

# YOUR BRENT

WINTER 2025

[www.brent.gov.uk/yourbrent](http://www.brent.gov.uk/yourbrent)



The magazine about life in Brent, published by Brent Council



## EXTRA CASH PACKS A PUNCH

### EVERY LITTLE COUNTS

Your council tax  
questions answered

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Council funding a  
knockout for locals

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### TRASH TALK

The zero-tolerance  
approach to flytipping

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# JOIN BRENT'S **ONLY** STATE SCHOOL OFFERING THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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At Wembley High, students choose between two world-class pathways, our A Level Programme or the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP), each designed to unlock your full academic and personal potential.

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*These achievements reflect not just talent, but a culture of ambition, support, and excellence that defines Wembley High.*



Applications are now open for external students

Apply here: [www.whtc.co.uk/sixth-form/applications-to-sixth-form-2025-entry](http://www.whtc.co.uk/sixth-form/applications-to-sixth-form-2025-entry)

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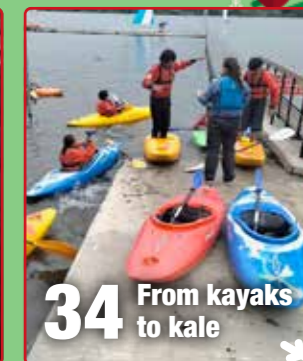
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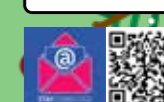
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## INVESTING IN BRENT'S FUTURE

As we wrap up another busy year in Brent, the festive spirit is in full swing. From Kilburn Music Mile Festival and community carols at the Civic Centre to the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra moving into their new Wembley Park home, our cultural calendar has been vibrant as ever.

Brent is one of the most diverse places in the country and winter is always a time when that togetherness and community spirit shines through. Recent Diwali celebrations were fantastic and it was an honour to join the 30th anniversary of the iconic Neasden Temple with King Charles III and Queen Camilla. With Christmas and Hanukkah coming up, I hope every family finds the time to enjoy being together.

This year has not been easy with the cost-of-living crisis continuing to place pressure on household budgets. We have also been working hard to manage the serious financial challenges we face as a council. After a prolonged period when funding for local councils did not keep pace with rising need, we are doing everything we can to protect frontline services.

Despite these pressures, we are investing our limited resources to put pride back into our high-streets and neighbourhoods. That is why we have launched Investing in Brent, a £27million programme funded by developments in our borough, designed to improve the public spaces we all use every day. Over the coming months you will see new streetlighting, improved roads and pavements and greener parks. There will be upgrades to youth centres, thousands of new trees, more CCTV, triple the number of fly-tipping enforcement officers, new mechanical sweepers, and more secure cycle parking. These improvements will help keep Brent cleaner, greener and safer.

This investment shows what is possible when the growth in our borough works for everyone. Every new home and every new development helps pay for better streets, cleaner neighbourhoods and improved local services.

As we look ahead to 2026, please check in on your neighbours, support our local shops and businesses, and reach out to the council if you are struggling.

On behalf of Brent Council, I want to wish you and your loved ones a peaceful, joyful and hopeful New Year.

**Councillor  
Muhammed Butt**  
Leader of the Council



## news

# Kilburn library set to reopen after revamp

**Kilburn Library officially reopens in the new year following a major £1 million refurbishment funded by Brent Council's Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy and Arts Council England.**

The upgraded library features a new digital area with improved IT facilities, a newly expanded children's library, more study spaces and a flexible hireable community space. The refurbishment will provide an inclusive, vibrant hub supporting learning, creativity and connection. During the refurbishment, alternative library services are available at nearby Willesden Green and Harlesden libraries.



# Royal Philharmonic's festive debut in new home

**London's largest BOXPARK welcomed the world-renowned Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for a festive concert for their first performance since its recent move to a new headquarters in Wembley Park.**

The 45-piece orchestra was conducted by Stephen Bell, one of the UK's leading maestros and joined by acclaimed guest vocalist Sumudu Jayatilaka. From beloved classics like White Christmas and Winter Wonderland to modern favourites including Mariah Carey's All I Want for Christmas Is You, the performance spanned a century of holiday music. Audiences were treated to everything from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Overture to Taylor Swift's Christmas Tree Farm.



## news

# New jobs for homeless locals

**Twenty-two residents at risk of homelessness or long-term unemployment have been given a fresh start thanks to a pilot scheme run in partnership with Brent Council and Veolia.**

The programme, created by The Big Issue, helps people on the margins of society rebuild their confidence, skills and dignity as they prepare to re-enter the world of work. The results have been impressive. Six participants have secured full-time jobs with Veolia's recycling team, while the remaining trainees have joined the company's wider workforce, opening the door to stable employment and future progression.



Cllr Krupa Sheth

Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm, said: "Everyone deserves employment. This scheme is a success with 22 people being integrated into Veolia's workforce and six of those getting full-time contracts."



A Veolia recycling worker

# Council calls for visitor levy pays off!

**Ahead of the Autumn Budget, Council leaders wrote to the Treasury and the department responsible for local government to call on the government to give local authorities the power to collect a visitor's levy.**

Following growing support for a levy in London, Chancellor Rachel Reeves is expected to give London Mayor Sir Sadiq Khan the power to impose a levy on overnight stays. Wembley Stadium attracts millions of visitors with sell-out performances from global stars like Oasis, Dua Lipa, and Coldplay. Each of these non-sporting events injects £4.35 million into the local economy and supports over 1,800 jobs.

Brent Council works closely with major venues to manage issues such as waste, traffic, and noise, while ensuring residents benefit from local events. But the influx of visitors places pressure on council services and residents.

Whilst the change was welcomed, the council has continued to make the case to Ministers that boroughs are best-placed to design the levy and decide where the funds collected are spent.



From left to right Cllr Patel (Deputy Leader), Cllr Grahl, Cllr Farah, Cllr Knight, Cllr Butt (Leader), Cllr Donnelly-Jackson, Cllr Benea, Cllr Sheth and Cllr Nerva

# New milestone as 291 homes for Wembley moves one step closer

**Building works to bring 291 new homes to Wembley have reached a big milestone. The construction of the highest point of the development was celebrated with the 'topping out' ceremony, with leaders from Brent Council and Wates Residential attending.**

Located at the junction of Wembley High Road and Cecil Avenue, the development includes a publicly accessible garden and play area, commercial spaces to support local

businesses, and around 100 new job opportunities. A new community hall will offer residents a welcoming space for events, activities and social gatherings. This milestone follows ongoing progress at Zephaniah House (formerly Ujima House). The scheme will deliver 54 affordable homes alongside workspace and a cafe - both designed to benefit the wider community. Both projects are due to be completed by the end of 2026.



Brent Council officers, councillors, with GLA and Wates colleagues

## Have your say on £10m plan to protect services

**Proposals to save £10million while safeguarding the frontline services that local communities rely on are being consulted on by Brent Council.**

Councils across the country face large budget gaps, with the financial outlook for local government in London especially challenging due to a high demand for services creating big pressures. Brent, like the majority of councils in England, is proposing council tax increases of 4.99% for 2026/27. The proposed behind-the-scenes changes are all about working more efficiently and effectively, and include using data to spot and help people earlier, before they get into a crisis. The council is proposing to harness technology, including AI, to get more

done in a day and save cash – making it easier and quicker for residents to contact the council online at a time that suits them and freeing up council staff and resources to spend on things residents care about, like cleaner streets and community safety. The council is also working on getting better deals with suppliers, cutting office costs, promoting apprenticeships and using empty council buildings to bring in extra income. Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of Brent Council, said: “Many councils continue to operate under severe financial duress. Brent isn’t immune to these challenges, but we have continued to manage our finances responsibly over many, many years, allowing us to protect

the frontline services that matter most. “We are now accelerating our programme to transform the way we work so we can continue to protect essential services. This isn’t an easy task but I’m pleased that most of our £10million financial plan will come from working more efficiently and effectively. “If you live or work locally, I urge you to have your say on the proposals.” For more information on the council budget and to have your say see page 20.

Councillor Muhammed Butt



## Cost of living support this winter

**With living costs still at record highs, residents feeling the pinch can get help with money, food, debt, energy bills and more.**

The council is providing a range of support, including its debt partnership with Citizens Advice Brent, which has already helped over 400 residents take control of their finances through confidential, in-person advice at Brent Hubs across the borough.

There’s £124 million in benefits going unclaimed in Brent, meaning you could be missing out on thousands of pounds each year. Find out what you could be entitled to at: [www.bit.ly/brentcalculator](http://www.bit.ly/brentcalculator). For help and support visit: [www.brent.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.brent.gov.uk/costofliving)



## Reaching new heights in housing with Quintain

**Brent Council partner developer Quintain has completed 'Solar', a new housing development adding 487 homes to Wembley Park, including 104 affordable rent and shared ownership properties.**

Following the success of sister building Luna, completed earlier this year, Solar’s arrival pushes Quintain’s total to an impressive 6,000 homes delivered in the area.

This milestone isn’t just about housing. The latest phase also welcomes a new performing arts community centre and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra’s headquarters, cementing Wembley Park’s growing status as a vibrant cultural hub.

Spread across three buildings rising nine, 12 and 27 storeys, Solar offers studio to three-bedroom flats with access to a gym and lounge.

With these additions, Wembley Park strengthens its reputation as one of London’s most vibrant urban neighbourhoods, recently named in The Sunday Times’ Best Places to Live 2025.



Photo: Chris Winter

### Civic Centre Christmas carols

Get into the festive spirit with Brent Music Service! On Tuesday 9 December, talented musicians from the service will be performing at Brent Civic Centre, with two special sets from 12.30pm-1.30pm and 4.30pm-5.30pm live in the atrium.

