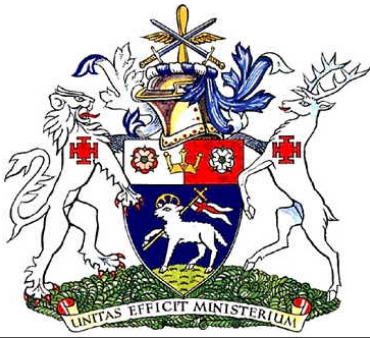| **Meeting** |
| :-: |
| **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** |
| **Date and time** |
| **Tuesday 5th March, 2024** |
| **At 7.00 pm** |
| **Venue** |
| **Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BQ** |

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed additional papers relating to the following items for the above mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda.

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
9	Towards A Fair Barnet	3 - 114

Faith Mwende - faith.mwende@barnet.gov.uk

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Title	**Towards A Fair Barnet**
Date of meeting	5 March 2024
Report of	Executive Director Children and Families
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Appendices	Appendix 1 – State of the Borough Report 2023 Appendix 2 – Residents' Perception Survey Summary Appendix 3 – Report on Resident Engagement Programme Appendix 4 – Building a Fairer City, The London Recovery Board
Lead Officer	Chris Munday, Executive Director Children and Families Chris.Munday@barnet.gov.uk Hal Khanom, Head of Strategy and Community Participation Hal.Khanom@barnet.gov.uk
Officer Contact Details	Stephen Benbough, Strategy Manager Stephen.Benbough@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 sets out our vision for tackling inequalities and fighting poverty. We are developing a new external, community focussed equalities strategic roadmap, Towards a Fair Barnet, to reflect and align with the ambitions in the plan.

This report provides an update on the development of the roadmap and seeks the views of the Committee on our proposed approach and potential priorities prior to the submission of the strategic roadmap to Cabinet on 16 April and Council on 21 May 2024.

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Recommendations
1. **That the Committee considers this report and making comments and recommendations on the proposed areas of focus to support the development of the document for Cabinet.**
2. **That the Committee considers making recommendations for the portfolio holder and lead officer to consider when developing the final strategic roadmap document.**
3. **That the Committee considers making any further recommendations to Cabinet**

(1)	**Reasons for the Recommendations**

Background

1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies and others carrying out public functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations. Public authorities also have specific duties under the Equality Act to help them comply with the public sector equality duty. Public authorities must:

- publish equality information at least once a year to show how they have complied with the equality duty

- prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

1.2 Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 made fighting inequalities and reducing poverty high priorities. We are developing the Towards a Fair Barnet Strategic Roadmap (including strategic equality objectives) to ensure that these are aligned to our corporate ambitions with a rigorous focus on inequalities faced by residents in their lives. The strategic roadmap will also set out how we will comply with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010.

The Evidence Base

1.3 Our evidence includes both data, perception and engagement findings.

1.4 To support the development of the strategy, we prepared a State of the Borough Report (attached as Appendix 1) to start to build an understanding of residents' experiences of inequalities in Barnet and the impact. Bringing together different themes, it provides an overview of what inequalities look like in important aspects of their lives. The report highlights that people are shaped by a combination of multiple factors, including their age, disability, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic background. The causes of inequality are often inter-connected and recognising this "intersectionality" provides an opportunity for us to better understand the lived experience of residents and the issues they face.

1.5 We have also analysed the results of the Residents' Perception Survey 2022 to assess the levels of satisfaction and views of different parts of our community. Appendix 2 highlights the findings where significant inequalities exist in relation to residents' responses. It also summarises the findings of the ethnographic research with residents with disabilities which was instigated following the Residents' Perception Survey. Updated perception surveys for both adults and young people are expected in March.

1.6 We have undertaken extensive resident engagement to inform the new strategy. Over 200 residents participated in phase one of the programme through workshops and other activity from February to August 2023. A second phase of engagement using a mix of approaches to reach people with different protected characteristics took place from October to December 2023 to seek views on priorities for the strategy. A report on the outcome of the resident engagement programme is attached as Appendix 3.

1.7 Taking the State of the Borough Report and Residents' Perception Survey as an evidence base and using the outcomes of our engagement with residents and partners, this report sets out our proposed approach and potential priorities for inclusion in the new strategic roadmap.

Other Drivers

<u>Responding to London Recovery Board: Building a Fairer City</u>

1.8 The Building a Fairer City plan (attached as Appendix 4) outlines actions under four priority areas.

1. Labour market inequality

2. Financial hardship and living standards

3. Equity in public services (tackling structural discrimination)

4. Civic Society strength

1.9 Our community wealth building approach is broad-reaching and will address financial hardship, living standards and labour market inequality. This includes continuing to expand on the impact of our innovative benefits calculator, our employment and skills support through BOOST and considering what debt advice we may be able to provide. This is in addition to the socio-economic benefits levered through our social value policy.

1.10 In many of the areas covered by this roadmap, we work with our partners in civic society, benefitting from their strengths and assets to reach diverse communities, targeting initiatives to those most impacted by inequality. We also have public sector partners like the police and the NHS who we will work closely with to support their own plans for addressing discrimination.

1.11 Part one and two of the strategic roadmap below consider tackling structural discrimination for equity in public services in depth.

Our Objectives

1.12 To achieve a fairer Barnet, we recognise that we need to do some things differently and ensure that best practice becomes the normal way of working in the Council. Our approach will change from considering inequalities as single-issue effects happening to individual residents who require help to understanding that our residents are impacted by structural inequalities that require us to change the way our systems and services operate to tackle unfairness in access and outcomes.

1.13 To make sure this work becomes widespread in the Council, we are proposing an approach based on three strategic equalities objectives under our corporate themes of People, Places and Planet:

● People: See the whole individual

● Place: Be informed by and tackle place-based drivers of inequality

● Planet: Support a just transition to net zero minimising the risk of future inequity.

1.14 Our objectives aim to ensure that we focus on equity for outcomes based on differing needs, not just equality of opportunity. In the longer-term, they will help us to reduce the structural drivers of inequalities and improve outcomes for our residents, with a focus on tackling the gaps between different communities.

<u>Part one: Focussed areas to kick-start the strategic roadmap</u>

1.15 We want to significantly move the dial on some of our borough's inequalities and keep an eye on the future. To do this, we will need to target resources towards a number of specific

inequalities in addition to embedding approaches across the Council through our strategic equalities objectives. We highlight potential priorities under the objectives in the following sections of the report for consideration by the Committee.

People: See the whole individual

1.16   We will view people as their whole selves and not only by isolated individual equalities protected characteristics. People are shaped by a combination of multiple factors, including their age, disability, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic background and much more. The causes of inequality are often inter-connected and combine to create different modes of discrimination and levels of advantage or disadvantage. Recognising this provides an opportunity to better understand the lived experience of people and the issues they face.

1.17   In many cases we address individual problems residents come to us with, without considering the rest of the challenges they are facing. Seeing people through their individual experience and respecting their multiple identities is known as having an intersectional approach. As part of the new strategy, we are proposing that all services make plans to move from relating to residents just by the nature of their service-request to thinking about the whole person in the round of their experiences. This will mean improving the understanding of the lived experience of our residents, particularly those experiencing multiple disadvantages, by listening and observing through working with residents (often called ethnographic research).

1.18   Potential priorities under this objective could be:

Disability rights, voice and outcomes (including removing barriers to inclusion)

The 2021/22 Residents' Perception Survey showed that disabled residents are significantly less likely to be satisfied across a number of key indicators compared to residents without a disability. To investigate these findings in-depth, the Tackling the Gaps Group commissioned Habitus, a specialised ethnographic research company, to conduct a study to understand the lived experiences of disabled residents. The project set out to address the following objectives:

● To understand the lived experiences of disabled residents (and to some extent their families and carers) in engaging or accessing Council and community services.

● To explore how different protected characteristics and intersectionality shape disabled participants' lived experiences in engaging in community life.

● To identify barriers to participation in Council and community services.

Four recommendations were shaped by the disabled residents, parents, and carers who took part in the study:

(1)   Understanding how residents identify and want to be identified is key in meaningfully engaging with them.

(2)   Consider how disabled residents access information and find different modes of making this accessible.

(3)   Community matters – working with voluntary sector organisations can help disabled residents engage meaningfully in community life.

(4)   Create opportunities to enable disabled residents to engage in community life and civic participation in different ways.

The Tackling the Gaps Group is currently reviewing the recommendations to consider how the Council can best respond and this will feed into the action plan for the new equalities strategy.

Care experience

At its meeting in January 2024, the Council recognised that care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives and that they often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system. They may also encounter inconsistent support in different geographical areas.

The Council adopted the Care Leavers Covenant and agreed to lobby government for a change in the law to allow care experience to become a protected characteristic under the Equality Act and other legislation. As a priority in the equalities strategy, we would aim to build on this decision by considering the needs of people with care experience in all aspects of the Council's work. We will proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when taking decisions and developing new policies.

Place: Be informed by and tackle place-based drivers of inequality

1.19 Where you live can unfairly impact your life chances. We have often focussed on fixing individual problems that residents come to us with rather than tackling the structural root causes that are driving inequality. The State of the Borough Report 2023 shows us that many avoidable inequalities are determined by what you have access to in your neighbourhood.

1.20 Place-based drivers of inequality are the conditions at a neighbourhood level that influence our opportunities for good health and wellbeing. They influence how we behave and how we think and feel, all of which impacts our life chances. Some residents face discrimination and disadvantage with poorer access to infrastructure and services, such as libraries, public transport, parks and green spaces.

1.21 We will improve our understanding of structural, place-based drivers of inequalities. We will use place-based systems that work with local communities, public and voluntary and community sector partners to agree shared priorities for local neighbourhoods experiencing the greatest inequalities.

1.22 Potential priorities under this objective could be:

A selected focus within broader Housing and Homelessness (tbc)

There is clear disproportionality for specific groups in relation to housing and homelessness. In particular, mental health has major effects on an individual's housing journey and often contributes to poor outcomes such as homelessness, loss of tenancies, breakdown in communication with services and unsuitable accommodation placements.

In addition, the successful operation of early intervention and prevention support is limited by persisting barriers to accessing services, which can directly cause housing issues to grow. Digital barriers, language barriers and mobility issues all disproportionately impact certain groups.

Disproportionality studies undertaken show an over-representation of black people and those with disabilities (particularly mental health) approaching Barnet Homes as homeless. Young People's Homelessness has been identified by O&S as a key focus already.

Health inequalities

Health inequalities in Barnet vary across the borough and are often related to people's education, homes, employment, environment, and behaviours. Differences in life expectancy between population groups often provide a clear indicator of health inequalities. Access to good quality services is an important way to reduce such inequalities.

There are marked differences in people's life expectancy across Barnet. The difference between people living in the most and least deprived areas of the borough is 5.7 years for females and 6.7 years for males.

Wider determinants and the circumstances in which people live, work and age, affect both people's life expectancy and the years of quality health they live in.

In addition to targeted public health interventions, we will ensure that all policies and strategies include specific actions on improving health and health equity, including by creating good housing, employment opportunities and active travel links.

Planet: Support a just transition to net zero

1.23 As we go further and faster to tackle climate change, we are committed to doing all that we can to prevent inequalities in the future. In delivering our sustainability strategy we recognise that they journey to net zero needs to not only delivery emission reductions, but do this in a way that improves the lives of all of our residents.

