# Item 7.1: Questions from Members of the Public

## Full Council – 16 November 2026

1. **Question from Stephen Thomas to Councillor Matt Kelcher (Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning)**

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning advise what they are doing to address the shortfall and backlog in affordable housing supply across the borough given the level of units being delivered by private developers across Alperton, including the Beresford Avenue and Grand Union developments and all around Wembley Stadium and increase in use of buy to let and student accommodation and properties then being used as Air B&B. These developments are not felt to offer real benefit to local residents whilst also placing additional strain on local infrastructure and already stretched community services.

**Response:**

This administration is very proud of Brent's record in delivering new homes for our local communities. Brent was recently named the UK's number one council housebuilder by Inside Housing magazine, with 557 homes completed last year and a further 1,360 in the pipeline.

Our wider approach to housebuilding supports a range of homes to meet different needs:

- We have delivered 155 homes in 26/27 up to Q1 and we expect to deliver a further 300+ homes this financial year including in areas of need such as Alperton, Church End and Kilburn;

- From Q1 2026-27 to date (including the number of planning permissions granted with affordable homes and across different the tenure types) – 201 LAR homes, 61 Social Rent Homes and 10 Shared Ownership Homes

- a range of homes for market sale.

A borough as diverse as Brent needs all these types of housing. Social housing is essential for residents on our waiting list, while other affordable tenures help households whose needs are not met by the market. We also need homes for the majority of our residents whose incomes place them above the eligibility thresholds for social or other affordable housing. Market-sale homes therefore also have a role in meeting local need and benefiting Brent residents.

We are doing everything we can to deliver more affordable housing, and Brent continues to lead the way. However, we face major pressures that are not unique to our borough.

One reason homes are so expensive to buy or rent is that they are increasingly expensive to build. Higher borrowing and energy costs, increased construction costs, interest rates, new regulatory requirements, including those arising from the Building Safety Act, and flat sales values have made delivery more challenging.

The Home Builders Federation has estimated that additional regulatory requirements have added more than £75,000 to the cost of building a new home. Across a large development, additional costs on this scale put substantial pressure on viability and the funding available for affordable housing.

That is why we must draw on different sources of funding and support to deliver homes at prices and rents that are genuinely affordable. We are pursuing three complementary approaches.

First, working with private-sector partners. We will continue to support new housing delivery through partnerships in which the proceeds from private sales help cross-subsidise affordable homes within the same development. This is an important means of securing affordable housing alongside market-sale homes.

Second, securing external funding. We will continue to bid for grants and other funding to subsidise affordable housing wherever possible. We look forward to continuing our engagement with the Greater London Authority to maximise the opportunities available to Brent.

Third, developing innovative delivery models. I was particularly proud to take the Brentfield Road scheme through Cabinet in October 2026, securing agreement to support Brent Community Land Trust in bringing forward 19 affordable homes on that site. This demonstrates our determination to explore new ways of delivering the homes our communities need.

2. **Question from Usha Vyas to Councillor Promise Knight (Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm)**

The residential area between the North Circular Road and Church Road serves a busy local community and contains a number of facilities that generate regular pedestrian and vehicle movements. These include two primary schools — Mitchell Brook Primary School on Bridge Road and St Mary's C E Primary School at the Mayo Road/Garnet Road end — as well as Church End Medical Centre, Willesden Court Care Home on Garnet Road, the Unity Centre on Church Road and the Elim River of Life Church on Gifford Road. Children, elderly and vulnerable residents, patients, families, worshippers and other pedestrians therefore regularly move through these residential streets.

At the same time, these residential roads form an interconnected route between the North Circular Road and Church Road through Woodheyes Road, Bridge Road, Hawkins Road and the surrounding residential streets, including Tynsdale Road, Helperby Road and Mayo Road. Residents continue to experience rat-running, speeding and aggressive driving through this area, including vehicles circumventing existing traffic-calming measures and recurring congestion and conflict at the narrow Bridge Road/Hawkins Road railway bridge.

Given the level of community use of this area and the fact that these roads operate as part of a connected route rather than in isolation, can the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm advise if the Council will consider undertaking a wider road-safety and traffic-management assessment of this corridor to determine whether further measures could help reduce rat-running, speeding, dangerous driving and conflict across the network?

**Response:**

As Lead Member I met the resident with officers from the Healthy Streets and Parking Service at the end of September 2026 on site to discuss the road safety and speeding concerns within the area where the CPZ has recently been implemented.