Whether you’re popping by for lunch or finishing your day, come enjoy a mix of seasonal tunes that will brighten up your day and spread some holiday cheer to celebrate the season and support young local talent. Everyone is welcome - bring your friends and family for some festive fun!

### Snow better time for free holiday fun

Families can plan ahead for the festive season with free holiday clubs for eligible children through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. Running for four days over the winter holidays, the clubs offer healthy meals and fun activities that support children’s wellbeing. Funded by the Department for Education, the programme gives children and young people a safe space to learn, play, and make friends. Venues, dates, times, and eligibility criteria will be live on the webpage from the first week of December! [www.brent.gov.uk/haf](http://www.brent.gov.uk/haf)

### Ready for school? Apply now for September 2026!

Do you have a child turning four by Monday 31 August 2026? It’s time to apply for their primary school place! Applications close on 15 January. Applying by then gives your child the best chance to start school in September at a school that suits your family’s needs. Get your application in on time to help your little one get the best start in life. Visit: [www.eadmissions.org.uk](http://www.eadmissions.org.uk)

# Gaumont glows! Kilburn kicks off its music mile revival

**After half a century, the lights of the Gaumont State Cinema shine once more over Kilburn High Road.**

Cllr Promise Knight, Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture, told ITN London that she was absolutely thrilled to see the venue reborn as part of the Kilburn Music Mile Festival in November.



Cllr Promise Knight being interviewed by ITN inside the Gaumont State Theatre

The Grade II\* Art Deco landmark — once host to Sinatra, The Beatles and Shirley Bassey, now promises to nurture new generations of talent while boosting local trade and pride. With concerts, community programmes and affordable tickets, the reopening marks not just a cultural revival, but a social and economic one. “This shows what creativity and community spirit can achieve,” said Cllr Knight. “Kilburn’s heartbeat is music once again.”



## Highlights from Hate Crime Awareness Week

**What’s the line between free speech and hate speech? This discussion was at the heart of Hate Crime Awareness Week this year. Brent hosted a series of events designed to help the community understand, recognise, and respond to hate crime.** The week kicked off with a Stop Hate UK workshop on October 13, focusing on online hate. On October 14, Protection Approaches offered practical advice, plus support

available to victims. The week wrapped up with a Q&A on October 16, where community safety experts and local leaders discussed ways to tackle hate crime together. These events brought people together who work in social care, local government, or are simply passionate about change. The message was clear: by working as one community, we can make our borough safer and more inclusive



Hate Crime Awareness Week workshops took place in the Civic Centre for residents and professionals.

## 16 days of activism

**A 16-day campaign to “End the Silence: Stand Together to Stop Violence Against Women and Girls” is making a big impact through till December 10.**

Communities have been coming together with local partners for workshops, panel talks, and events, to raise awareness, support survivors, and help make everyone safer. Topics covered include honour-based abuse, forced marriage, domestic abuse, and how abuse affects mental health and children. Workshops have also explored how to use trauma-informed language and how agencies can work together.

To learn more about violence against women and girls, and how to get help, visit: [tinyurl.com/VAWG\\_Brent](https://tinyurl.com/VAWG_Brent)



## We ain’t buying it!

**Why buy when you can borrow? From drills and sewing machines to carpet cleaners and projectors, Willesden Green’s Library of Things helps you save money, cut waste, and get creative this Christmas.**

Over 1,000 Brent residents have already saved £231,143 and reused 11.3 tonnes of electricals, keeping 33.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> out of our atmosphere. Whether you’re hosting, gifting, or decorating, borrow instead of buy! Visit [libraryofthings.co.uk](https://libraryofthings.co.uk) and use code **YOURBRENT15** for 15% off your next rental. Offer valid until 31 December 2025.



Willesden Green's Library of Things

## Wreaths laid on Remembrance Sunday to honour soldiers

**On Remembrance Sunday, residents and community leaders paid their respects to those who fought and lost their lives in the two World Wars and other conflicts.**

Councillor Ryan Hack, Mayor of Brent Council, said: “on Remembrance Sunday, we unite as a community to honour those who gave so much to protect our freedoms and shape the lives we enjoy today.”

“By wearing poppies as a sign of hope, laying wreaths, and joining memorial events across Brent and beyond, we pay tribute to the courage and sacrifice of all who served our country.”



Councillor Ryan Hack, Mayor of Brent Council, at the Remembrance ceremony

## Awaab’s Law

**Two-year-old, Awaab Ishak, tragically died in 2020 after prolonged exposure to damp and mould in his home.** In October 2025, a new law was introduced in his name to ensure that social housing is safe, healthy and free from serious hazards. By law, social landlords, including councils and housing associations, must act quickly and within specific timeframes to tackle issues like damp and mould when residents report them. For more information, visit: [www.brent.gov.uk/healthandsafety](https://www.brent.gov.uk/healthandsafety)

## Grit expectations

All 326 grit bins across Brent have been fully serviced in preparation for a chilly winter. Council gritters are ready to respond quickly to any sudden changes in the weather, with forecasts closely monitored to keep main roads clear. Find your nearest grit bins: [www.brent.gov.uk/gritting](https://www.brent.gov.uk/gritting)



## Fowl Play! £22k fine for meat mayhem

**A Willesden business that has consistently butchered our streets with piles of raw meat and rubbish has finally had its chickens come home to roost.**

Nour Damascus, Willesden, has been hit with a £22,033 fine for eight offences of unlawful waste disposal – blocking the high street with bin bags, plastic crates, raw meat and other filth.



# £22 million for brand-new SEND school

There were smiles all around as children and teachers moved into the brand-new £22 million Wembley Manor School for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The three-storey building on London Road provides 150 much-needed specialist places for secondary-aged pupils, meaning more families can now access the right support closer to home. Built by Reds10 using 121 modular units made in East

Yorkshire, the school was completed ahead of schedule and to budget. Thoughtfully designed for pupils' needs, it features bright, modern classrooms and specialist spaces that support learning and wellbeing. Cllr Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, said: "Wembley Manor will make a huge difference for families in Brent – a place where children feel supported, valued and inspired."



Modular installation at Wembley Manor School in March 2025

## New licensing scheme to improve standards for shared homes

From 2 February 2026, all landlords in Brent who rent out Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) - will need to have a license.

The new legal requirement means that smaller shared homes with three or four tenants from different households must now be licensed, joining larger HMOs with five or more tenants, which already require one. Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "Everyone deserves to live in a safe, secure, and well-maintained home. This scheme will help drive up standards for renters and support responsible landlords."

The new scheme aims to make homes safer and better managed for renters. Every licensed home will be inspected by the council, and landlords will have to fix any safety or maintenance issues. If they don't, the council can take action. An Additional HMO Licence for smaller shared homes will be valid for up to five years and cost £1,040 from 2 February 2026. Landlords who apply early can secure the lower current rate of £840, with licences becoming active from February 2026. Landlords can apply now at: [www.brent.gov.uk/getlicensed](http://www.brent.gov.uk/getlicensed).

## Help someone sleeping rough this winter

As the nights grow colder, more people are seeking shelter wherever they can, in places such as doorways, stations or shopfronts. Winter is especially dangerous for those without shelter, but there's an easy way to help.

StreetLink connects people sleeping rough with local outreach teams who can offer emergency accommodation and longer-term support. If you see someone sleeping rough, make a referral at: [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk) to help them get the support they need.



Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

## Building firm slapped with a £223k fine

The directors of a building company have been given a huge £223,350 in fines and costs after they obstructed the public highway without a valid licence – and hoped no one would notice.

Mizen Design Build Ltd. the construction company set up scaffolding and hoarding outside Heron House on Wembley Hill Road.

**FINED**



## Power to the renters

The government's Renters' Rights Bill was passed on 27 October - a landmark step forward for people living in privately rented homes. This new law is designed to give renters across the country more security, fairness and protection.

It puts power back in renters' hands by ending 'no-fault' evictions, giving tenants more notice before being asked to move, protecting them from unfair rent increases, and strengthening their right to challenge poor housing conditions.

Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "Almost half of all homes in Brent are privately rented, so these reforms are hugely important. We fully support the Renters' Rights Bill, which gives tenants the security and protections they deserve. At our Private Renters Fair in October, we met many residents who will directly benefit from these changes."

"Through landlord licensing and cracking down on rogue landlords, we're working hard to raise standards for renters. This new bill will build on those efforts and give renters even more protection."

Look out for more information on [www.brent.gov.uk/privaterenting](http://www.brent.gov.uk/privaterenting) and in the next edition of Your Brent.

FAREWELL TO  
THE FESTIVE FIR!  
CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION



Saturday, 10 January 2026

9am-11am  
Priory park road j/w Hazelmere Road

12 noon-2pm  
Brondesbury Villas j/w Woodville Road

2pm-4pm  
Shaftesbury Avenue HA3.  
(by the Tennis Courts at Woodcock Park)

Saturday, 17 January 2026

9am-11am  
Lydford Road j/w St Gabriels Road

12 noon-2pm  
Anson Road j/w Kendal road

2pm-4pm  
Doyle gardens j/w Furness road

Residents can drop real Christmas trees at the Abbey Road Reuse & Recycling Centre, cut them up for garden-waste recycling (if subscribed), or book a bulky collection at [brent.gov.uk/specialcollections](http://brent.gov.uk/specialcollections).

# Loo-ser! Landlord fined after leaving tenants without a bathroom door

A rogue landlord has been fined £6,543 after leaving a Brent family to live in shocking conditions for more than a year.

**FINED**

The case came to light when tenants reported that their cooker and hob were not working, posing a safety risk. Council officers who inspected the property also found severe damp and mould in the kitchen, alongside a missing bathroom door.