1.24 We will think through how the urgent transition to net zero can happen trying to avoid creating new gaps or widening existing ones is. We will review impacts to ensure that the costs of climate policies do not fall unequally on different groups of people.

1.25 Our new Barnet Transport Strategy and subsequent action plan will consider how transport works as a barrier to opportunities and incorporate supporting a just transition in its vision and approach.

1.26 In attracting sustainable businesses and investment, we will work with our partners to address the existing inequalities in the green workforce, which is male dominated, with a lower proportion of workers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds in comparison with all sectors in London.

1.27 We will work with our regional and subregional partners to do all we can to protect residents from 'greenflation', where companies cost measures for tackling climate change out of the reach of the communities experiencing the worst of the impact.

Part two: Adapting our core work to tackle inequalities

1.28 All services will be tackling inequalities and addressing disadvantage through their own strategies and policies. These often focus on taking a preventative and early intervention approach to provide effective support to those at risk of poor outcomes.

1.29 All services are currently identifying the key activities in their work that they can undertake to tackle inequalities and disproportionality, so that these can be reflected in the roadmap where appropriate, but more importantly to enable us to increase the visibility of this work and monitor its effectiveness. Examples include the Barnet Youth Justice Plan which aims to tackle disproportionality in the criminal justice system, our Local Area Inclusion Plan which supports children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to achieve good outcomes and our community health screening programme focussing on areas of higher deprivation.

1.30 We will also continue to celebrate the diversity of our borough and foster community cohesion by encouraging mutual understanding between communities, including by supporting and organising events and celebrations. We will challenge discrimination and tackle harassment and hate crime in all its forms.

1.31   To ensure transparency, we will develop an on-line hub capturing the totality of what we are doing to address inequalities bringing this together in one place, with an overview in this final document.

Partnerships

1.32   The Council can not tackle this on its own and will work in partnership with others. For example, this includes working with health agencies to reduce health inequalities and improve healthy life expectancy through the Barnet Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Police and other partners to deliver the aims of the Barnet Community Safety Strategy.

Beyond the Strategy

1.33   We will develop an action plan to support the delivery of our work on our equalities objectives. Progress against the actions in the plan will be tracked and scrutinised by our Tackling the Gaps Group and reported to our senior Council Management Team. We will also report publicly on progress through our annual equalities report.

1.34   As mentioned above, we will also create an online hub to increase the visibility and transparency of equalities issues. This will include details of our core equalities work and the effectiveness of our interventions.

1.35   We will also strengthen our approach to equalities impact assessments to ensure that the effect of our decisions, policies and strategies on different sectors of the community are properly considered and publish these on our online equalities hub.

(2)   Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

2.1   We considered having a strategy that covers all of the work the Council does to address disproportionate outcomes but residents have told us they want us to have a simple visual document, with a focus on actions.

(3)   Post Decision Implementation

3.1   The intention is to submit the Towards a Fair Barnet Roadmap for approval by Cabinet on 16 April and Council on 21 May 2024. We will develop a detailed action plan to support the delivery of our work on our equalities objectives. Progress against the actions in the plan will be tracked and scrutinised by our Tackling the Gaps Group and reported to our senior Council Management Team. We will also report publicly on progress through our annual equalities report.

(4)   Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

4.1   Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 sets out our vision for fighting poverty and tackling inequalities and commits us to:

- Fight inequalities and work to improve life chances for a good, healthy, happy and long life. Working in partnership, we will ensure no one is held back, that Barnet is the healthiest borough in London and our communities and residents can take advantage of every opportunity.

- Reduce poverty in our communities, boosting incomes and reducing costs. We will create an inclusive Barnet by promoting long-term economic growth that benefits everyone and where families and communities support each other.

- Be a family friendly borough where children and young people have the best start in life with the best education, the right support and safeguarding when they need it, and the right tools to live their lives successfully into adulthood. This especially applies to our children in care and care leavers, who we are 'corporate parents' for.

- Focus on all residents having the best opportunities to live well and feel part of the community. This will mean increasing the inclusion of older and disabled residents and celebrating their contributions. We will recognise people's goals and support them to build on their existing abilities and strengths. We will work with residents, communities and our partners to support residents to stay well and free from abuse.

- Tackle inequalities by actively listening to and considering different perspectives and needs in policy-making and service design.

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

4.2 We have prepared a State of the Borough Report to provide a baseline of known inequalities in Barnet to help inform the development of our new strategy. We intend to build and expand on this in future years to monitor and track progress against a range of inequalities outcomes and metrics.

Sustainability

4.3 One of the proposed priorities for the new strategy focusses on the need to consider environmental and sustainability issues from an equalities perspective to ensure that our journey to net zero takes place in a fair and inclusive way.

Corporate Parenting

4.4 People with care experience face disadvantage, discrimination and barriers in life. We have a particularly strong responsibility for this group. In January 2024, the Council adopted the Care Leavers Covenant and agreed to lobby government for a change in the law to allow care experience to become a protected characteristic under the Equality Act and other legislation. This commitment to people with care experience will be recognised in the new roadmap.

4.5 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 also places a duty on the Council to consider corporate parenting principles in decision-making. This includes ensuring that children in care and care leavers are not disproportionality impacted by any decisions the Council may make.

Risk Management

4.6 We monitor and report against our equalities objectives and action plans to ensure that we meet our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

Insight

4.7 An overview of the characteristics of our residents can be found in the Barnet Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. We have also prepared a State of the Borough Report which provides a profile of Barnet's population and gives a summary of known inequalities in the borough. The report is based on extensive research and draws on a wide range of resources and data.

Social Value

4.8 The updated social value policy outlines how we can extract benefits from our procured contracts and reinvest them into the community. The policy provides opportunities to further the equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda as well as reducing poverty.

(5)	**Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)**
5.1	There are no resource implications arising from this report.

(6)	**Legal Implications and Constitution References**
6.1	The Council has statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and public sector equality duty. This includes a requirement to prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years. The strategy will include new objectives to replace those in the previous EDI Policy 2021-25 to ensure alignment with Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 and to provide a greater focus on external inequalities faced by residents.
6.2	The Council's Constitution, Part 2B & Part 2C Terms of reference and delegation of duties to Committees and Joint arrangements. Para 9.2.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for Policy Development and Review – by supporting the Council and Executive in developing the policy framework and budget for the Council, working with partner organisations on issues that may be outside the remit of the Council and reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions. Para 9.2.5 Pre-Decision Scrutiny following consideration of the Key Decision Schedule (Forward Plan) and with the agreement of the Executive, to scrutinise key decisions prior to them being made.
6.3	Under Article 3, the Full Council, the policy framework is set out at para 3.3.1. The policy framework includes plans and strategies which include the Corporate Equalities Objectives.
6.4	Under Part 3D, Budget and Policy Procedure Rules, para 8.1 - A copy of any proposed plan or strategy which is part of the policy framework shall also be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in sufficient time for the proposals to be included in the agenda for a scheduled meeting of the Committee, and for the Committee to make a report or recommendations to the meeting of the Council that is to consider the plan or strategy concerned. The Council shall not agree a plan or strategy until the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has had the opportunity to consider the proposals, subject to the need for statutory deadlines to be met.

(7)	**Consultation**
7.1	We have undertaken extensive resident engagement to inform the new roadmap. Over 200 residents participated in phase one of the programme through workshops and other activity from February to August 2023. A second phase of engagement using a mix of approaches to reach people with different protected characteristics took place from October to December 2023 to seek views on priorities for the strategy. A report on the outcome of the resident engagement programme is attached as Appendix 2.
7.2	We will be consulting our partners through the Barnet Partnership Board in March 2024 on our proposed approach and priorities for the new equalities roadmap.

(8)	**Equalities and Diversity**
8.1	The new strategy will strengthen the Council's ability to meet the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty. A new action plan will be developed to set out a new programme of activities to deliver the priorities. The strategy will have a positive impact on residents with protected characteristics.

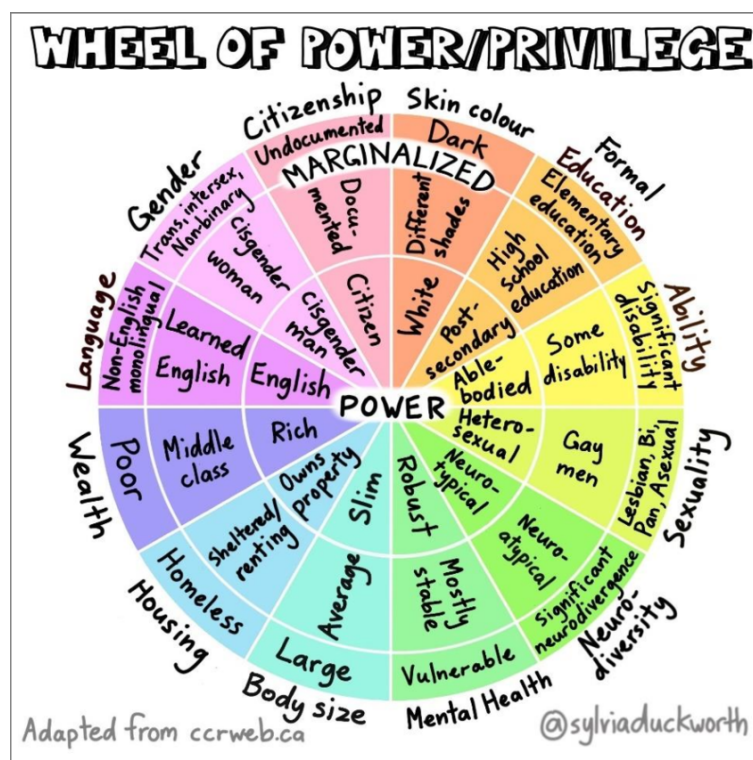| 8.2 | A full equalities impact assessment will be undertaken on the new strategy. Further assessments will be undertaken as required on projects and activities taken forward as part of the action plan. |

(9) Background Papers

| 9.1 | This paper references the following programmes and strategies: |
| | Barnet Plan 2023/26 |

STATE OF THE BOROUGH REPORT (OCTOBER 2023)

INTRODUCTION

With people of many cultural backgrounds, faiths and life experiences living side by side, one of Barnet's biggest strengths is its diversity. We are proud of these diverse communities and of being a place where people feel welcomed and celebrated. In the Residents' Perception Survey 2021/22, 88% of residents agreed that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

But not everyone's experience of Barnet is the same, with some finding it easier to access services and take advantage of opportunities. Some people with protected characteristics[1] face structural discrimination when institutional and other common practices within society disadvantage them across many aspects of their lives. Others face inequalities and social exclusion as a result of low income and poverty.

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[1] Protected characteristics are defined by the Equalities Act 2010 as disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council recognises that care leavers also face barriers that impact them throughout their lives and that they are likely to face discrimination and disadvantage. Therefore, we treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic in addition to those groups defined in the Act.

However, as depicted by the Wheel of Power/Privilege above, people are shaped by a combination of multiple factors, including their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic background. These characteristics combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege and levels of advantage and disadvantage. We will develop our understanding of "intersectionality" to better understand the lived experience of residents and the issues they face and also shift our focus from personal responsibility to the structural, place-based drivers of inequalities.

Our plan for Barnet 2023-2026 sets out our vision for fighting poverty and tackling inequalities which affect everything from health, education to work opportunities. We want to ensure that no one is held back, whatever their background.