Road safety measures are mainly funded through the councils Transport for London (TfL) allocation to deliver the Local Implementation Plan and meet the Mayor for London’s Transport Strategy. Road safety schemes are prioritised Schemes are prioritised on the basis of personal injury accidents (PIAs) reported by the Metropolitan Police. However, following discussions relating to safety concerns, officers proposed to take the following actions forward;

- Develop a scheme of quick-win interventions for Mayo Road. This is expected to include at least two sinusoidal road humps (physical measures), together with additional road markings such as "SLOW" carriageway markings and speed roundels.

- Arrange the installation of a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on Hawkins Road, along with additional "SLOW" markings and speed roundels on the carriageway.

- Liaise with our line-marking contractor to ensure the missing section of single yellow line in Creukhorne Road is completed.

- Include the area for consideration of prioritisation for future funding as part of our Road Safety programme, which will be subject to further assessment.

Further to the meeting, the two Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) on Hawkins Road were installed on 21 October 2026.

Officers are continuing to progress the remaining measures outlined above and will provide further updates as these works are developed and programmed for implementation.

3. **Question from Peter Gomez to Councillor Matt Kelcher (Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning)**

In September 2024, Brent's Planning Committee required Wembley National Stadium Ltd (WNSL) to undertake a full review of the residents' ticket allocation scheme to ensure the "fairest assessment possible", with the review submitted to and approved by the Council. The subsequent Section 106 agreement established the Community Ballot for residents within the Wembley Stadium Event Day Parking Zone and provided that the Ticket Scheme should not be amended unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

WNSL subsequently proposed a substantially smaller Event Day Impact Zone, which now determines eligibility for the Residents' Ballot. Brent has stated that WNSL developed the boundary and that the Council does not determine the eligibility boundary or hold details of the methodology used to create it.

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning therefore advise:

(a) What evidence did Brent Council examine before agreeing to or approving the replacement of the Event Day Parking Zone with the smaller Event Day Impact Zone as the basis for Residents' Ballot eligibility.

(b) Who gave that agreement or approval and under what authority; and

(c) How Council satisfied itself that the resulting boundary represented the "fairest assessment possible" when it does not appear to hold the methodology by which WNSL determined that boundary?

**Response:**

The narrower zone was aimed at providing more impactful approach to those who live closer to the stadium. While the "Event Day Impact Zone" was discussed with some senior officers and members, no submission was made to the Planning Authority, and therefore no formal assessment of the revised Ticket Scheme has been undertaken. WNSL has been reminded that they are required to formally submit details for the Ticket Scheme for consideration and approval.

As Lead Member I was not advised personally of these changes as the implementation preceded before I was appointed to the Cabinet. The previous Cabinet Member for Public Realm had been advised directly by the Football Association (FA) on a system the FA considered to be compliant with the planning condition obligations, and that was how the matter was left.

In revisiting the original planning obligations, the FA have agreed to restore the boundary in advance of next year's events programme to better and more accurately account for the wording and spirit of the s106 planning condition obligation.

4. **Question from Janice Long to Councillor Promise Knight (Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm)**

The Highway Code has pedestrians at the top of the road user hierarchy.

In 2026 the Government gave councils the authority to ban pavement parking. In London it is already banned, but Brent has given exemptions to many roads in the Borough. With the result it is not a safe walking environment as cars are parked on the pavement.

Walking should be safe and it should be easy.

The Council website lists the streets where footway parking is allowed. Some are in a CPZ where parking bays are painted on the road and pavement. In other areas there is meant to be 1.2 metres left on the pavement for pedestrians. Yet in practice this does not happen and pedestrians and wheelchair users have to use the road as the pavement is blocked.

Can the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Streets, Transport & Public Realm therefore outline the Councils plans to eliminate parking on the pavement so that pedestrians can safely walk down the footway and not in the road.

**Response:**

The Council recognises that inappropriate footway parking can create difficulties and potentially unsafe conditions for pedestrians, particularly wheelchair users, people with mobility impairments and those using pushchairs.

Where footway parking exemptions are considered necessary, officers seek to balance local parking needs with the need to maintain a safe and accessible route for pedestrians.

Any proposal to introduce or amend informal (without marked bays) or formal (with marked bays and signage) footway parking arrangements is carefully assessed against the local highway conditions. Officers follow the relevant guidance when allowing footway parking exemptions, and, wherever practicable, seek to maintain a minimum unobstructed footway width of 1.2 metres for pedestrians.

The Council also undertakes consultation on proposed measures before implementation, giving residents and other affected parties an opportunity to comment. Residents are informed of the outcome and that penalty charge notices will be issued where inadequate space is left for pedestrians and send reminder letters, where necessary.