Despite being served an Improvement Notice, the landlord failed to carry out any repairs. Magistrates found him guilty of breaching the Housing Act 2004 for failing to address multiple hazards. Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "This case shows how

seriously we take landlords who try to exploit tenants in Brent. Everyone deserves to live in a safe home with dignity and privacy; no one should be expected to use a bathroom without a door."

If your landlord isn't playing by the rules, report them here: [www.brent.gov.uk/privaterenting](http://www.brent.gov.uk/privaterenting).



Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson



## Paan spitting £30k clean-up bill sparks crackdown

Council Enforcement Officers are taking a zero-tolerance approach to those caught ruining Brent streets with paan.

Locals will have noticed banners, put up by the council, in 3 major hotspot locations where paan staining is a big problem. They are also investing more in cleaning streets of paan, as well as offering free stop smoking services.



## Tell us what you think: How can we make Brent more welcoming?

Over the years, many new people have made Brent their home and we want to continue that welcoming legacy.

We would like to hear:

What made you feel welcome when you first came to Brent?

What makes you feel part of the community now?

What you would like to do to help other newcomers make Brent their home?

Your responses will be used to help us keep Brent a welcoming borough.



Have your say before 31 January 2026



## Harlesden pupils kick off Euro 2028 at No.10

It's not every day that you are invited to a kickabout in the back gardens of 10 Downing Street but that's exactly what children from John Keble Church of England School in Harlesden experienced last week when they helped the Prime Minister launch Euro 2028 with the final due to take place in our very own Wembley Stadium!

20 Year 5 and 6 pupils visited 10 Downing street, where Prime Minister, Keir Starmer hosted the UEFA President Alexander Ceferin and FA Chair Debbie Hewitt MBE at a special launch event. The children treated the dignitaries to a showcase of their football skills, impressing even England international and Aston Villa star Tyrone Mings. Like many of today's professional football stars, the children were keen to get up close and place their hands on the celebrated Euro trophy!



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**Adults**

- Wed 6-8pm
- Thurs 9.30-12.30pm
- Thurs 1.15-4.15pm
- Fri 11-2pm

**Kids**

- Wed 4.30-5.30

**Adults and Kids**

- Sat 10.30-12.30pm

POTTERSPOCKET22 POTTERSPOCKET

## Brent Health Matters scoops top health awards

Brent Health Matters (BHM) – the health inequalities programme run in collaboration between Brent Council, local NHS services, community and voluntary organisations in the borough – has won not one, but two awards recently.

The BHM pharmacy team scooped the ‘Learning Disabilities Initiative of the Year’ award at the HSJ Patient Safety Awards and the Children’s and Young People team won ‘Best Health-Creating Grassroots Approach to Reducing the Impact of Long-Term Conditions’ from The Health Creation Alliance.



## Keep well and warm

Although illnesses like flu and COVID-19 can strike at any time, they’re more common in winter and can spread quickly.

Taking simple steps can help protect you in cold weather:

Keep clean: Wash your hands often  
Get vaccinated: Speak to your GP for recommended winter vaccines  
Stay home: If you’re not well enough to work or socialise  
Eat and drink well: Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy warm meals  
Stay warm: Keep your home at around 18°C, especially if you’re vulnerable

Walk safely: Wear shoes with good grip to avoid slips and falls.

To keep well and warm visit:



## Neasden Temple gets the Royal treatment

The King and Queen joined worshippers at London’s Neasden Temple to mark its 30th anniversary and offer a “very happy belated Diwali.”

The royal couple removed their shoes, received floral garlands, and watched children perform prayers for peace. They met Cllr Ryan Hack, Mayor of Brent and local families celebrating the festival and viewed a model of a new Hindu temple being built in Paris, due to open in 2026. The visit highlighted the royals’ long friendship with the Hindu community in Brent. The Mayor said of the visit: “We were honoured to welcome Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla to Brent to celebrate 30 years of Neasden Temple, marking decades of devotion, faith and community service. On behalf of the people of Brent, I wish the Royal Family and Neasden Temple continued blessings and prosperity.”



Brent Mayor, Cllr Ryan Hack greeting King Charles III

## Brent’s fine work pays off

Brent Council’s parking team has steered its way to victory, clinching the “Parking in Action” award at the British Parking Awards.

Judges were impressed by Brent’s clampdown on Blue Badge misuse and parking fraud, showing that Brent isn’t stalling when it comes to keeping roads fair for all.



Brent Council staff at the British Parking Awards.

UNITED COLLEGES GROUP

# OPEN DAYS

Join us at our next Open Days

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**17 JANUARY 2026**  
10am - 1pm

**21 JANUARY 2026**  
5pm - 7pm

**PADDINGTON GREEN CAMPUS**  
[CWC.AC.UK/OPEN-DAYS](http://CWC.AC.UK/OPEN-DAYS)

**WILLESDEN CAMPUS**  
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# Striking history

**W**e are the Lions, Mr Manager! is a play which follows Jayaben Desai who led the strike action for two years, beginning with an argument with her factory manager, where the play received its namesake.

She said "What you are running here is not a factory, it is a zoo. In a zoo, there are many types of animals. Some are monkeys who dance on your fingertips, others are lions who can bite your head off. We are those lions, Mr Manager."

We sat down with writer and co-producer of the play, Neil Gore who brought this piece of history to life, reminding people that Brent has always been a borough that stands up for the little guy.

"It's such a big piece of history which must never be forgotten. We need to hang on to these people and what they achieved," Gore explained. "Jayaben was tiny, at just 4'10ft, but determined. Ultimately, her determination changed the complexion of trade unionism in Britain."

Neil also acknowledged the strike's social significance "It was a realisation that an injury to one is an injury to us all. These immigrant workers were being treated far worse than their white counterparts."

He explained that the decision to restage the play came after seeing "the race riots last summer, and the rise of the far right," which reminded them of the social tensions that surrounded the original strikes. "There are lots of similarities between now and the 70s" he said.

Neil added that the production serves as "a reminder that progress isn't permanent. The same struggles over race, fairness, and respect in the workplace still surface in different forms today" also citing Tony Benn MP's famous quote on how "There is no final victory, as there is no final defeat." Gore added "the Brunswick dispute, inspired lots of similar strikes afterwards" citing examples such as the Gate Gourmet strike at Heathrow Airport and the Chix bubble gum factory dispute in Slough

where marginalised groups challenged unfair treatment and won. As Gore puts it: "The Grunwick strikers showed Britain what dignity at work really means. Their roar still echoes today, and it's one we all need to hear now more than ever."

Neil and Townsend Theatre Productions are now working on a new show titled Farewell Leicester Square, which tells the story of Joe Clough, Britain's first Black bus driver, who came to London from Jamaica in 1903.



Mrs Desai surrounded by police during the Grunwick strike



Neil Gore and Lead Actress Rukmini Sircar on stage

When a small group of predominantly Asian women walked out of the Grunwick Film Processing Factory in Willesden in 1976, few could have imagined that their strikes would become a defining moment in British labour history.

“What you are running here is not a factory, it is a zoo. In a zoo, there are many types of animals. Some are monkeys who dance on your fingertips, others are lions who can bite your head off. We are those lions, Mr Manager.”



# Your town centre through their eyes

Brent's 17 town centres are central to our local economy, with around 1,600 small and independent businesses. We spoke to a few of them about how their areas have changed.



CHURCH END

The Church End Growth Area will deliver at least 1,300 homes and over £600 million in development value, supported by £30 million of council investment in new housing, commercial space, a market square and public realm due in 2026. Nicola from Roundwood Vets said: "Roundwood Vets has been nestled in the heart of Church Road for the past 10 years. Over the last decade, we've seen tremendous change: CCTV installations, tree planting, and fresh coats of paint have all helped to brighten the space. We're confident in the direction Church Road is heading. Roundwood Vets is here to stay."



Roundwood Vets Chloe Griffiths, Nicola Roberts and Lisa Hirst.



NEASDEN

The Neasden Stations Growth Area plans at least 2,000 homes and over £925 million in development value by 2035, creating a mixed-use neighbourhood with improved public space, pocket parks and better walking and cycling links. Safety, lighting and greening have already been upgraded, and work continues toward the proposed West London Orbital link.

Mustafa from Way 2 Save said: "This isn't just a business for me, it's my life. I've watched families grow up around me. For me, it's all about giving back to the community that's supported me."



HARLESDEN

Harlesden's regeneration builds on its musical heritage, with projects such as the Reggae Walk of Music Trail and heritage murals, while work with traders is strengthening the market. Lola from Hair Control said: "My family has been running this business since 1995. Harlesden has really changed with more businesses that cater for a wide variety of communities."



Lola from Hair Control in front of her salon



WEMBLEY

More than 6,000 homes have already been built, with 2,400 more under way, alongside investment from partners such as Quintain. The area includes the OVO Arena, London Designer Outlet, Boxpark, Union Park and hundreds of new trees. Wembley has attracted around £2.8 billion of investment and will become one of the UK's largest Build-to-Rent neighbourhoods. The Ealing Road and Alperton Creative Enterprise Zone supports local artists and entrepreneurs.

Zainab from Zain Accessories said: "Zain Accessories is a family-run treasure trove. The shop has become a cherished meeting place for local people. Over the years, the area has grown busier and more vibrant."



KILBURN

Kilburn town centre regeneration is being progressed with Camden and Westminster through One Kilburn, an innovative local partnership that works with residents and

businesses to meet a wide range of challenges across boroughs. The joint approach has successfully secured £8 million for a Better Safer Kilburn scheme that will transform the High Road and improve safety over the next few years to support growth.



WILLESDEN

Community-led regeneration initiatives in Willesden Green are currently exploring opportunities to enhance the station

area, local shopfronts and public spaces, with the aim of creating a greener, more accessible and welcoming town centre.

Nihat from Lezziz said: "Over the years, we've seen the local area develop and improve significantly. It's been wonderful to see the community continue to grow."