This report starts to build an understanding of residents' experiences of inequalities in Barnet and the impact. Bringing together different themes, it provides an overview of what inequalities look like in important aspects of their lives. This is the first report of its type for Barnet and we know that there are gaps in our knowledge with a lack of quality data being available at a local level. For example, we have extensive information on outcomes for children and young people, but less detail about residents' attitudes to and experiences of environmental services. We will seek to improve our understanding of sustainability through an equalities lens to assess how the ability to respond to climate change and environmental issues disproportionally affects our most disadvantaged communities.

The report will continue to evolve as an Equalities Index to ensure that we provide a more comprehensive picture of the issues our residents face.

Taking this report as an evidence base and using the outcomes of our continued engagement with residents and partners, we will refresh our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to demonstrate how we can work together with partners and residents to address inequalities and poverty. This will embed our actions into activity and plans across the Council to ensure that tackling inequalities is a key part of everyone's agenda.
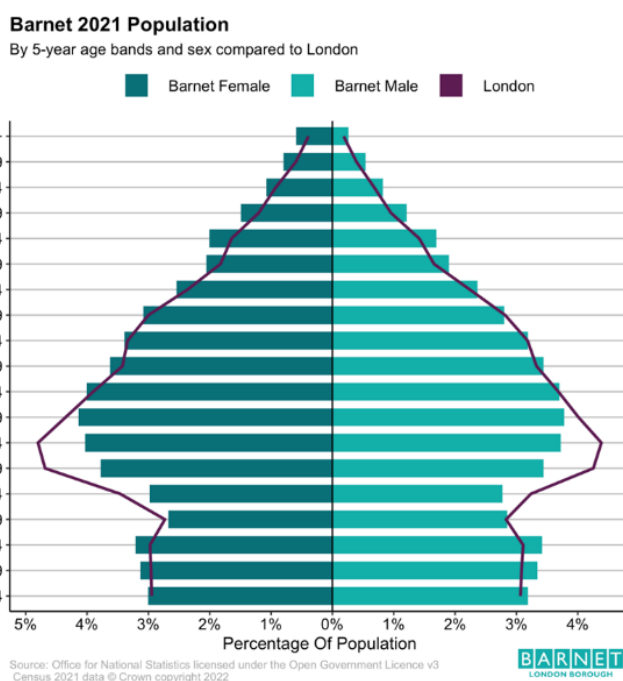
OUR RESIDENTS

The 2021 Census[2] shows that Barnet is the second largest borough by population in London, home to an estimated 389,300 people. The population had grown by 9.2% since the 2011 Census compared to growth in London overall of 7.6%. 48.4% or residents were male and 51.6% female.

Age Profile

The number of residents aged 0-19 years has increased by 38% to 96,600 since 2011 and they now make up a quarter of the population. About 83,400 residents aged five years and over were school children or full-time students. In contrast, there has been an 8% reduction in the number of children under five years old.

56,100 residents (14%) were aged over 65, a smaller increase of 18% over the previous ten years. 26,300 were aged over 75 years old, an increase of 10.9% since 2011. One-in-ten older residents was living alone. Working age adults (20-64 years) represented 61% of the population.

Figure 1: Barnet's population by five year age band

Barnet 2021 Population
By 5-year age bands and sex compared to London

Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v3
Census 2021 data © Crown copyright 2022

Compared to London overall, Barnet has a greater proportion of the population aged 0-15 and those aged 40 and over. The proportion of young working age people aged 20 to 39 living in Barnet is lower.

Ethnicity, Language and Religion

57.7% of our population is from a white background, followed by 19.3% from an Asian background, 7.9% a black background, 5.4% a mixed background and 9.8% from other ethnic groups. Residents identifying as white British made up 36.2% of the population.

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[2] The 2021 Census was based on pre-2022 ward boundaries.

221,293 of Barnet's residents (56.8%) were born in the UK. Residents born outside of the UK increased by 21.3% to 168,050. Those born in in the Middle East and Asia now make up 15.3% of Barnet's population, with the countries seeing the highest increases being Romania (200%) and Iran (55%).

There are large differences in the population of ethnic groups between neighbourhoods in Barnet:

- 74% of the population in High Barnet and Hadley identified as white compared to 36% in Colindale West and South.

- 37% of the population in Colindale West and South and 23% in Edgeware Park identified as Asian.

- 24% of the population in Grahame Park identified as black, 23% as Asian and 7% as mixed ethnicity.

The most common religion is Christianity. 36.6% of the population self-identified as Christian, 14.5% as Jewish and 12.2% as Muslim. 20.2% of residents described themselves as having no religion. Barnet is home to London's largest Jewish community.

Again, there are large differences between neighbourhoods with, for example, 53.1% of residents of Golders Green North and 44% in Hendon Park describing themselves as Jewish and 27.1% of people in Brent Cross and Staples Corner as Muslim.

77.1% of residents aged over three years old stated that English was their main language, with 95.9% of the population identifying themselves as being proficient in the English language. Over 90 languages are spoken, including Romanian by 3.0 % of residents, Persian or Farsi (2.3%), Polish (1.5%), Gujarati (1.4%), Portuguese (1.0%) and Arabic (1.0%).

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
8,633 residents (2.8%) identified with a LGB+ orientation (gay or lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation). 2,550 residents (0.8%) did not identify with the same gender as their sex registered at birth.

Disability
49,679 (12.8%) residents self-identified as having a disability that either limited their day-to-day activities a little (7.1%) or a lot (5.7%). This is 1.4% lower than the average of all local authorities in London. The highest levels of disability are found in Ducks Island and Underhill (16.0%), Hadley Wood (15.6%), Fallow Corner (14.6%), North Finchley (14.5%) and High Barnet and Hadley (14.1%).

Health
85.9% of Barnet's population considered themselves to be in very good or good health, which is 1.9% above the average of all local authorities in London. 5.4% of residents described their health as bad or very bad. The highest level of very bad health is found in

Ducks Island and Underhill (1.4%) followed by North Cricklewood, Mill Hill Broadway, Childs Hill and Brent Cross and Staples Corner (all 1.3%).

Education and Qualifications

49% of people have the highest Level 4 qualifications or above[3]. This is similar to the London average and an increase of 33.2% since 2011. Hampstead Garden Suburb (64.4%) had the highest proportion of residents with at least Level 4 qualifications, followed by West Finchley (61.6%), East Finchley (61.2%), Golders Green South (60.7%) and Church End (57.5%).

15.4% of residents have no qualifications. This is similar to the London average (15.7%) and represents an increase of 9% since 2011. Burnt Oak and Watling Park (24.0%), Brent Cross and Staples Corner (22.9%), West Hendon (20.9%) and Mill Hill Broadway (20.3%) had the highest prevalence of residents with no formal qualifications.

Figure 2: Residents with no qualifications by ward (2021)
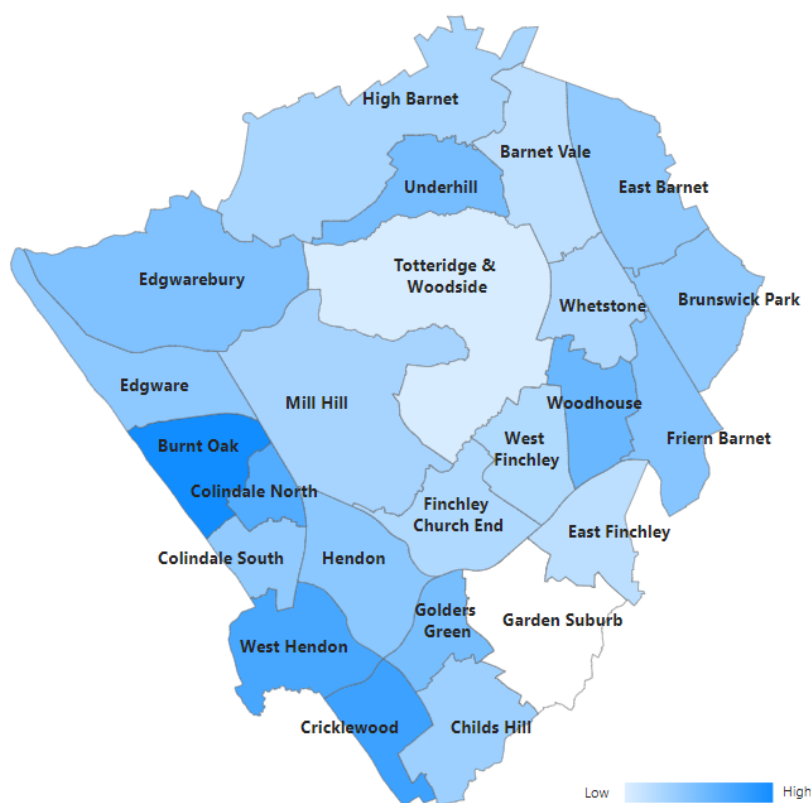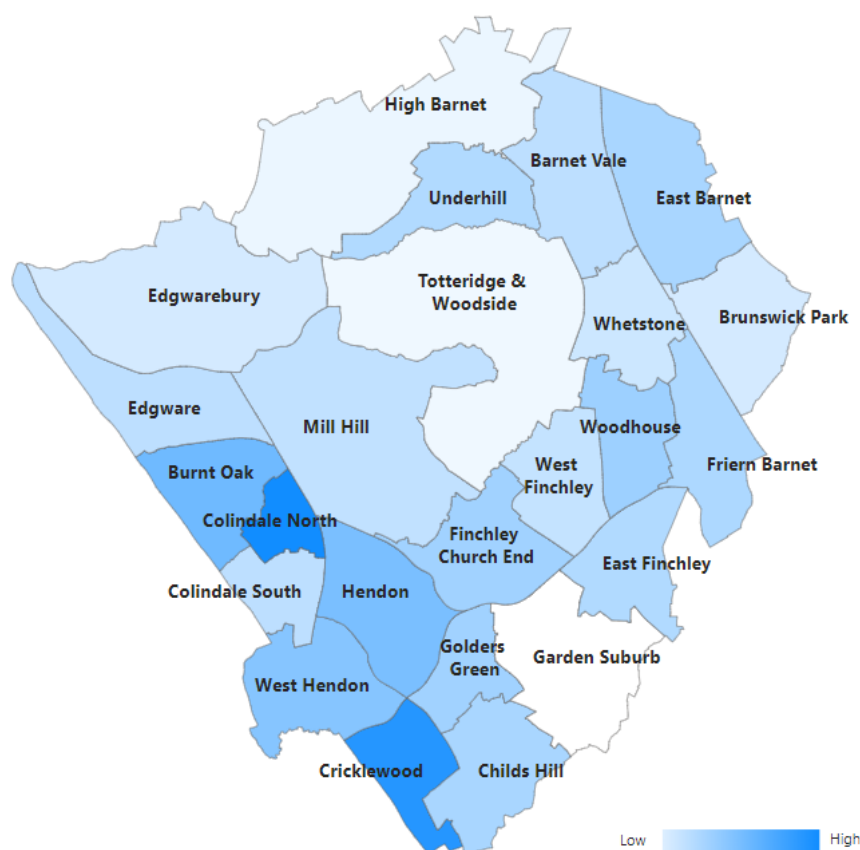

Employment

The Census 2021 took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change that had a significant affect on employment and the labour force across the country. The economically active population includes people who were put on furlough at the time, who were considered to be temporarily away from work. 32,900 people were furloughed in Barnet.

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[3] Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree or post-graduate qualifications

64.6% of residents were classified as economically active, which is a reduction of 6.8% from the 2011 Census. Residents classified as being 'economically inactive due to retirement' had the largest increase with 14.9% of Barnet's population being retired. Of the overall population, the reasons for economic inactivity were retirement (15%), student (7%), looking after a home or family (6%) and long-term sickness or a disability (3%).