Where there are numerous reports of obstruction, the council may also introduce signs and lines to improve compliance.

The Council remains committed to balancing parking requirements with the need to provide safe and accessible footways for all users.

# Item 7.2: Questions from Brent Youth Parliament

## Full Council – 16 November 2026

1. **Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Jake Rubin (Cabinet Member for Children Services, Employment & Climate Action)**

   What plans does Brent Council have to work with local businesses, schools and community organisations to create more accessible work experience, internships and career opportunities for young people?

   **Response:**

   The launch of Brent's Youth Employment and Progression Taskforce on 2 November will be a key part of our response to the challenge set out in Sir Alan Milburn's review of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), bringing together young people, business, employers, schools, training providers, community organisations and public sector partners to develop a coordinated approach to reducing youth unemployment and inactivity in the borough.

   Through our emerging Employment and Skills Strategy, we are strengthening the pathways available to young people at every stage. This includes a revised targeted Information, Advice and Guidance service for 16 and 17 year olds, helping those at greatest risk of becoming NEET to access the right support and opportunities early.

   We are also developing work to support schools in strengthening careers education and employer engagement. Alongside this, Brent Works is increasing engagement with schools, particularly with Key Stage 4 pupils, to provide greater exposure to local employers, work experience opportunities and clear routes into employment and further learning.

   Working with local businesses and employers, our Wembley Jobs Fair held in September attracted significant attendance from young people seeking information, advice and guidance regarding their careers and opportunities that are available locally. We are working with our data supplier to track attendees, understand progression resulting from the event and to follow up with live opportunities in the jobs market. We are also looking to develop further, more local events throughout the year.

   We recognise though that some young people face additional barriers to entering work. That is why, for example, we are enhancing our supported internship offer for young people with SEND, working with employers to create more inclusive opportunities and improve progression into sustainable employment.

The Council, through Brent Works and in partnership with our West London neighbours, will be supporting the delivery of the Government's Youth Jobs Guarantee focused on supporting 18 to 24 year olds who have been unemployed for 18 months or more, ensuring they can access tailored employment support and fully-funded work placements for 6 months. This is a significant development that will provide real-world, paid work experience for those young people who have found it hardest to secure employment and to establish a foothold in the labour market.

The Council will be implementing all these measures and more as our strategy takes shape, to further strengthen partnerships with local businesses, schools and community organisations, with the aim to create more accessible routes into work for Brent's young people.

2. **Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Jake Rubin (Cabinet Member for Children Services, Employment & Climate Action)**

What steps is Brent Council taking to reduce waiting times for young people seeking mental health support and how is it ensuring that young people who cannot access support through school or specialist services are not left without help.

**Response:**

The prevalence of mental health and wellbeing concerns is high among Brent children and young people and we are aware that young people sometimes have to wait to access CAMHS treatment services provided the Central and North West London NHS Trust (CNWL). This is why the Brent Children's Trust, chaired by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Community Development, CNWL (the local CAMHS provider) and the Brent Integrated Health Partnership have all lobbied the Integrated Care Board that is responsible for funding health services for additional resources for Brent. As a result, some non-recurrent funding has been provided to reduce waiting times, for example for neurodiversity assessments.

To prevent the escalation of mental health and wellbeing concerns, in February this year, a new early intervention and prevention service called LYRA was introduced to support children and young people with mental health and wellbeing concerns. The service is delivered primarily by the Anna Freud Centre and the Brent Centre for Young People. It provides a range of support from targeted mentoring to interventions aimed at supporting emotional regulation, resilience building and coping skills. Young people can self-refer to this service, and families and professionals can also make referrals using the same access point phone number as CAMHS.

Over 50% of schools in Brent now have Mental Health Support Teams, that are part of a national initiative funded by the NHS aimed at supporting children and young people's emotional wellbeing with practitioners based in schools. The intention over the next couple of years is for this to be rolled out to all schools.

The Local Authority is also working with health partners to develop a mental health and wellbeing crisis café in Brent. This will be open in evenings and at weekends and will provide a safe space for young people and families who need urgent support or advice. West London MIND and the Brent Centre for Young People have been commissioned to run the service which is in development. They will be reaching out to Brent Youth Parliament very soon to hear your thoughts about what the need to offer to young people and where from.

3. **Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Lix Dixon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Public Health)**

The Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028 reports a 44% fall in serious youth violence offences between 2016/17 and 2024/25 but shows an increase in the number of knife and robbery crimes.