# Every little counts

Every year, the council sets a budget to decide how taxpayers' money is spent on local services. With rising costs and growing demand, it is more important than ever that every pound is used effectively - and that residents have their say on the plans for the year ahead.

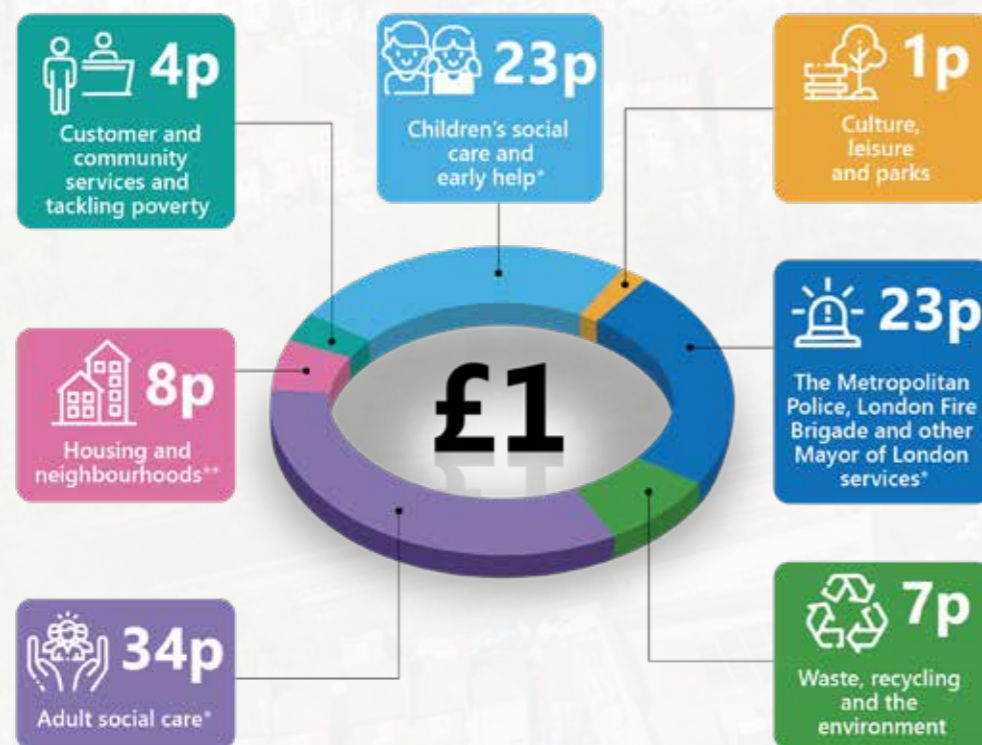
For lots of people, the only time they interact with the council might be when they're reading this magazine, setting up a direct debit or putting their bins out. But the council does so

much more than that - providing hundreds of different services. Here's how your Council Tax is used to support local people, protect essential services and invest in Brent's future.

## What is my Council Tax spent on?

Every pound you pay supports hundreds of vital local services.

The average council tax for 2025/26 is £41.02 per week, based on a band D property. Here's how each £1 is being spent on services residents rely on:



Did you know local authorities have a duty by law to spend on essential services like adult social care, education and waste to protect residents' wellbeing?

## How does my Council Tax help local people?

If you've walked on a Brent pavement, driven on a Brent road, had your bins collected, or visited a library or local park, you've benefited from services made possible by Council Tax.



From giving local children the best start in life through Brent schools and early years services, to making sure older people and residents with a disability get the support they need, your Council Tax keeps crucial services going.

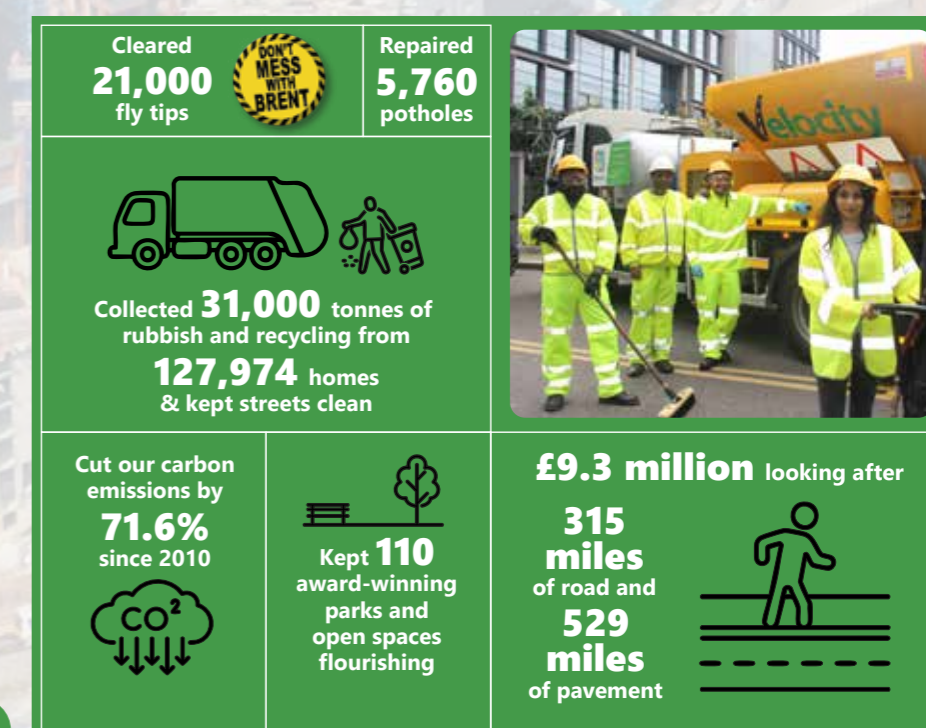
**A perfect storm of high inflation and reduced central government funding since 2010 means the council has less money to serve more people.**

Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources



## How does Council Tax impact public spaces?

It helps keep your borough safe, clean and green. This includes looking after 315 miles of road and 529 miles of pavement and ensuring Brent's 110 award-winning parks and open spaces continue to flourish. Last year\*, the council:



## Why does Council Tax keep going up?

Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, said: "A perfect storm of high inflation and reduced central government funding since 2010 means the council has less money to serve more people, who need more services, which have become more expensive to provide. "To rise to this challenge, your council is radically changing the way it works behind the scenes, to make sure it's able to deliver the high-quality public services you want and need within the available budget.

"Next year's budget proposals include £10million in savings. But the good news is that most of these savings will come from the council working more efficiently and effectively." Scan the QR code to see the full proposals and have your say by 30 January 2026:



Please note, at time of going to print, the government was due to announce the autumn budget. Check the Brent Council website for the latest news on what this means for the borough.

# Warm tales for cold nights

Fireside Tales is a show about the stories we tell, the ones we pass down, the ones we forget and what happens when we take the time to listen.

**A**udiences are invited to step into this immersive experience where stories flicker like flames and imagination keeps them burning bright.

Developed with schools, Fireside Tales encourages young audiences to draw, write and share their own stories. The cast includes Siddiqua Akhtar (A Good Girl's Guide to Murder, BBC/Netflix); Rebecca Clark who has performed recently with Frantic Assembly and Complicité; Amari Harris who has collaborated with venues including the Old Vic and Half Moon Theatre in his work as a storyteller and drama facilitator and Alex Stedman (The Lost Lending Library, Punchdrunk Enrichment; Murder On The Orient Express, UK & Ireland Tour). Brent-based writer and director Steve McCourt said: "As someone who has dedicated their career to providing platforms for youth voice, 'Fireside Tales' stands as an exciting opportunity for the children of Brent and beyond to share their stories with the world."

For millennia, we have gathered to share tales of resilience, hope and home. In an increasingly isolating world, it's essential we hold on to that spark of imagination and the flame of community spirit." Steve's previous work for Punchdrunk Enrichment includes immersive learning project, The Creature Chronicles and the development and delivery of workshops, masterclasses and mentoring projects for teachers. Steve said: "My vision is for the organisation to be locally rooted whilst creating stories that are globally relevant. I'm keen to develop the stories of our home, working with local artists, organisations and schools so their stories can be heard further afield." Fireside Tales is running at Punchdrunk Enrichment Stores in Wembley Park between 6 December 2025 – 4 January 2026.

Tickets from £15 are now on sale at [www.punchdrunkenrichment.org.uk/events/fireside-tales](http://www.punchdrunkenrichment.org.uk/events/fireside-tales)

**"I'm passionate about broadcasting the stories of Brent."**



## Council grants fuelling community growth

Generous funding from the council's Community Grant Fund which is money generated from development, Love Where You Live and the Edward Harvist Trust Fund is driving a wave of inspiring projects across Brent.

**The Fresh Arts Community Grant (£89,320 awarded in March 2024)** will deliver 760 free arts workshops by 2026.

**QPR in the Community Trust (£49,369 awarded in March 2024)** supports young people at risk of crime through football and life skills programmes.

**Emerging leaders grow through the Learie Constantine Grant (£45,000 awarded in March 2024),** engaging in workshops.

**The Zest of Mind Wellbeing Warriors (£39,000 awarded in March 2024)** programme boosts physical and mental health.

**Absolute Beginners (£4,728 awarded in November 2023)** teaches sustainability through creative upcycling.

**Beyond CIC (£500 awarded in December 2024)** empowers ex-offenders to break barriers, opening doors to independence.

**Creative writing workshops at Destiny House's Imagination Explorers (£5,000 awarded in November 2023)** inspire children aged 6-11 to build confidence and teamwork.

Apply for a grant and help build a brighter Brent.  
[www.brent.gov.uk/funding](http://www.brent.gov.uk/funding)

# Investing in Brent

Parks, public spaces and youth centres are among a long list of local projects that will see a huge cash injection over the coming months.