68% of the Barnet workforce were in full-time employment, with 32% in part-time roles. Unemployment was 4.4%, which is in the top third in the country. The highest unemployment rate was 6.8% in Colindale East.

Figure 3: Unemployment by ward

10% more men (65.4%) resident in Barnet were in employment compared to the proportion of women (55.4%). 0.6% more men (4.7%) were unemployed compared to women (4.1%).

28% of disabled residents were in employment, slightly higher than the national average (27.3%).

42.8% of Barnet's workforce stated that they mainly worked from home, an increase of 35.4% from the 2011 Census. Combined public transport use decreased by 22.3% and those who drive to work by 11.3% since the previous Census.

Housing
Purpose-built blocks of flats or tenements continued to be the most common type of accommodation (36.6% of total households) followed by semi-detached (27.5%). Colindale

had the highest increase in residents living in purpose-built blocks of flats or tenements (239.4%), followed by Mill Hill East (69.0%) and Oakleigh Park (42.5%).

Two bedroom properties have become most prevalent (29.8%), followed by three bedroom (27.4%) and four-or-more-bedroom (25.4%).

Owned accommodations were the most common type of tenure (52.7%), followed by private rented (32.7%) and social rented (13.5%). Privately rented accommodation recorded growth of 39.7% compared to 2011.

Grahame Park (50.6%), Burnt Oak and Watling Park (31.0%), Ducks Island and Underhill (29.0%), Mill Hill Broadway (27.5%) and Brent Cross and Staples Corner (27.4%) had the highest percentage of residents in socially rented accommodation. Colindale had the highest growth of residents in socially rented accommodation (170.3%) and privately rented accommodation (189.7%) over the last decade.

Occupancy rating for bedrooms, which refers to the difference between the number of bedrooms needed and the number available per household, indicated that 9.4% of households in Barnet were overcrowded. This is a slight decline from 10% at the previous Census and lower than the London average (11.1%). Burnt Oak and Watling Park (20.8%), Grahame Park (19.3%), Brent Cross and Staples Corner (16.0%), Mill Hill Broadway (15.9%) and Colindale (15.1%) recorded the highest rates of overcrowding.

*Figure 4: Overcrowding by ward (2021)*
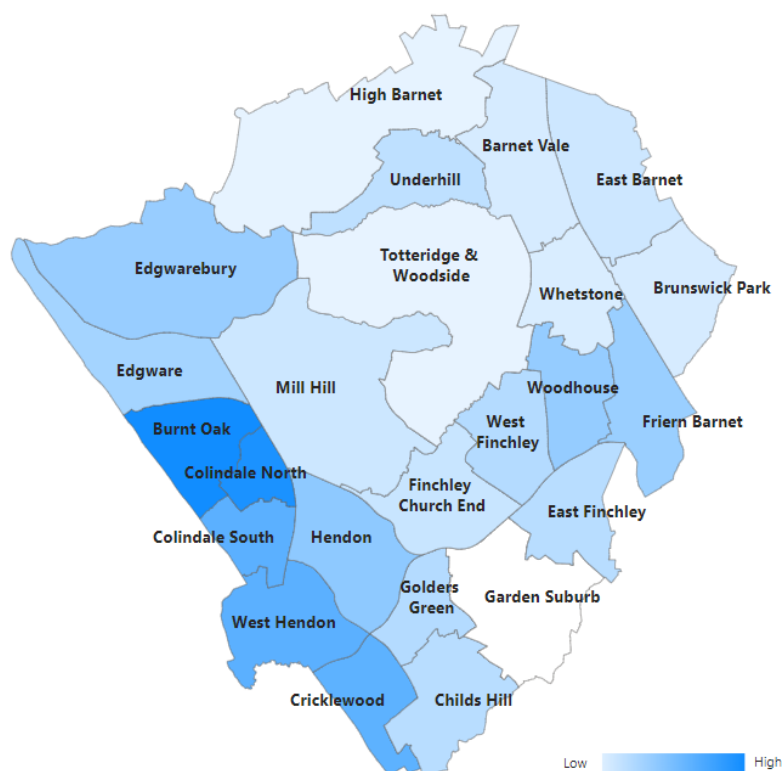
Households

There were an estimated 148,917 households in Barnet, an increase of 9.6% since 2011 and the second largest of any borough in London. The average number of people per household remained the same at 2.6. 61% of all households were single family households (47% of which included dependent children), 28% were one person households and 11% were multiple family households.

The number of households with at least one dimension of deprivation (based on employment, education, health and disability and housing status) decreased by 6.4% compared to the 2011 Census with 50% of all households in Barnet having at least one dimension of deprivation. 25,960 households (13%) recorded two or more dimensions of deprivation, a reduction of 18.2% from 2011.

Burnt Oak and Watling Park (66%) Brent Cross and Staples Corner (64%), Grahame Park (62%), Mill Hill Broadway (60%), West Hendon (58%) and Hendon Central (58%) recorded the highest levels of households having at least one dimension of deprivation.

Figure 5: Households having at least one dimension of deprivation by ward
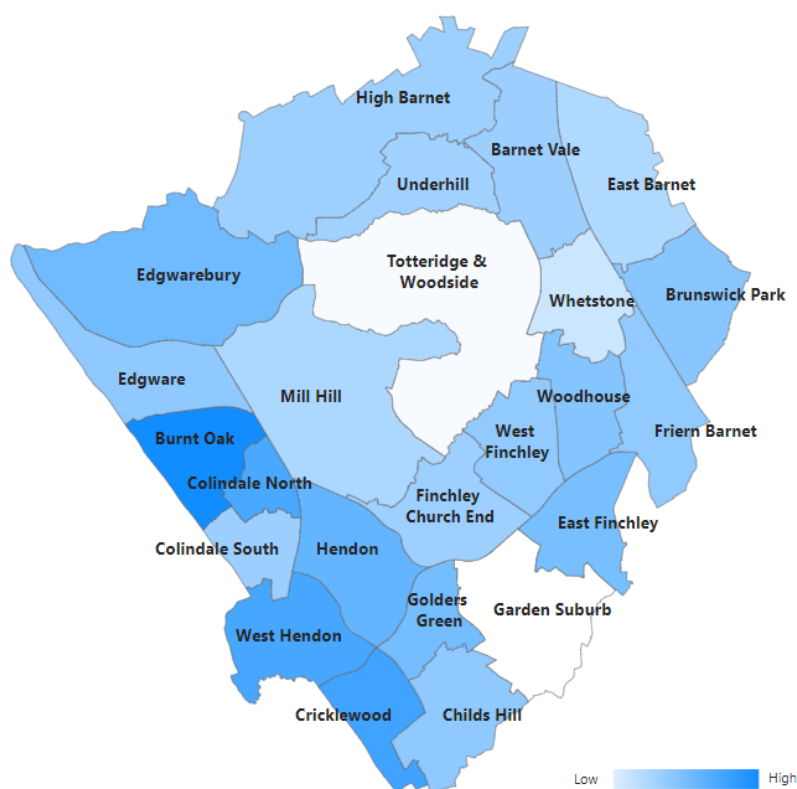
The percentage of households in Barnet owning at least one car or van (70.1%) declined by 1.2%. Brent Cross and Staples Corner (53.3%), Childs Hill (53.9%), Colindale (55.4%), Golders Green South (58.4%) and Hendon Central (59.1%) had the lowest rates of car ownership.

INEQUALITIES IN BARNET

In this section of the report, we start to build a picture of the inequalities faced by our residents under the Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26 themes of People, Places and Planet. We recognise that there are limitations and that we need to do more to enhance our understanding. It has not been possible to source high quality local data on several topics for those with certain protected characteristics. For example, there is little data on the experiences of members of the LGB+ community.

In many cases, local data is only available on a place basis and we are only able to present information on inequalities by geographical area rather than by protected characteristics. Where this report has highlighted gaps in our knowledge, we will explore future opportunities to gather information to present a more comprehensive picture of inequalities, including by engaging residents about their own experiences.

PEOPLE

Education and Children

More than **10,000 children** live in income deprived households

Black students and students from other ethnic groups are **3 times more likely** to receive free school meals than white students

Black students are almost **twice as likely** as white students to be excluded from school

Black children are **3 times more likely** to be in the looked-after cohort than white children

Over **one-fifth** of Year 6 students are obese or severely obese

Asian students have the **highest average** attainment at GCSEs

Girls **perform better** than boys at GCSEs, but the gap is less than in London overall or nationally

Black students and those receiving free school meals **perform less well** at GCSEs

Children's health and education have a critical impact on their future life chances. Factors such as deprivation, living conditions and family lifestyles in the early years have a profound impact and can entrench inequalities later in life. There are significant disparities between the childhood experiences of different demographic groups.

Children who grow up in poverty are likely to suffer poorer education and health outcomes throughout their lives compared to children who do not. In Barnet, 11.9% of children live in relative poverty, significantly lower than the comparable rates for London (16.4%) and

England (20.1%). 9.5% of children live in absolute poverty. Again, this is lower than comparable rates for London (13.1%) and England (15.3%).

Whist this is generally positive, there are pockets of higher deprivation in parts of the borough. Deprivation affecting children is highest in Burnt Oak (22.4%), Colindale (19.2%) and Golders Green (15.1%)[4].

There were over 4,000 children classified as in need during 2022/23 across the borough. In 2022/23, there were around 11,450 pupils eligible for free school meals across both primary and secondary schools (21.3%). Disproportionality studies show that black children and children from "other ethnic groups" are 2.9 times more likely to receive free school meals than white children and those from a mixed or multiple ethnic background are 1.8 times more likely. Those who identify as Asian or Asian British are slightly less likely to receive free school meals than the majority population.

There were 499 looked-after children in Barnet in total during 2022-23. Black boys are 3.2 times more likely to be represented in this cohort than white boys. Boys from other ethnic groups (2.6) and a mixed or multiple ethnic background (2.2) are also over-represented. Black girls are 2.7 more likely to be in the looked-after group, followed by those from a mixed or multiple ethnic background (2.0) and other ethnic groups (1.4). The Council has recognised that care leavers face discrimination and disadvantage that impacts them throughout their lives and treats care experience as if it were a protected characteristic.

Disproportionality is less stark for those accessing early help support in the borough. Black children are 1.8 times more likely to have an early help referral, with children from mixed or multiple ethnic groups 1.6 times more likely to receive such support. Black children in the 0 to 4 year age range are 2.6 times more likely to experience an early help episode than white children. Those who identify as Asian or British Asian and other ethnic groups are in-line with the majority population for referrals to early help. However, for ages 0 to 4, all minority ethnicities are twice as likely to have an early help episode than white children.