What is the Council doing to address these concerns and help young people feel more safer, and how will the youth be involved in shaping these measures?

**Response:**

The 44% fall in serious youth violence offences between 2016/17 and 2024/25 is welcome, but we are not complacent about increased robbery and concerns around knife-related offending. The Council, Police, schools, health services and community partners are combining early intervention, targeted prevention and coordinated action to protect young people and address emerging risks.

To tackle robbery, the VRU-funded Robbery Reduction Project, relaunched in September 2026, targets the after-school period from 3pm to 6pm in Wembley Park, Harlesden, Kilburn and Neasden. Connect Stars, Hilltop Circle, United Borders, TETH and Westminster Warriors provide outreach, trusted support and positive activities for young people at risk of offending or becoming victims.

Knife crime prevention includes school workshops, Street Doctors' bleed kit awareness and first aid training, and the YJS and Police-led No Knives Better Lives programme, Sterling Foundation and Words for Weapons, support safe, anonymous disposal of unwanted weapons. Reducing violence, with a particular focus on knife crime, remains a key priority of the Safer Brent Partnership. To support this objective, the Community Safety Team is delivering a range of targeted prevention, intervention, and enforcement initiatives designed to reduce knife crime, safeguard vulnerable individuals, and improve community safety across the borough.

The Targeted Prevention Hub and Turnaround programme offer early help through mentoring, education, health and wellbeing, substance misuse and family support. For those at greatest risk, the Youth Justice Service and multi-agency Exploitation, Violence and Vulnerability arrangements use risk assessments, peer mapping and intelligence to develop individual safety plans. The associated programme, delivered with Air Sports Network and St Giles Trust, provides trauma-informed outreach, mentoring, hospital-based support and pathways into education, training and employment.

Helping young people feel safer is central to the Brent Youth Strategy 2025–2028. Alongside investment in youth provision and positive activities, practitioners explore where young people feel unsafe, risks of retaliation, trusted adults, safe spaces and protective relationships, so that support reflects their lived experience. Young people are shaping this response. They co-designed the Youth Strategy, and Brent Youth Parliament and Family Hubs representatives sit on its Delivery Group. Quarterly youth roundtables bring young people together with Police, Community Safety and YJS to discuss knife crime, policing, stop and search and social media. Their feedback on

safe spaces, mental health support, career opportunities, and recreational activities has informed programme development and commissioning for 2027 and beyond.

Through the Brent Youth Justice Plan and Youth Strategy governance, we will review evidence and young people's feedback, challenge insufficient progress and adapt our response to changing patterns of robbery, knife crime, and serious violence.

4. **Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Jake Rubin (Cabinet Member for Children Services, Employment & Climate Action)**

What is the Brent Council doing to ensure that young people regardless of their financial circumstances, can access affordable youth clubs, sports and other activities?

**Response:**

Ensuring access to positive activities, regardless of family income, is a clear priority for Brent. Free holiday provision, neighbourhood-based activities, strong voluntary-sector partnerships, and investment in accessible youth facilities is working to help young people across Brent participate, develop their talents, build relationships and enjoy their communities. There are a number of initiatives underway including:

- Free Holiday Activities and Food - We recognise that costs can prevent some families from accessing activities. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme helps address this by providing free holiday activities and meals for eligible children and young people, including sport, creative activities and other enrichment opportunities. In summer 2025 just over 2,000 children accessed the programme. The Government has since provided a three-year funding settlement for HAF, offering greater stability for continued delivery. We are also working to understand and mitigate the impact of changes to eligibility so that vulnerable families continue to receive support.

- Accessible local activities - Our eight Best Start Family Hubs provide accessible, neighbourhood-based opportunities for children and young people. Alongside digital facilities, the hubs have offered sport, mixed martial arts and arts sessions after school and during school holidays, in partnership with voluntary and community-sector organisations. This provision includes inclusive opportunities for children and young people with SEND.

- Youth provision and facilities - Brent works closely with the voluntary and community sector to strengthen and sustain local youth provision, particularly through the Young Brent Foundation and its network of more than 200 member organisations. The Brent Youth Strategy 2025-2028 records that the Foundation invested £2.9 million in youth programmes in 2023/24, supporting an estimated 15,000 to 17,500 young people through a wide range of programmes and partnerships. Brent has approved a £4 million Youth Facilities Capital Investment Programme to improve five existing youth facilities. The programme aims to increase access, improve the quality of provision and expand local recreational and sporting opportunities. Young people directly shaped this investment. A Youth Panel helped assess proposals, prioritising projects they considered would reach the wider community and provide the most valuable youth offer.