From better roads and pavements to greener parks and thriving youth clubs, close to where you live, you will see and feel the difference.

The investment, totalling £26.9m, will soon provide the biggest upgrade to local public spaces in years.

I am really pleased that we've generated so much funding as a direct result of development, that can go towards so many great projects. Almost every part of the borough will soon feel the impact of this large investment over the next few months and I am excited to see how the borough transforms.

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



## Better public spaces

The investment will soon provide improvements including:



New gyms in your parks and improvements to footways and green spaces



Over £5m towards improving streets, parks and public spaces



Roads and footpaths revamped and improved



Improvements to cycle lanes, more secure bike parking



Better CCTV to catch those who use our streets as their rubbish bins



Triple the enforcement officers (see page 28)



More mechanical sweepers



We've taken such a strong approach against the worst cases of fly-tipping in the borough over the last few years. Whilst we are proud of the strides we have made we know there is still more to do and that is why I am delighted that we are spending even more money investing in to our local environment, so that everyone can enjoy it, and we can keep Brent clean and green.

Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement



# Better spaces for young people and resident services

Young people can look forward to a major boost to their local Youth Centres with £4million in funding to upgrade six much-loved spaces across the borough.



There will be upgrades at:

- 

Cricklewood Boxing Club in Dollis Hill
- The Jason Roberts Foundation gym and sports hall in Stonebridge


- 

The OK Club's sports hall in Kilburn
- Roundwood School and Community Centre


- 

The Young Brent Foundation's Anchor Youth Hub in Roundwood
- Additional Classroom and Café Space for Brent Start in Harlesden





Cricklewood Boxing Club children with coach Rob Buick



Jason Roberts Foundation Gym

This investment is about giving our young people the spaces they need to thrive and feel supported. We want to empower young people in Brent to build skills, make new friends, and be active members of their communities.

Cllr Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools.



# Climate Action

Climate action is a key part of this huge cash injection, the council is investing in trees, green spaces, traffic calming measures, and much more.

**£280,000**  
new funding towards the Kingsbury Green Corridors scheme

**£750,000**  
extra funding for the Church End and Roundwood green corridors scheme

**Four new school streets**  
Improving health and wellbeing of local children

**70 bike hangers**  
Brand new for safe bike storage

**1,500**  
new trees across the borough



Students from Park Lane Primary School join project leaders, Wates Living Space and partners, Brent, Network Homes and the Conservation Volunteers to plant 650 new trees.

We want residents to feel proud of where they live and put funding towards issues that residents care about most. I am looking forward to seeing the transformation of Investing In Your Everyday over the next few months in our parks and streets. This is Brent’s biggest climate investment since declaring a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, with the current round of projects focused on climate action totalling £3.22 million.

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



## START YOUR NEXT CHAPTER AT THE PAGES

Discover The Pages – Wembley’s vibrant new community. Centred around a courtyard garden, these stylish apartments, complete with private balconies and terraces, offer a perfect urban retreat. With residents’ concierge, lounge and co-working spaces, every convenience is right at your fingertips.

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# THE PAGES WEMBLEY

# Trash talk

**Huge changes to street cleaning and fly-tipping enforcement promises cleaner, greener streets for Brent residents.**

**C**ouncillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement, said: "We are ramping up action against those who think they can dump waste in Brent, backed by a record-breaking number of fines issued this year.

Littering and fly-tipping chip away at the pride we all have in Brent and create the conditions for even more mess. We will pursue offenders all the way to the courts in our battle to stop the selfish minority that use our streets like their own bin.



Last May the council had 6 enforcement officers, that number will have tripled to 18 by the end of 2025

Double the number of refuse vehicles and mechanical sweepers on local streets

More litter-pickers, keeping your streets clean throughout the day in the busiest areas

The council has handed out 5,700+ fines out for waste offences, double compared to last year



## Overnight collections

This is Taulant, one of the council's overnight collection crew members. He said: "It's a great feeling working hard all night and at the end of a shift seeing our streets clean. It's so satisfying."



## More street sweepers

Ihor from Ukraine, is one of the council's new street sweepers. He said: "I like my job, I'm really happy here. I like the thought that what I do might brighten up someone's day."

**We are ramping up action against those who think they can dump waste in Brent, backed by a record breaking number of fines issued this year.**

Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement



New mechanical sweepers

New officers patrolling parks

Additional Officers to keep estates clean

Extra officer to work with businesses and help them to be compliant

Triple the number of boots on the ground enforcing fly-tipping

5 new mini street sweepers

# Refill-ution

**School children are leading the charge against climate change and helping local families save money along the way.**

**F**our schools in Kingsbury are at the heart of the Green Neighbourhoods programme: St Robert Southwell, The Village School, Roe Green Juniors, and Fryent Primary have launched their own eco refill shops. Families and neighbours are invited to bring empty bottles and containers to top up with affordable, eco-friendly products, all made in the UK.

Backed by Pupils Profit and Brent Council, this isn't just about reducing plastic waste; it's a growing movement driven by young people who are passionate about protecting the planet. Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power, said:

"Children are learning how their everyday choices can make a huge difference in tackling climate change. And with prices that help ease the

pinch of the cost-of-living crisis, these refill shops are a win-win." Even better? The pupils run the show themselves, from managing stock and promoting products to tracking their environmental impact. It's real-world learning that builds confidence, teamwork, and leadership skills. Natalia Elena-Halip, an eight-year-old eco-warrior at Roe Green Junior School, said: "I like the eco-refill shop as it helps with the climate change. We use bottles to refill so we don't waste plastic. Working with other schools helps us learn and share ideas." The refill shops open every month, offering a fun, easy, and affordable way to shop more sustainably. Contact the schools directly for opening times. And don't forget: bring your own containers and join the plastic-free revolution!



Natalia Elena-Halip, an eco-warrior at Roe Green Junior School

**Children are learning how their everyday choices can make a huge difference in tackling climate change.**

Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power



Bright smiles and busy hands! Children at The Village School proudly run their new eco-refill shop, which welcomed its first paying customers through the doors in September.



# High streets

**You know the drill – a bank shuts down, and soon another betting shop is opening its doors in its place. It’s the same story in towns and cities up and down the country.**

**R**esidents are fed up. They say Adult Gaming Centres are having a negative impact on the community, pose a risk to vulnerable people, and make them less keen to visit their high street\*.

Earlier this year, tired of having its hands tied by legislation forcing it to approve new gambling shops, Brent Council decided to take a stand.

“Local people should have the power to shape what is on their high street,” argues Brent Deputy Leader Councillor Mili Patel, “but we have to follow national laws that are tilted in favour of granting new licences for gambling shops, rather than protecting residents.”

The council took its campaign national. It rallied 40 councils and mayors, representing nearly 12million people, to ask the government to change the law.

Councillor Patel continues, “It’s not lost on us that you don’t see loads of gambling shops in more affluent places – you only have to look down the road in Hampstead or Canary Wharf. These companies are making record-breaking profits, while fuelling debt in communities like Harlesden and stripping away pride from the places we call home.”

Now for the good news. The government has promised legislation which, once approved, will make some changes that will help. Under the proposals, when a new betting shop applies for a licence, the council won’t have to look at it in isolation. They can actually step back and say, “Hang on, we already have five on this street – that’s enough”.

Brent Council has welcomed the announcement, but is pushing for further changes. Read the full report by scanning the QR code:



\*2025 survey conducted by Social Market Foundation, as part of a report commissioned by Brent Council

# at stake



**“These companies are making record-breaking profits, while fuelling debt in communities like Harlesden and stripping away pride from the places we call home.”**

Brent Deputy Leader  
Councillor Mili Patel



# From kayaks to kale

Community grant funding is transforming the way local people build new skills and create real change to the areas that need it most.

**A**cross the borough, grassroots projects are transforming lives, boosting confidence, creativity, wellbeing, and community spirit.

One standout success is the Better and Brighter Brent Youth and Community Project in Stonebridge and Harlesden. Awarded an £18,000 Brent Community Grant, this year-long initiative, led by the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led group Abundance Arts, has delivered a vibrant mix of activities for young people. From weekly online maths tuition to physical activities like roller skating, trampolining, climbing, and kayaking at Brent Welsh Harp, the project has supported young people's learning and wellbeing among families struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

In Harlesden, the Healing Garden Club received a £50,000 grant to restore the garden at the Asian Women's Resource Centre. The transformed space now offers a safe and welcoming outdoor environment for women and their children. Project manager, Punam Kharbada, said: "For many of our service users, the revitalised garden will be the first time they've had access to a safe and secure outdoor environment where they can relax, reconnect and begin to heal."