Obesity in childhood can lead to the early onset of various health conditions and an increased risk of obesity and associated poor health in later life. 7.6% of Barnet's students are obese or severely obese in Reception, rising to 20.4% in Year 6. Both figures are lower than for London overall at 10.0% and 23.7% respectively.[5]

The prevalence of obesity is not distributed equally. The highest rates of obesity in Year 6 are found in Burnt Oak (26.7%), Colindale (24.3%), Childs Hill (23.5%), West Hendon (23.1%) and Edgware (21.9%)[6]. In 2019-20 in England, children in the most deprived areas were more than twice as likely as children in the least deprived to be obese, while the Black African group had the highest prevalence of obesity in both Reception and Year 6.[7]

School readiness is a key measure of early years development across a wide range of areas. Children from more disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to achieve good development

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[4] Children in low income families (2022)
[5] Prevalence of childhood obesity (2019-20)
[6] PHE Fingertips – Child and Maternal Health (2021)
[7] Health Profile for London 2021

and the evidence shows that differences by social background emerge early in life. Within Barnet in 2022/23, 70.4% of children achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception. This was above the overall average for London (69.1%) and England (67.3%). 58.2% of pupils receiving free school meals achieved a good level of development which was above England's attainment (52.2%) and in line with London (58.4%). In 2023, there remained a large gap between free school meal recipients in Barnet (58.2%) and national attainment for non-free school pupils (69.8%), although this was lower than in 2022. All ethnic groups achieved higher than their national comparators for school readiness, except for black pupils, who were in line with the national position, and any other ethnic group who were 1.3 percentage points below.

Attainment 8 scores measure students' average GCSE grades across eight subjects. In 2021-22, students in Barnet achieved an attainment score of 58.1 compared to 52.7 in London and 48.9 in England. Girls (59.5) had on average a higher score than boys (56.9), although the gap was less than in London or nationally. Asian students attained the highest Attainment 8 score at 71.5, with pupils from black groups (51.9) and those receiving free school meals (45.1) on average performing less well.[8]

The worst educational outcomes are often among children excluded from school. Exclusion is also linked with a higher risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime. In the school year 2020-21, Barnet (2.33%) had a lower proportion of children being temporarily excluded from school than the average for England (4.25%). However, black children (4.23%) and those from mixed ethnic groups (3.17%) were more likely to be excluded than other groups.[9] Of the 82 young people involved with the Youth Justice Service between April 2022 and March 2023, 29 were white, 24 were black and 14 were from other ethnic groups.

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[8] GCSE results by borough (2021-22)
[9] Permanent exclusions and suspensions in England (2020-21)

Health and Social Care

Health inequalities in Barnet vary across the borough and are often related to people's education, homes, employment, environment and behaviours. Differences in life expectancy between population groups often provide a clear indicator of health inequalities. Access to good quality services is an important way to reduce such inequalities.

There has been a significant decline in male average life expectancy in Barnet since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fall has been influenced largely by excess deaths due to COVID-19 and cardiovascular diseases. There has been a smaller decline in female life expectancy since 2017.

*Figure 6: Life expectancy at birth by sex in Barnet*
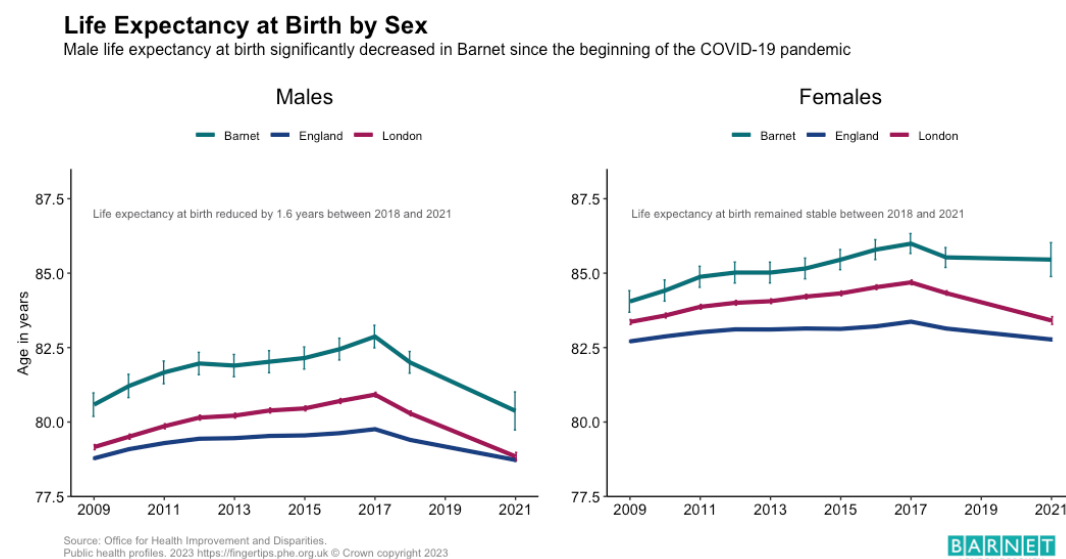
12

There are marked differences in people's life expectancy across Barnet. The difference between people living in the most and least deprived areas of the borough is 5.7 years for females and 6.7 years for males. This gap has narrowed over the last decade for men by 1.3 years, but has increased for women..

Figure 7: Life expectancy at birth by ward
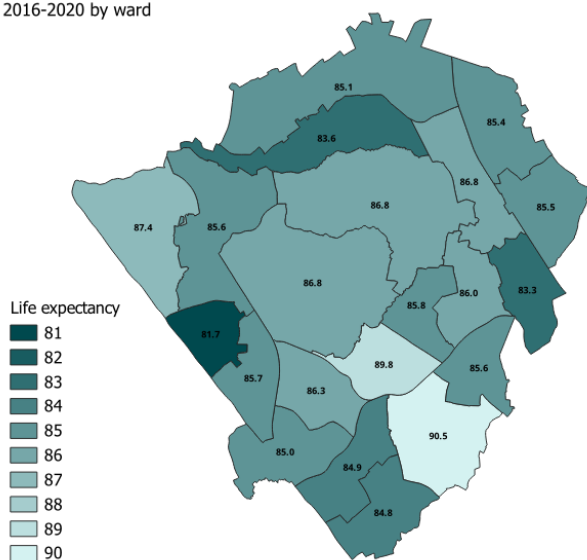

Barnet Male Life Expectancy at Birth
2016-2020 by ward
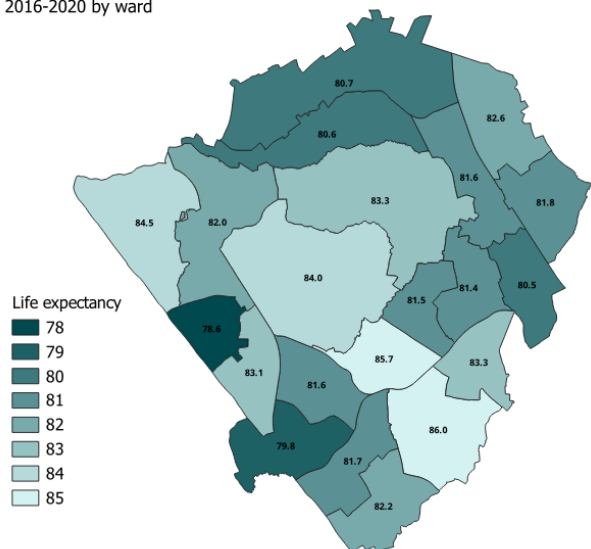
Barnet Female Life Expectancy at Birth
2016-2020 by ward

There is no local data on life expectancy for particular demographic groups. The most recent reliable national figures for life expectancy by ethnicity are for 2011-14. These showed that white and mixed ethnic groups in England and Wales had lower life expectancy at birth than

all other ethnic groups, while the black African group had statistically significant higher life expectancy.[10]

For males, the main conditions that affect inequality of life expectancy between those living in the most and least deprived areas are other causes[11] (22.6%), cancer (18%) and circulatory diseases (14.5%). For females, the main conditions contributing to the gap are circulatory diseases (27.2%), COVID-19 (24.1%) and respiratory diseases (19.6%).

Overall, people in Barnet tend have a comparatively long life-expectancy, but both men and women now spend more years in worse health than ten years ago. However, the increase for men has been greater. Healthy life expectancy at birth is 62.9 years for men and 67.1 for women, compared to 63.8 for men and 65.0 for women in London overall.[12] Poor health in later years of life is mostly attributable to long-term conditions such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, respiratory diseases and mental ill health.

Wider determinants and the circumstances in which people live affect health and influence the formation of unhealthy behaviours and health inequalities. The prevalence of obesity, alcohol abuse or dependence and smoking differs across Barnet and mostly mirrors the map of deprivation, with the highest prevalence of these behavioural risk factors observed in more deprived parts of the borough.

*Figure 8: Obesity, alcohol use and smoking prevalence compared to deprivation*

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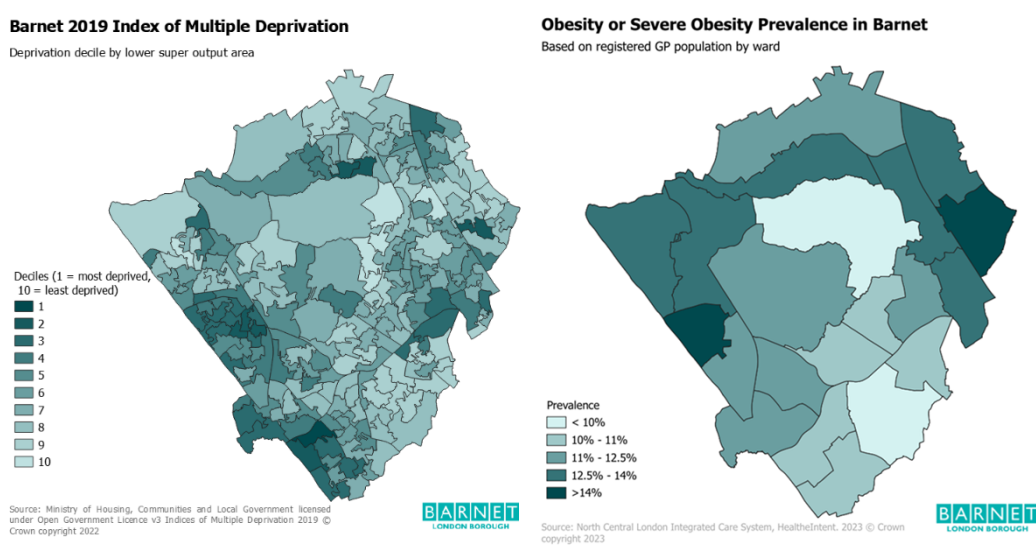
[10] ONS Ethnic Difference in Life Expectancy (2011-14)

[11] Other causes include all causes of death not included in the defined categories (e.g. unspecified infectious diseases, diseases of the blood, metabolic diseases etc.)

[12] PHE Public Health Outcomes Framework - Healthy life expectancy at birth (2018-20)
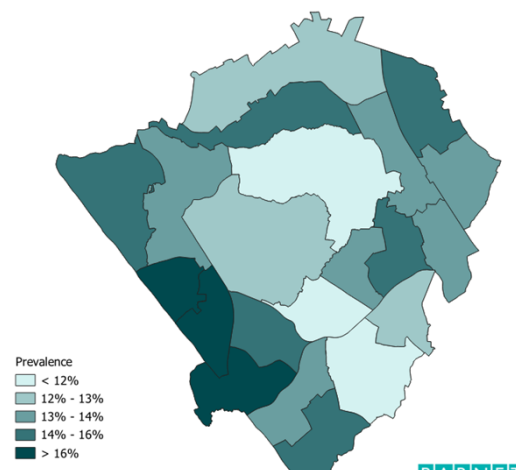
14

Alcohol Abuse or Dependency Prevalence in Barnet
Based on registered GP population by ward
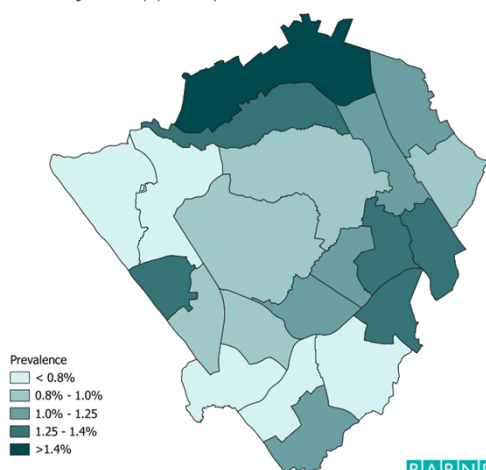
Prevalence
< 0.8%
0.8% - 1.0%
1.0% - 1.25
1.25 - 1.4%
>1.4%

Source: North Central London Integrated Care System, HealtheIntent. 2023 © Crown copyright 2023

Smoking Prevalence in Barnet
Based on registered GP population by ward

Prevalence
< 12%
12% - 13%
13% - 14%
14% - 16%
> 16%

Source: North Central London Integrated Care System, HealtheIntent. 2023 © Crown copyright 2023

More disadvantaged groups experiencing inequalities are also more likely to have a cluster of unhealthy behaviours, such as smoking, drinking, low consumption of fruit and vegetables and low levels of physical activity[13].

Although smoking prevalence in London fell from 16.3% to 12.9% between 2015 and 2019, it remains London's leading cause of premature death killing 8,000 people each year. Levels of smoking in Barnet also continue to fall, but we know rates are higher in more deprived areas, amongst those with routine and manual occupations and for men. This creates a level of disproportionality across wards in Barnet.

Hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions and alcohol related mortality in Barnet are lower than the London and England average. The prevalence of 'increasing or higher risk' drinking in England is generally greatest in the highest household income group. However, the rate of hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions is highest in the most deprived areas. This is believed to be due to interactions with other health behaviours in more deprived areas, such as smoking, poor diet and lack of exercise.

In 2019-20, over half (57%) of adults in Barnet were estimated to be overweight, higher than the London average (55.7%) but lower than that for England (62.8%). Across London, for both men and women, obesity was lowest in those aged under 25 with a gradual increase by age through to 55-64 years, after which prevalence decreases. Obesity prevalence was lowest in the least deprived and highest in the most deprived areas. Diet and physical activity are key risk factors for being overweight or obese[14].

In 2019-20, the proportion of the population meeting the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables on a 'usual day' in London was 55.8%, similar to England (55.4%). National data indicates that five-a-day consumption is lower in people who are unemployed (45.2%), living with a disability (52.1%), Asian (47.2%), black (45.7%) or living in the most deprived areas (45.7%)[15].

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[13] Global Burden of Disease Tool for London
[14] Health Profile for London (2021)
[15] Health Profile for London (2021)

15

Around a quarter of adults in Barnet (23.7%) took part in less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per week during 2019-20. This is similar to the London average (23.8%), but higher than the England average (22.9%). Findings from Sport England found wide inequalities in physical activity in adults. The proportion of physically active adults is lower for people who are in routine or semi-routine jobs (52%), long-term unemployed or have never worked (52%), living with a disability or long-term health condition (45%), Asian (48%) or black (52%).

In Barnet, black residents are twice as likely to use Adult Social Care services than white residents, with the age range of 18 to 40 years having the highest percentage of service users. Other populations are in line with the majority white population for accessing services. Wards that have the highest disproportionality are West Finchley, Finchley Church End and Hendon.

Learning disability support is accessed less by all ethnic minority groups compared to white residents, although there is higher usage by those in the 20 to 39 range identifying as black. Black residents are twice as likely to access mental health support services than the majority white group. This rises to three times more likely for those in the 20 to 39 age range. Those identifying as black are twice as likely to use physical support services than white residents.

White residents are 1.3 times more likely to have substance misuse issues than those from an ethnic minority background. However, black residents and those from a mixed or multiple ethnic background are twice as likely to have a substance misuse issue between the ages or 20 to 29. White residents in Burnt Oak and Cricklewood have the highest disproportionate number of people with substance misuse issues.

16

Employment

More than
one third
of working age
residents with
disabilities are
economically
inactive

White
employees earn
19% more
more on
average than
black workers
across London

More than
one third
of working
age black
residents are
economically
inactive

Men earn
10% more
than women
on average
in Barnet

Disabled
employees earn
17% less
than
non-disabled
employees in
London

Men are
twice
as likely to be
managers,
directors and
senior officials

Residents from
ethnic minorities
born in the UK
have the
highest
unemployment
rate

Those who experience the greatest income inequality are more likely to have poorer outcomes in education, housing, health and life expectancy. Low-income households also have a disproportionate over-representation of people with one or more protected characteristic. In London, those at highest risk of living in deprived areas include young people, disabled people and people in black, Asian and other ethnic minority groups.

Working and earning a reasonable wage are a crucial part of many of our lives helping us to support our families and have a decent quality of life. Some residents face inequalities that limit their ability to find a job and make a decent living.

24.3% of Barnet's working age population is economically inactive. The rate for women (30.9%) is significantly higher than for men (19.2%). Both are higher than the respective rates for London at 24.6% for women and 15.9% for men. The rate of economic inactivity for residents with disabilities is 37.5%[16]. The most common reasons given for economic inactivity are long-term sickness (32.5%) and looking after a family or home (19.3%). 79.7% do not want a job.[17]

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[16] Employment rates by disability (2021)
[17] Economic inactivity by gender (2022)

Working age economic inactivity varies significantly between broad ethic groups.[18]

	Barnet	London
Indian	11.6%	16.9%
Other Ethnic Group	20.9%	25.1%
White	21.8%	17.2%
Mixed Ethnic	24.3%	28.5%
Black or Black British	35.3%	26.3%
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	Not available	33.8%

Unemployment rates in Barnet are lowest for white residents not born in the UK (4.0%), followed by white UK born residents (4.7%) and residents from ethnic minorities born outside the UK (6.8%). The highest rate is for residents from ethnic minorities born in the UK (8.9%).[19]

In 2020/21, the estimated median income of taxpayers in Barnet was £32,200, higher than London (£31,500) and England (£26,600).[20] Median weekly earnings for full-time male workers (£654) are higher than those for women (£594).[21] Men (17.3%) are twice as likely as women (8.5%) to be classified as managers, directors and senior officials, although a greater proportion of women are in professional occupations than men.[22]

Across London, there is a difference in the earnings of white employees compared to those of other ethnicities. In 2019, the median hourly wage of black workers was 19% lower, followed by workers from other ethnic backgrounds (11%) and Asian workers (10%).[23] The disability pay gap was 16.6%[24].

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[18] Economic inactivity rate by broad ethnic group
[19] Unemployment rate by ethnic group and nationality
[20] Average income of taxpayers (2020-21)
[21] Earnings by workplace (2022)
[22] Employment by occupation type and gender (2021)
[23] Ethnicity pay gaps in London (2020)
[24] Disability pay gaps in London (2020)

PLACES

We are working to better understand residents' different experiences of places. This will include analysis of inequalities in access to services and amenities, such as parks, playgrounds and open spaces, public conveniences, transport and car parking. This section of the report currently focuses on inequalities in housing, deprivation, crime and anti-social behaviour across the borough.

Housing and Deprivation

High house prices and rents have long created challenges for households in Barnet. Costs have risen unexpectedly fast compared to incomes exacerbating the problem. The ongoing cost of living crisis, with inflation outstripping earnings growth, brings with it a risk of increased poverty and inequality.

In the 2021 Census, the number of households with at least one dimension of deprivation (based on employment, education, health and disability and housing status) decreased by 6.4% compared to 2011, with 50% of all households in Barnet having at least one dimension of deprivation. 25,960 households (13%) recorded two or more dimensions of deprivation, a reduction of 18.2% from 2011. Burnt Oak and Watling Park (66%) Brent Cross and Staples Corner (64%), Grahame Park (62%), Mill Hill Broadway (60%), West Hendon (58%) and Hendon Central (58%) recorded the highest level of households having at least one dimension of deprivation.

7,766 (13.4%) of pensioners are living in poverty.[25] The highest rates are found in Colindale North (38.0%), Burnt Oak (25.8%), Cricklewood (23.5%), East Finchley (22.7%) and West Hendon (21.2%).

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[25] Defined as pensioners in receipt of Pension Credit (2022).

15,188 (10.4%) of households in Barnett are estimated to be living in fuel poverty[26]. The highest levels of fuel poverty are found in Burnt Oak (17.6%), Colindale South (17.1%), Cricklewood (15.1%), West Hendon (13.3%) and Colindale North (12.6%).

9.4% of households in Barnet were overcrowded based on the number of bedrooms being less than needed. This is a slight decline from 10% at the previous Census and lower than the London average (11.1%). Burnt Oak and Watling Park (20.8%), Grahame Park (19.3%), Brent Cross and Staples Corner (16.0%), Mill Hill Broadway (15.9%) and Colindale (15.1%) recorded the highest rates of overcrowding. Across London, those from black, Asian and other minority groups are around twice as likely to live in overcrowded conditions as white residents[27].

There has been a rapid increase in the number of people approaching Barnet Homes as homeless over the last six months. This places additional strain on the limited social housing available and has increased the number of households in temporary accommodation. Homelessness in Barnet is most keenly felt amongst minority ethnic groups. Those identifying as black are 4.2 times more likely to present as being homeless than those identifying as white. Those from mixed ethnicity or multiple ethnic backgrounds are 2.3 times more likely to approach Barnet Homes for this reason.

Over a fifth of Barnet's residents aged over 16 (21.2%) feel lonely always, often or some of the time compared to figures of 23.7% for London and 22.3% for England.[28] In terms of personal characteristics, those at high risk of feeling lonely include those whose gender identity is different from their sex at birth, who identify with a lesbian, gay or other sexual orientation, who are from minority ethnic groups and those with a disability. People who live alone, are widowed or surviving a civil partnership partner, provide care or rent accommodation are at higher risk of loneliness.

74.2% of those facing deprivation in Barnet are also likely to be considered digitally isolated or excluded. Digital exclusion compounds the complexity of a person's needs and the inequality they are likely to face when accessing services. 11% of Barnet residents have never used the internet compared to 7% in London. This was similar across all ethnic groups, but 51% of Londoners aged over 75 had never used the internet.[29]

20% of households in Barnet do not have access to private outside space, compared to 21% across London and 12% in England[30]. The highest proportion of households without access to gardens are found in Hendon Central (36%), Childs Hill (35%), Colney Hatch (31%) and North Finchley (31%). Across London, lower income and black residents are least likely to have access to a garden. Ethnic minority Londoners and those living in more deprived neighbourhoods are also more likely to have poor access to high quality local green spaces.