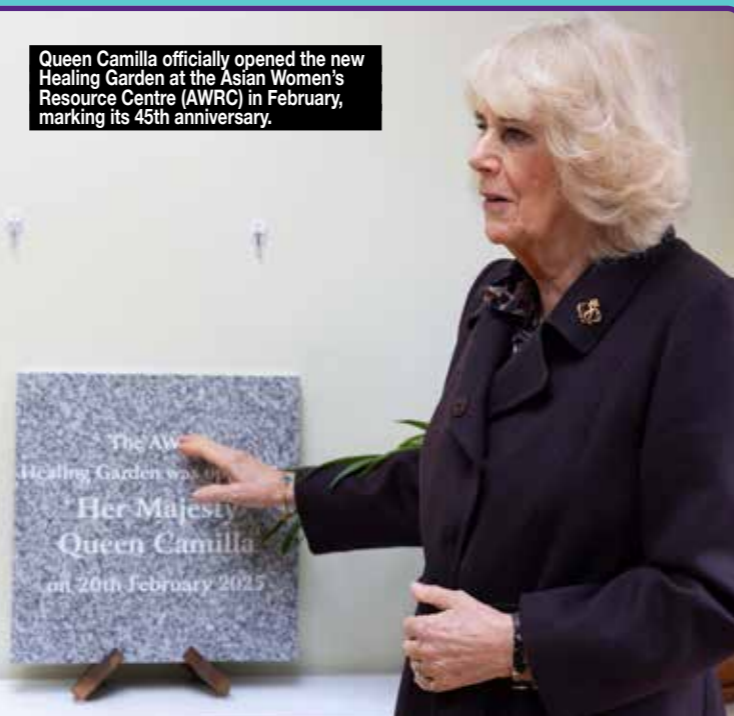
Meanwhile, a £500 Love Where You Live grant helped residents celebrate the reopening of My Romania Community as the EchoVibe HUB at The Library at Willesden Green. And Wembley Park's Fresh Arts programme received an

£89,320 community grant to deliver 760 arts workshops and support 10 community leaders and artists. Another £18,000 grant awarded to Triton in Cricklewood provided free swimming lessons for children and swim teacher training opportunities for 14 adults who otherwise could not afford them. Cllr Jake Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power, said: "It's inspiring to see how local organisations are using this support to deliver creative, inclusive projects that boost confidence, wellbeing, and skills. We're proud to invest in initiatives that not only improve lives today but also build a brighter, more connected future for Brent."



Before and after pictures of The Healing Garden at the Asian Women's Resource Centre in Harlesden. Thanks to the community grant, the garden is now a safe, welcoming outdoor space for the local community.

Queen Camilla officially opened the new Healing Garden at the Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC) in February, marking its 45th anniversary.



Water sports and Welsh Harp kayaking: Fun school holiday activities like roller skating, trampolining, climbing, and kayaking at Brent Welsh Harp helped young people and families build resilience and teamwork. Abundance Arts is committed to helping young people thrive.



Young people take part in a West End musical theatre workshop. Thanks to the community grant, Fresh Arts is holding 25 workshops a week in term time, as well as offering holiday activities.



Young people proudly receive Pathway to Paris Olympic Challenge certificates, launched by Team GB and Paralympics GB.



At Triton in Cricklewood, 100 children developed their water safety skills while trainee teachers gained accredited qualifications to start careers in swim coaching.



Magician, Marius Faladi, entertains children at The Library at Willesden Green for the launch of EchoVibe.

## Want to bring positive change to your community?

Come along to a Brent Connects meeting to find out how you can apply for grants and turn your ideas into reality! Whether you're part of a local group, charity, or simply passionate about making Brent a better place, these meetings are the perfect chance to learn about available funding, get expert advice, and connect with others who share your vision.

# A recipe for harmony

The Civic Centre is buzzing again, and it's not just the coffee. After a five-year break, a new café has opened with a fresh new flavour.



Vijay Palogu is the head chef at Harmony Kitchen



**H**armony Kitchen, run by London's Community Kitchen (LCK), has opened its doors, serving up delicious breakfasts, hearty lunches and seasonal specials, all at affordable prices.

But Harmony Kitchen is more than a place to grab a bite. It's a social enterprise with heart on a mission to make good food accessible, sustainable and rooted in community. Around 25 percent of Harmony Kitchen's food is leftover supply from supermarkets that would otherwise go to landfill, and the target is to increase that amount to 50 percent.

Vijay Palogu, head chef at Harmony Kitchen who lives with his family in Harrow, said the most rewarding part of his job is knowing that every meal sold provides another meal for free to a family-in-need. "I used to live in India, and I have seen what food instability looks like," Vijay said. "It is rewarding to know that I can turn surplus food into a meal. So much surplus food goes to landfill. But I can use my skill to turn that food into a nutritious meal."

London Community Kitchen is the brainchild of Taz Khan, MBE. "The 1,000 meals sold at Harmony Kitchen every week provide 1,000 free meals to Ealing Road Food Bank every Saturday," he explains. Most of the ten Harmony Kitchen staff are Brent and Harrow residents and 12 local interns will start in February. Harmony Kitchen also provide work opportunities for local people, who can train for formal qualifications, so they can pursue a career in hospitality. There are plans to host community events, provide free healthy meals for children during school holidays, and offer training for local people aiming to build careers in hospitality.

So whether you're stopping by for a morning coffee or a freshly cooked lunch, Harmony Kitchen is serving up good food, and great purpose, on the first floor of the Civic Centre. Open 8am to 3pm, Monday to Friday, it's proof that food really can bring people together.

# Festive finds unwrapped

Small businesses are the backbone of Brent's thriving community. By shopping locally, we help them flourish and safeguard local jobs. Join us this season to make a difference by supporting your local businesses.

**C**ouncillor Teo Benea, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property, said: "Our small businesses are at the core of our community, helping to create vibrant, diverse neighbourhoods."

Shopping locally isn't just convenient, our independent shops on the high street offer goods and customer experience that you won't find online, and they safeguard local jobs.

"With thousands of small businesses across our borough, this is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the diversity, creativity and hard work of our local entrepreneurs. From family-run shops to delicious food and creative products, Brent businesses have something truly special to offer."

**Our small businesses are at the core of our community, helping to create vibrant, diverse neighbourhoods.**

Councillor Teo Benea, Brent's Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property



## James Dunne, owner of Daisy Chain

A family-run florist in Willesden Green, said: "I've always wanted Daisy Chain to feel like a little burst of colour in Willesden Green. We've been here for 20 years and it's been amazing to see how the area's grown. As it gets colder, you really feel that sense of community, people are choosing to shop local and support small businesses like ours, which makes all the difference."



## Adil Charef, owner of family-run Blakes Bakery

in Harlesden, said: "Blakes Bakery has been part of this community for years. We've seen generations of families come through our doors. There's something special about those early morning visits for fresh pastries and freshly ground coffee. It reminds you just how important local shops are in keeping Harlesden's heart alive. We wouldn't have done it without our wonderful team and the support of the council."



## Albion Hysa, owner of Holdens Coffee

In Church Road, said: "Over the last five years, Holdens Coffee shop has always been about good food, good coffee and a friendly space where everyone feels at home. This time of year is my favourite. You see familiar faces coming in more often and new people discovering us for the first time which keeps us connected with each other."



## Reza Jahanfar, store manager of Rapid Scooter Master

"Kilburn is a great place for us because there are lots of people moving in to take advantage of the areas excellent transport links. We're at the corner of Brent, Camden and Westminster, so it's great to see the three councils working together to bring forward the new Better Safer Kilburn scheme, which will improve the public realm, layout and function of the High Road and make it a safer place for people to cycle along."



## Mullah, co-owner of DOAA clothes boutique in Wembley

"DOAA is a boutique bursting with bold choices and shimmering details. Owned by Farooq and myself, our shop is known for its unusual designs, glamorous partywear and affordable sparkle that turns heads at any holiday gathering. Whether you're after a statement piece or a full festive look, DOAA offers styles that are anything but ordinary. Our team knows our customers, curating collections that reflect local tastes with unique flair."



## Mada, owner of Aqua clothes boutique in Wembley

"Aqua brings seasonal style and elegance to Wembley at prices everyone can appreciate. Our collection blends festive classics with modern trends, offering the perfect outfit for Christmas dinners, New Year parties, and everything in between. When you shop here, you'll always find a friendly face and something that fits both your style and your budget."





# Your Leadership Career Starts Here

Join Brent Council's Impact Graduate Programme and kick-start your public sector leadership journey. This two-year scheme is designed for ambitious local graduates who want to make a lasting difference while developing skills that open doors.

## What you'll get:

- £34,998 starting salary, rising in year two
- Fully funded CMI-accredited leadership qualification
- Minimum of three placements across the council
- Guaranteed interview if you reach the final stage
- Third-year contract upon successful completion
- Mentorship from senior leaders
- Access to meaningful projects tackling housing, inequality, regeneration and more.

To apply, you must have (or be working towards) a 2:2 degree by summer 2026 and live, work or have previously studied in Brent – or be a Brent care leaver. Right to work in the UK is essential.

**Apply by:**  
**12pm, Tuesday 6 January 2026**



Visit [brent.gov.uk/graduates](https://brent.gov.uk/graduates) to find out more and apply.



# From Church End to centre stage

One local resident is on a mission to break down barriers in the creative scene

**B**lack History Month celebrates the amazing contributions and culture of people from African and Caribbean communities. Brent is rich in diversity and black people have played a vital role in shaping the borough. Innovative Opportunities is a not for profit dedicated to creating inclusive spaces that foster community growth and show black excellence. Award winning mentor, community consultant and blogger Anita Whittaker, 55 from Church End, founded the organisation to create experiences for the Brent community guided by forward-thinking concepts and collaborative partnerships. In October she launched the Black History Month exhibition programme with Black Made Art: Heritage in the Making, an art exhibition and panel discussion with artists Errol Lloyd,

Claudette Forbes, Kaye-Anne "R3times" Smith, Gary Jo Gardenhire, and Zach Whittaker.

"I created the exhibition because we are based in Church Road and nothing like that has been here. People won't go to art exhibitions elsewhere because they feel like they don't belong, I want to show people that art is for everyone, and you can enjoy it no matter where you are from."

As a Church End resident, the community has always been at the forefront of her ventures.

"Church End raised me. I lived in North Wales for a bit, but Church End always felt like home because people looked like me and sounded like me. I felt strong being a part of a community that embraced me in ways that the outside world didn't."

When asked about why art is an expressive



Kaye-Anne "R3times" Smith

tool for the black community, Anita said "the older generation spent so much time trying to survive, focusing on vocations to make sure they earned money, they didn't have the opportunity to express themselves in the form of art. Black people have been left out of the art world, has been made inaccessible, often what we produce is taken from us and monetised and I think it's time that we take that back."