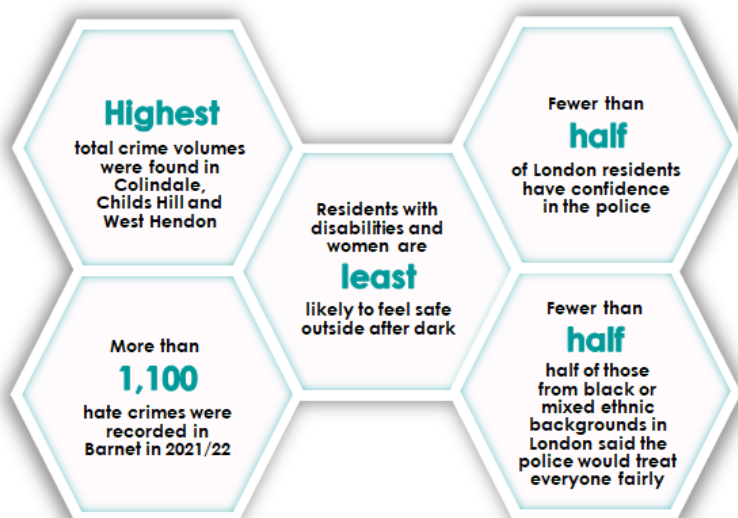[26] Based on the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) fuel poverty metric (2022)
[27] State of London Report - Dashboard
[28] Active Lives Adult Survey, Sport England (2021)
[29] Internet use by borough and population sub-groups
[30] ONS Access to gardens and public green space in Great Britain (2020)

Crime and Community Safety

Across London, trust and confidence in the police have seen sustained declines over recent years. In 2021-22, confidence was 45%, a fall of 14% percentage points over the previous three years. Trust in the police stood at 66%, a decline of 17% over the same period. The lowest levels of trust and confidence were expressed by those who are of mixed ethnicity, black, LGB+ or aged under 25. Overall, 62% of respondents said the police would treat everyone fairly. Londoners aged under 25 (56%), those from black (46%) or mixed ethnic backgrounds (44%) or LGB+ (50%) are far less likely to feel the police would treat everyone fairly[31].

In the 12 months to March 2022, there were 10,746 anti-social behaviour calls made to the police in Barnet. Some of these would have been related to breaches of Covid regulations. The wards with the highest number of calls were Colindale (2,424), Golder's Green (2,139), Childs Hill (1,661); Burnt Oak (1,627) and West Hendon (1,254). Over the same period, the wards with the highest crime volumes were Colindale (3,161), Childs Hill (2,834), West Hendon (2,713), Burnt Oak (2,523) and Golders Green (2,272).

There were 2,332 incidents of burglary across Barnet between April 2021 and March 2022, a decrease of 10.2% compared to the previous year. The highest number of incidents occurred in Childs Hill (201), Hendon (185) and Colindale (169). The lowest volumes were found in Underhill (53), Totteridge (65) and Oakleigh (74).

Over the same time period, there were 127 possession of weapons incidents in the borough, with the highest numbers occurring in Burnt Oak (17), Childs Hill (12) and West Hendon (10).

Some geographical areas of London experience much higher rates and concentrations of violence than others. However, some groups are disproportionately overrepresented as victims and offenders. Research has found that young black males are disproportionately

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31 A Better Police Service for London MOPAC London Surveys (2021-22)

more likely to be either a victim or a perpetrator of serious violence than any other category of young people[32].

In the period 1 January 2022 to 31 May 2023, there were 2,420 recorded convictions or cautions in Barnet. 48% of perpetrators were white European, 24% Afro-Caribbean and 9% Asian. Over the same period, where ethnicity was recorded, 51% of the victims of crime were white European, 16% Asian and 16% Afro-Caribbean.

3,446 stop and searches were undertaken by the police in Barnet in 2022. 46% of the subjects were white European, 29% were black and 11% Asian.

There were 2,890 domestic abuse offences in Barnet in the 12 months to March 2023, a reduction of 3% compared to the previous years. The rate of domestic abuse offences in Barnet (7.2 per 1,000 population) was lower than the rate for London overall (9.8)[33]. The substantial majority of victims of domestic abuse are women.

There has been an increase in most forms of hate crime in Barnet over recent years, with 1,114 offences recorded in 2021-22[34].

Hate Crime Offences in Barnet	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Race and Religious	654	787	787	786	823
Antisemetic	122	190	165	128	155
Islamophobia	55	30	36	11	33
Disability	19	12	22	14	23
Homophobia	39	39	75	72	67
Transgender	4	6	3	5	13

Over three fifths (64%) of residents feel safe when outside in their local area after dark. However, residents with a disability (51%), women (55%), Jewish residents (58%), people living in areas of higher deprivation (57%) and those aged over 65 (59%) are significantly less likely to say this. Residents living in Edgware (50%) are the least likely to feel safe in their area after dark.

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[32] Understanding serious violence among young people in London - London Datastore
[33] MPS Crime Dashboard
[34] Barnet Community Safety Strategic Assessment (September 2022)

PLANET

Further work is being undertaken to explore inequalities issues in relation to sustainability and environmental issues. This will include consideration of the experiences of residents with services, such as waste collection and recycling, street cleanliness, tree-planting and access to electric vehicle charging points.

However, the effects of air pollution on health are well established with impacts on lung development in children, heart disease, stroke, cancer, exacerbation of asthma and increased mortality.[35] Air quality mapping of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) for Barnet suggests higher air pollution in more deprived parts of the borough and along main roads, although this is improving in most locations. The chart below identifies the current areas of focus with the poorest air quality and monitoring locations.
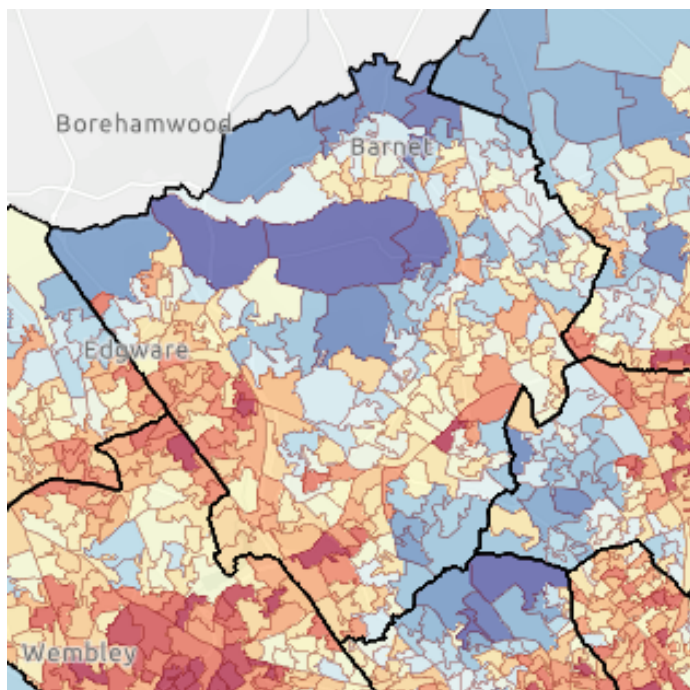
Figure 9: Air quality priority areas
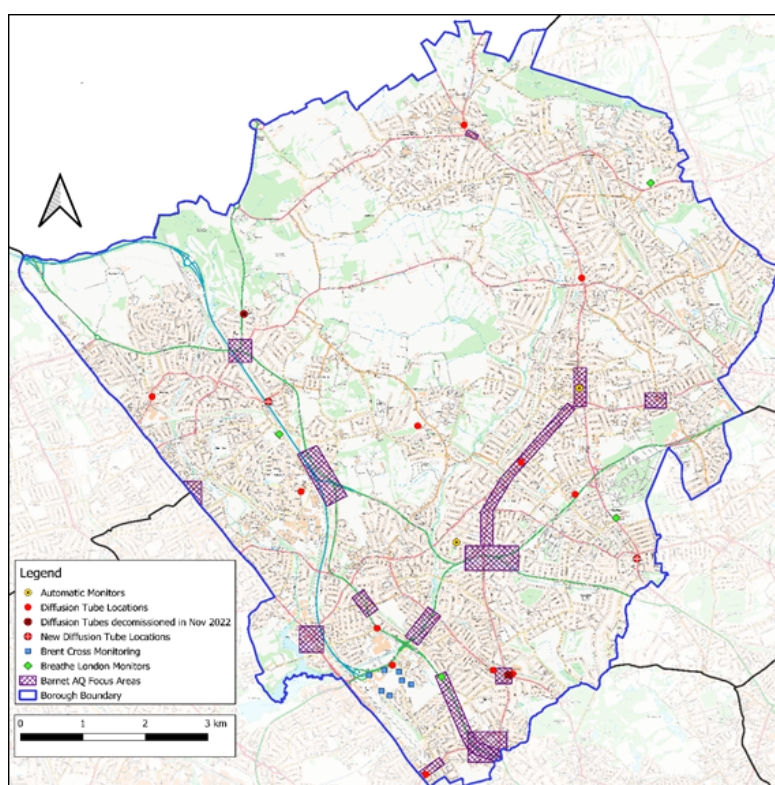
Climate risk maps have been produced to analyse climate exposure and vulnerability across Greater London.[36] Climate vulnerability relates to people's exposure to climate impacts like flooding or heatwaves, but also to personal and social factors that affect their ability to cope with and respond to extreme events, such as age, income and ethnicity. High climate risk coincides with areas of income and health inequalities demonstrating that climate impacts will not affect all communities equally. Areas with high concentrations of vulnerable populations are most exposed to climate impacts such as heatwaves or floods.

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[35] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2022-air-pollution
[36] Climate Risk Mapping - London Datastore

Figure 10: Climate risk map for Barnet

Public transport accessibility is crucial to alleviating traffic congestion and promoting urban sustainability. It also has a key role in helping to tackle inequality, by improving access to opportunities such as jobs, education and other key services. WebCAT provides information on London's transport system and assesses public transport access levels. The map below rates locations in Barnet by distance from frequent public transport ranging from dark blue (worst) to red (best). Access to public transport is high across our growth areas, town centres and main road corridors, but orbital connections remain lower.

Figure 11: Public transport access levels in Barnet

24
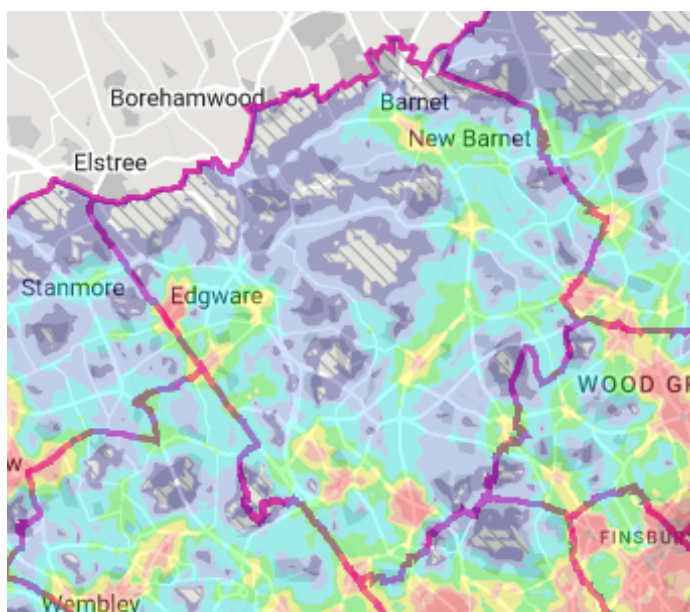
NEXT STEPS

Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26 commits us to fighting inequality and improving life chances for a good quality, healthy and long life. Wherever we find that people have experienced inequality or disproportionate impact due to their background or identity, we will work to tackle this and eradicate it. Working in partnership, we will ensure that no one is left behind and enable our communities and residents to take advantage of new and existing possibilities.[37]

There is much current good practice across the Council and our future focus will be to:

- Improve outcomes for our residents by tackling the gaps between different communities. This will include shifting our focus from personal responsibility to developing a better understanding of the structural, place-based drivers of inequalities.

- Improve our understanding of our communities and residents' experiences to ensure services are fair, equitable and accessible to all. This includes developing a focus on intersectionality to understand how combinations of equality characteristics influence their experiences of the borough.