The future of Innovative Opportunities looks bright, as they look ahead to creating art galleries and learning spaces where artists can gain business skills, as well as running apprenticeships for young people in wide range of trades and workshops in schools.

**Church End is an eclectic mix of people that you can learn from and share with. All it takes is having a conversation and you can travel the world all on one road.**



Zach Whittaker



Claudette Forbes

# WHAT'S ON: ARTS AND CULTURE

## LIBRARIES

### Celebrating 60 years of Brent Until December 2025

#### Kingsbury Library

This display brings together objects and images from 1960-69 and reflects the diversity of the Borough with themes of activism, everyday life and people coming together in joyful ways.

### WW2 Exhibition

#### December to January

##### The Library at Willesden Green

Marking the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day and Victory over Japan (VJ) Day, this exhibition remembers those who fought during the Second World War and explores the everyday lives of people from Brent and further afield. The exhibition features bomb maps, oral histories, museum objects, photographs and archival material.

### Exhibition: Portraits of Brent

#### 6 January - 27 February 2026

##### The Library at Willesden Green

Exploring the stories of people from Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) backgrounds in Brent, this exhibition is rooted in real experiences, identity, heritage and belonging, brought to life through personal storytelling and portraiture.

### Celebrating Brent's Somali Community

#### 19 January to 27 April

##### Kingsbury Library

Discover key Somali figures in Brent and learn about traditional nomadic food and drink, decorative and clothing items, featuring creative responses from local school children.

### Dub in Dementia

#### Until March 2026

##### Harlesden Library

A creative arts and heritage project designed for people living with dementia; exploring local history, reggae and dub culture through music, poetry, storytelling and visual arts.

### Free Low-Impact Exercise Classes at Brent Libraries

#### Term time only 2026

##### Willessden Green Library

Yoga & Stretch

Mondays

2.30–3.30pm 3.30–4.30pm

#### Kingsbury Library

Stretch Exercise

Tuesdays

2–3pm (2 x 30 min sessions)

#### Harlesden Library

Strength Exercise

Fridays

2–3pm

#### Ealing Road Library

Stretch Exercise

Saturdays

11am–12noon

#### Wembley Library

Stretch Exercise

Thursdays

10.30–11.30am (2 x 30 min sessions)

Join free, low-impact exercise sessions across Brent libraries to improve your health and well-being in a friendly, supportive space.

Book at [Ourparks.org.uk/brent](https://ourparks.org.uk/brent).

### Festive health and wellbeing community fun days

#### 6 December 2025

##### Wembley Library

#### 13 December 2025

##### The Library at Willesden Green

#### 11am–4pm

Celebrate with festive creative fun and maybe even a Father Christmas visit! Plus, free NHS health checks for dental health, diabetes and blood pressure, and more. All welcome, drop in.

### Robotics Workshop

#### Saturday 14 February 2026

#### Saturday 21 February 2026

#### Saturday 28 February 2026

#### Saturday 7 March 2026

##### The Library at Willesden Green:

11am–1pm

#### Ealing Road Library:

2:30–4:30pm

Advanced booking required at

[tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs](https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs)

### Lights, Camera, Action – Create your own self portrait

#### Tuesday 17 February 2026

##### Ealing Road

##### Kingsbury

##### Wembley Libraries

##### The Library at Willesden Green

2.30pm–3.30pm

#### Harlesden Library

#### Thursday 19 February

2.30pm–3.30pm

Fun arts and craft activity for ages

5–11. Drop in.

### Beezee Families: Portion Patrol:

#### Mission Nutrition!

#### 16 February 2026

##### Ealing Road Library

12noon–1pm

#### Harlesden Library

2.30–3.30pm

#### 18 February 2026

##### Wembley Library

12noon–1pm

#### 19 February

##### The Library at Willesden Green

2.30–3.30pm

#### 20 February

##### Kingsbury Library

12noon–1pm

Get together with the family to learn how to serve smarter, eat better and feel great! For ages 5–11 years.

### Creative Art Workshops delivered by Learning Through The Arts

#### Monday 16 February

##### The Library at Willesden Green

11am–12 noon and 2–3 pm

#### Uzo Egonu: People & Shapes and

#### Bhajan Hunjan Painting

#### Tuesday 17 February

##### Harlesden Library

11am–12noon and 2–3 pm

#### Pen Holders & Paper Fish

#### Thursday 19 February

##### Ealing Road Library

11 am–12noon and 1–2 pm

#### Zines & Poems from Old

#### Newspapers

#### Friday 20 February

##### Kingsbury Library

11am–12noon and 2–3pm

#### Bug Badges & Creative Shoes

#### Saturday 21 February

##### Wembley Library

11am–12noon and 1–2pm

#### Optical Illusions & Hanging Circles

### The Shaw Trust Employment Support

#### Harlesden Library

3rd Tuesday of each month

#### 16 December, 17 February

#### 17 March, 21 April, 19 May

#### 16 June

3–5pm

#### The Library at Willesden Green

#### 1st Thursday of each month,

4 December, 5 February, 5 March,

2 April, 7 May, 4 June

3–5pm

#### Wembley Library

#### 2nd Monday of each month

8 December, 9 February, 9 March,

13 April, 11 May, 8 June

11am–1pm

Connect to Work is a government funded programme to help people find and keep a job.

### Ealing Road Library STEM Club

#### Wednesdays 28 January, 25

#### February, 25 March, 29 April

##### Ealing Road Library

4–5.30pm

Science, Technology, engineering and mathematics workshops for children aged 8–11. Advanced booking required at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>

### Ealing Road Film Club: Zootropolis

#### Thursday 19 February 2026

##### Ealing Road Library

2.30pm–4.30pm

Screening of animated adventure film for ages 5–11 years. Drop in.



**Give to Gain  
– Challenging  
bias through  
language and lived  
experience**  
Tuesday 10 March  
2026

#### Harlesden Library

2–3pm

Join author Monique Pennie for an inspiring International Women's Day event. Advanced booking required at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>

### Talk Health Thursdays by Brent Health Matters

#### Thursday 26 February 2026

March: 5, 12, 19, 26

##### Harlesden Library

3.30pm–4.30pm

### Family Talk half term session

#### Thursday 19 February 2026

##### Harlesden Library

3.45pm–4.45pm

A six-week programme of free, interactive health sessions, including gentle exercise/movement and a chance to chat with a hot drink. Drop in.

### Wembley Library Book Club

#### Monday 1 December 2025

##### Wembley Library

6.30pm–7.30pm

### Shake hands with freedom

#### Saturday 6 December 2025

#### Saturday 13 December 2025

##### Wembley Library

2–4pm

Join Splats Entertainment for 2-hour circus skills sessions for 8–11 year olds, last session is a performance for family and friends!

### Filipino Cultural and Health day

##### Wembley Library

#### Saturday 13 December

10am–4pm

Come and join in a celebration of art, music and culture for wellbeing.

### Poetry In Wembley: “Roots” Writing Workshop

#### Thursday 5 March

##### Wembley Library

2.30pm–4.30pm

Come with your stories and memories and bring them to life in poems. This event is funded by “Love Where You Live” Project. Advanced booking required at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>



### Coffee morning: The General Strike

##### Kingsbury Library

#### Monday 23 March

11am–12noon

Join trade union historian Christine

Coates to discover the story.

Advanced booking required at

<https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>

### Poetry In Wembley: “Roots”

#### Thursday 5 March 2026

##### Wembley Library

6.30pm–8pm

Join T S Eliot shortlisted poet, Jane Clarke for a performance, followed by an open mic session. Advanced booking required at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>



### Swing into the Season: A Festive Feast of 1930s Jazz and Christmas Classics

#### Thursday 11 December 2025

##### The Library at Willesden Green

6.30pm–7.30pm

Join the Bluebelle Trio for an evening of 1930s jazz and timeless Christmas favourites. Advanced booking required at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>

### Autism-friendly early opening

#### Wednesday 18 February 2026

##### The Library at Willesden Green

9.30–10.30am

Enjoy an early opening of The Library at Willesden Green for a limited number of children aged 3–15 years with their siblings, parents and carers. Advanced booking required and more details at <https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>

### World Book Day

#### Thursday 5 March

##### The Library at Willesden Green

4–5pm

Drop in and help us celebrate World Book Day with bookish crafts and favourite characters. For ages 5–11.

### Coffee Morning: Come talk rubbish with the Brent waste and recycling team

#### Wednesday 8 April 2026

##### Wembley Library

11am–12noon

Ever wondered what really happens

to your recycling once it's collected?

Join Brent's waste team to find out.

Advanced booking required at

<https://tinyurl.com/jjhjrrzs>



### Engage with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

#### Thursday 5 March 2026

##### The Library at Willesden Green

12noon–1pm

Join members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for an interactive lunchtime concert, where you discover a variety of exciting and engaging classical music

## THEATRE

### Intergen Company Workshops

#### Every Monday and Thursday

#### Until July 2026

##### Kiln Theatre

Celebrating Our Stories is an intergenerational project for participants of all ages, who will collaborate with a professional creative team to stage a full-length community play at Kiln Theatre. Participants will work with a playwright to tell local heritage stories that have been gathered over the course of the project. To sign up or find out more email Stella Taljaard on [stellataljaard@kilntheatre.com](mailto:stellataljaard@kilntheatre.com) or call 07375532006



### Coven

#### 31 October to 13 December

##### Kiln Theatre

7.30pm

1612. Pendle, Lancashire. A witch hunt is raging and a 9-year-old Jennet accuses her own family of witchcraft. 21 years later, she finds herself imprisoned, surrounded by the most feared women in town.

Tickets £15 - £40

(Discounts available for Brent & Camden residents)

[kilntheatre.com/whats-on/](https://kilntheatre.com/whats-on/)

### Actor's Studio

#### Autumn Term 5

#### Every Tuesday

##### Park Lane Primary School,

##### Park Ln, Wembley, HA9 7RY

Inclusive performing arts sessions including; acting, music and movement leading to the development of an original musical, sessions for 7–11 years old and 11–14 years old. FREE

### Dance and Movement

#### Autumn 5

#### Every Thursday

##### 113 Chalkhill Rd, Wembley Park,

##### Wembley, HA9 9FX

Inclusive dance, fitness & movement classes led by professional dance facilitators. Sessions for 7–11 years old and 11–14 years old. FREE

[www.uniquecommunity.org/](https://www.uniquecommunity.org/)

### Deafinitely Youth Theatre

#### 18 October 2025 to

#### 21 February 2026

##### Old Diorama Arts Centre and other

##### various London locations

Fortnightly 11am–4pm

Deafinitely Youth Theatre is an exciting FREE opportunity for deaf, hard of hearing, CODA or BSL signers aged 14–21 years old to take part in drama activities, meet other deaf young people and get involved in theatre. Free

### Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

#### 12 December to 14 December

##### Church of Ascension Hall, The

##### Avenue, Wembley, HA9 9QL

Friday 7pm

Saturday 2pm and 6pm

Sunday 2pm

Book now for a brand-new Christmas show bursting with magic, music and festive fun! Join Princess Snow White on an enchanting adventure as she faces off against her wicked stepmother. £12.50 Concessions and £14.50 Adults

# WHAT'S ON: ARTS AND CULTURE

## WORKSHOPS

**Mother Tongue Theatre Workshop**  
Every Wednesday  
Wembley Creative Community Hub  
Unit 17, 2 Station Grove, HA0 4AH  
10.30am-12.30pm  
A theatre workshop open to all. Every Wednesday until the 10th of December (in terms only). 16+, Free of charge, [contact@werest.art](mailto:contact@werest.art)

**Artventures Club**  
Every Saturday  
Wembley Creative Community Hub  
Unit 17, 2 Station Grove, HA0 4AH  
11am-12noon  
Art & Crafts activities for children, 6-15 years old. Free of charge, [contact@werest.art](mailto:contact@werest.art)

**Christmas Party**  
13 December  
Wembley Creative Community Hub  
Unit 17, 2 Station Grove, HA0 4AH  
11am-2pm  
Let's celebrate Christmas together! children and families. Free of charge, [contact@werest.art](mailto:contact@werest.art)

**Knitting Club**  
Every Thursday  
Wembley Creative Community Hub  
Unit 17, 2 Station Grove, HA0 4AH  
Let's create together - open to all, needles and wool provided. 16+, Free of charge. [contact@werest.art](mailto:contact@werest.art)

**Christmas Wembley Park Market**  
13-20 December  
Market Square  
9am-3pm  
Discover key Somali figures in Brent and learn about traditional nomadic food and drink, decorative and clothing items, featuring creative responses from local school children.

**Portraits of Brent**  
December 2025 - January 2026  
Are you from a Southwest Asian or North African background? Join our Portraits of Brent workshops to explore your identity and culture through creative storytelling, writing, photography and meaningful objects. Apply now through the Brent People's Museum & Archives website or email [museum.archives@brent.gov.uk](mailto:museum.archives@brent.gov.uk) for more details.

**Cuban Vibes Dance School**  
Mondays  
Railway Club - Cricklewood NW2  
7.30pm-11.30pm

Wednesdays  
Royal Oak - Harlesden NW10  
7.30pm-11pm

Thursdays  
Patidar House - Wembley HA9  
7.30pm-8.30pm  
Join the Cuban Vibes Dance School for your Cuban Salsa, Son Cubano & Rueda classes and social dancing. Adults Tickets for social dancing - £5  
Tickets for dance classes - £10

## Brent Civic Centre — Christmas Opening Hours

24 Wednesday	Open 10.30am-4pm (reduced opening hours)
25 Thursday	Closed (Christmas Day)
26 Friday	Closed (Boxing Day)
27 Saturday	Open as usual
28 Sunday	Open as usual
29 Monday	Open as usual
30 Tuesday	Open as usual
31 Wednesday	Open 10.30am-4pm (reduced opening hours)
1 Thursday	Closed (New Year Bank holiday)
2 Friday	Open as usual

For libraries, services and other opening times, scan the QR code to find out more information



Holiday opening hours

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### FOR HELP WITH COST OF LIVING

[www.brent.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.brent.gov.uk/costofliving)

### EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Call 999 for the police, fire brigade or ambulance services.

Call 101 to report a crime that is not an emergency  
Call 111 if you have a medical problem that is not an emergency



### OTHER LOCAL SERVICES

Find your local GP using the NHS search tool [www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4](http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4)

If you want to help someone sleeping rough go to [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk).

If you are worried about domestic abuse call Advance Brent on 07398 454 898. Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm or email [brent.admin@advancecharity.org.uk](mailto:brent.admin@advancecharity.org.uk)

If you are concerned about a child, call Brent Family Front Door on 020 8937 4300

### COMMUNITY GRANTS AND FUNDING

[www.brent.gov.uk/funding](http://www.brent.gov.uk/funding)

### STAY CONNECTED

Keep in touch with the latest news and service updates in Brent by signing up for e-alerts at:

[www.brent.gov.uk/stayconnected](http://www.brent.gov.uk/stayconnected)

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

#### December 2025

8 General Purpose Committee

8 Cabinet

10 Planning Committee

#### January 2026

14 Planning Committee

19 General Purposes Committee

19 Cabinet

19 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny

21 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny

26 Schools Forum

29 Health & Wellbeing Board

#### February 2026

3 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee

5 SACRE

9 Cabinet

11 Planning Committee

18 Pension Fund Sub-Committee

23 Full Council

24 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny

26 Schools Forum

#### March 2026

4 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny

5 Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board

9 General Purposes Committee

9 Cabinet

11 Planning Committee

17 Joint Boroughs IT Committee Brent, Lewisham and Southwark

19 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

23 Pension Board

24 Audit and Standards Advisory Committee

#### April 2026

1 Health & Wellbeing Board

2 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny

7 Cabinet

7 Corporate Parenting

8 Planning Committee

9 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny

### ACCESS SERVICE ONLINE

Pay council tax online  
[www.brent.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.brent.gov.uk/counciltax)

Make a claim for housing benefit  
[www.brent.gov.uk/housingbenefit](http://www.brent.gov.uk/housingbenefit)

Apply for a parking permit  
[www.brent.gov.uk/parking](http://www.brent.gov.uk/parking)

## WASTE COLLECTION

### Too much recycling after Christmas?

Put extra mixed recycling in clear bags next to your blue-lidded bin on collection day. Leave paper and cardboard loose next to your blue sacks – but check the weather forecast first! Wet cardboard can't be recycled.

Tip! Buying wrapping paper? Check it's recyclable before you buy – as pretty as it looks, anything glittery or foil-lined sadly cannot be recycled.

There are no bin collection services on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 December. Bins will be collected on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 December.

There will be no collections on Thursday 1 January. This will be collected on Saturday 3 January.

On 29, 30, 31 December and 2 January services will operate business as usual.

Normal collection day	Christmas and New Years Collection week
Thu 25 Dec	Sat 27 Dec
Fri 26 Dec	Sun 28 Dec
Thu 1 Jan	Sat 3 Jan

## HOW TO HELP SOMEONE SLEEPING ROUGH

The streets are no place to be, especially in the cold weather. If you're worried about someone sleeping rough in Brent, please use the StreetLink website to help connect them to local services. London has a "Severe Weather Emergency Protocol" to make sure every rough sleeper has a safe and warm place to stay when temperatures drop.

StreetLink is a charity that aims to offer everyone the means to act when they see someone sleeping rough.

If you are concerned about someone sleeping rough, send an alert to StreetLink by visiting [www.streetlink.london](http://www.streetlink.london), or via their mobile app, available from Apple iTunes and Google Play store, or calling them on 0300 500 0914.

If you want to help someone sleeping rough, go to [www.streetlink.london](http://www.streetlink.london)

Brent's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) will be activated when the temperature drops below zero.

# CHOOSE Hosting the Christmas Party



Visit [nhghomes.com](https://nhghomes.com) to check out great homes across London available with shared ownership



## Heybourne Park Colindale, NW9

Enjoy parkside living in North West London, including a new community plaza, outdoor gym, library, on-site supermarket and cafe.

£ Prices from £88,125 for a 25% share

1 & 2-bedroom apartments

15 mins walk to Colindale Station



## Gadwall Quarter Woodberry Down, N4

Modern 1 bedroom apartments in North London, amongst abundant green space, just 6 mins to Kings Cross by tube.

Prices from £118,750 for a 25% share

4 mins walk to Manor House Station

Ready to move in now



## Lampton Parkside West London, TW3

Final ten 1 bedroom apartments remaining in the heart of Hounslow, from £83,125 for a 25% share with Shared Ownership.

Final 1-bedroom apartments

4 mins walk from Hounslow station

40 acres of green space



## Pod Brentford, TW8

Studio, 1 & 2 bedroom apartments moments from Boston Park, perfect for access to green spaces and everything Central London has to offer.

Prices from £51,695 for a 25% share

8 mins walk to Brentford station

Communal roof terrace

LAUNCHING  
APRIL 26

# Register to vote

Registering to vote  
only takes five minutes!

All you need is your  
National Insurance number

[www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)

And remember, if you are voting in a polling station  
next May you must bring photo ID.  
There are a number of accepted forms of ID, including:

- Passport
- Driver's licence
- Multiple concessionary travel passes
- PASS card (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Blue badge
- And many more



For a full list,  
scan the QR  
code or visit

[www.gov.uk/how-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote)



**Brent**