- Use our new community participation strategy to better engage residents from all communities, including minority, seldom heard, protected and vulnerable groups.

- Promote and celebrate the diversity of our borough and foster community cohesion.

We recognise that these are long-term challenges, requiring systematic, joint working with partners. Some of the issues will need to be addressed at national or regional levels, but we have a crucial role to play.

There is a need for structural change and new policies to address inequalities, not just one-off interventions. There is much we can do locally, working with our residents to change how we deliver our services. Our initiatives and actions will be informed by ongoing engagement work with our communities.

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[37] Caring for people, our places and the planet: Our plan for Barnet 2023-2026

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RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION SURVEY SUMMARY

The following table highlights the findings of the Residents' Perception Survey where significant inequalities exist in relation to residents' responses. It also summarises the findings of the ethnographic research on residents with disabilities which was instigated following the Residents' Perception Survey.

Age	Residents aged over 65 (59%) are less likely to feel safe in their local area after dark than the population overall (64%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 65 (57%) are less likely to agree that Barnet supports residents to live a healthier life than the population overall (65%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 55 to 65 (54%) and over 65 (61%) are less satisfied with the way the Council runs things than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 65 (62%) are less likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy than the population overall (72%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 65 (58%) are less likely to feel that the Council keeps them informed than the population overall (70%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 55 to 65 (56%) and over 65 (56%) are less likely to agree that the Council promotes equal opportunities for all and equal access to services than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022). Residents aged over 65 (63%) are less likely to report their health as being good or very good than the population overall (82%). Residents aged over 65 (69%) are less likely to use the internet daily or almost every day than the population overall (89%) (RPS 2022).
Disability	Residents with a disability (75%) are less likely to be satisfied with their local area as a place to live than the population as a whole (85%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (82%) are less likely to agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (88%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (51%) are less likely to feel safe in their local area after dark than the population overall (64%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (48%) are less likely to agree that Barnet supports residents to live a healthier life than the population overall (65%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (52%) are less satisfied with the way the Council runs things than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (58%) are less likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy than the population overall (72%) (RPS 2022).

	Residents with a disability (56%) are less likely to feel that the Council keeps them informed than the population overall (70%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (51%) are less likely to agree that the Council promotes equal opportunities for all and equal access to services than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (28%) are less likely to report their health as being good or very good than the population overall (82%) (RPS 2022). Residents with a disability (75%) are less likely to use the internet daily or almost every day than the population overall (89%) (RPS 2022). The 2021/22 Residents' Perception Survey showed that disabled residents are significantly less likely to be satisfied across a number of key indicators compared to residents without a disability. To investigate these findings in-depth, the Tackling the Gaps Group commissioned Habitus, a specialised ethnographic research company, to conduct a study to understand the lived experiences of disabled residents. The project set out to address the following objectives: • To understand the lived experiences of disabled residents (and to some extent their families and carers) in engaging or accessing Council and community services. • To explore how different protected characteristics and intersectionality shape disabled participants' lived experiences in engaging in community life. • To identify barriers to participation in Council and community services. Four recommendations were shaped by the disabled residents, parents, and carers who took part in the study: (1) Understanding how residents identify and want to be identified is key in meaningfully engaging with them. (2) Consider how disabled residents access information and find different modes of making this accessible. (3) Community matters – working with voluntary sector organisations can help disabled residents engage meaningfully in community life. (4) Create opportunities to enable disabled residents to engage in community life and civic participation in different ways.
Race/Ethnicity	White residents (67%) are less satisfied with the way the Council runs things than those from an ethnic minority background (72%) (RPS 2022). White residents (68%) are less likely to feel that the Council keeps them informed than those from an ethnic minority background (74%) (RPS 2022).

	White residents (67%) are less likely to agree that the Council promotes equal opportunities for all and equal access to services than those from an ethnic minority background (71%) (RPS 2022).
	Residents from an ethnic minority background (76%) are more likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy than the population overall (72%) (RPS 2022).
	Residents from an ethnic minority background (69%) are more likely to agree that Barnet supports residents to live a healthier life than the population overall (65%) (RPS 2022).
Religion or belief	Jewish residents (58%) are less likely to feel safe in their local area after dark than the population overall (64%) (RPS 2022).
	Jewish residents (65%) are less likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy than the population overall (72%). Muslim residents (81%) and Christian residents (75%) are more likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy (RPS 2022).
	Muslim residents (78%) are more likely to feel that the Council keeps them informed than the population overall (70%) (RPS 2022).
	Muslim residents (75%) and Christian residents (70%) are more likely to be satisfied with the way Council runs things than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022).
	Jewish residents (56%) are less likely to agree that the Council promotes equal opportunities for all and equal access to services than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022).
	Muslim residents (74%) and Christian residents (70%) are more likely to agree that Barnet supports residents to live a healthier life than the population overall (65%) (RPS 2022).
Sex	Female residents (55%) are less likely to feel safe in their local area after dark than the population overall (64%) (RPS 2022).
	Female residents (63%) are less likely to agree that the Council promotes equal opportunities for all and equal access to services than male residents (71%).
	Female residents (67%) are less likely to feel that the Council keeps then informed than male residents (72%) (RPS 2002).
Other relevant groups	Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (78%) are less likely to be satisfied with their area as a place to live than the population as a whole (85%) (RPS 2022).
	Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (57%) are less likely to feel safe in their local area after dark than the population overall (64%) (RPS 2022).

	Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (60%) are less likely to agree that Barnet supports residents to live a healthier life than the population overall (65%) (RPS 2022). Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (62%) are less satisfied with the way the Council runs things than the population overall (67%) (RPS 2022). Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (68%) are less likely to feel that the Council is trustworthy (72%) (RPS 2022). Residents living in the more deprived parts of the borough (83%) are less likely to use the internet daily or almost every day than the population overall (89%) (RPS 2022).

EDI Policy Engagement Findings Phase 1 (Feb – Aug 2023)

Introduction and Context

- This presentation reports on the main findings from a series of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) workshops delivered in February – March 2023. This research was led by the Strategy and Engagement Team.

- The insights gathered from engaging with a range of stakeholders will help inform the Council's new EDI policy (external facing).

- The Council wants to build Barnet into a strong cohesive community, where diversity is celebrated, and everyone has equal opportunity regardless of their background.

- The significance of recent changes has validated the need to refresh our current EDI policy to align with the vision and priorities in the new Corporate Plan.

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Approach and Methodology

- The Strategy and Engagement team worked with a range of stakeholders (internal and external) to develop the engagement method and discussion guide.

- The workshops explored several areas including common EDI terms, experiences of discrimination and EDI priorities for Barnet. Where possible, the workshops ensured views of participants could be understood by location and protected characteristics.

- Workshops were widely promoted on Engage Barnet, Comms channels, internal teams and external partners (e.g. Barnet Together Alliance and The Barnet Group.

- Five workshops were delivered during the period with 102 people participating:
  - Resident workshop on 28 February (33 residents)
  - Resident virtual workshop on 2 March (18 residents)
  - Barnet Mencap workshop led by Adult Services on 9 March (10 residents)
  - VCS workshop on 13 March, (24 people)
  - Young peoples workshop on 20 March (17 young residents)

Profile of residents: 70% female, 40% with disability and 50% from Chipping Barnet Constituency

Age	Total
11-17	17
18-34	7
35-44	11
45-54	13
55-64	12
65+	8

Sexual Orientation	Total
Bisexual	2
Gay or Lesbian	3
Other	2
Heterosexual	40
Prefer not to say	4

Gender	Total
Male	18
Female	48
Prefer not to say	2

Disability	Total
Yes	31
No	47

Ethnicity	Total
Asian	22
Black	6
Mixed	3
Other	2
White	33
Prefer not to say	2

Religion	Total
Buddhist	3
Christian	12
Hindu	6
Jewish	4
Muslim	6
No religion	13
Prefer not to say	7

Constituency	Total
Chipping Barnet	25
Finchley and Golders Green	12
Hendon	13

Living in Barnet: what residents like/dislike about the borough

Theme	Like	Dislike
Environment	"The green spaces, the geography/ topography of the landscape" – Female, 45-54, Black British, Brunswick Park	"litter, dirty streets, dirty park area especially around playground for children" – Female, 65-74, Asian / Asian British – Bangladeshi, Colindale
Transport	"Transport links are superb" – Male, 55-64, White British, Hendon	"Travel options limited East vs West, parking restrictions in key high streets…no free off street parking near me" - Female,45-54, Asian / Asian British – Bangladeshi, Brunswick Park
Safety	"feels a bit safer than other boroughs for families" – aged 25-34, Asian / Asian British – Chinese, Colindale	"Can be intimidating people at time, hence would be nice to see more police presence especially around tube stations" Male, 35-44, White, Hendon
Community	"We have a very unique and diverse culture" – Male, 25-34, Black African, Friern Barnet "Like a village feel, community, friendly" – Female, 65-74, White British, East Finchley	"Lack of inclusion of elderly and disabled [people] in their life choices, vast inequalities between richest and poorest" –Female, 45-54, White British, High Barnet "Lack of communications, knowing what is going on in the borough"
Education	"Good schools" – Female, 55-64, Asian / Asian British – Indian, Underhill	'lack of special education needs schools' - Female, 44-54, White British, West Finchley
Housing	"Houses rather than high rises" – Male, 65-74, West Finchley	"Over intensification of built up area in Hendon. Hendon + Colindale have little to no input from Barnet [Council]" – Male, 35-44, Asian / Asian British – Indian, West Hendon

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Insights on the meaning of common EDI terms

- **Equality**: most people were familiar with the term and provided similar definitions.

"Equality is treating everyone the same regardless of characteristics." - Male, 25-34, Asian / Asian British – Indian, West Finchley

""Equality means creating opportunities and lowering barriers to entry" - Male,55-64, White British, Golders Green

"Equal opportunities doesn't always mean treating everyone the same. Sometimes groups require more resources than others to access equal opportunities. " – VCS workshop

- **Diversity**: comments ranged from recognising and respecting differences to celebrating them. Several reflections that diversity is merely "a tick box for organisations" if it's not backed by meaningful actions

"[Diversity means] many different people from different backgrounds, races and beliefs coming together – Male, 14-15, Asian / Asian British – Indian, Woodhouse

"Diversity needs to be more than just visible. Just celebrating days and months is not good enough. Speak up, don't be a bystander." – Female, 18-24, Asian, Underhill

"Giving everyone a seat at the table – having good representation across the board (from top to bottom)" – VCS workshop

- **Inclusion**: participants provided similar responses centred around 'putting words into action' to ensure everyone can be involved, but exceptions were mentioned

"Ensuring everyone can participate – a sense of togetherness. Not leaving anyone isolated."- Female, 18-24, Asian / Asian British – Bangladeshi, East Barnet"

"Not everyone should be included in everything -some services need to be exclusive to certain people, i.e., religion /faith based; Sex based" - 45-55, White British, East Finchley

"Reaching out to the community to let know there's opportunities to be more included and not always waiting for them to come to us" – VCS workshop

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A New Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy for Barnet

- **Equity**: participants were less familiar with this term and how it differs from 'equality'. Some posted/described an image to illustrate the differences or searched for definitions online.

"Equity = equality" – young person, aged 11-17

*"Fellow residents were particularly talking extensively about the distinction between equity and equality and I felt there was a disagreement on those topics which creates barrier to move forward and discuss what action or plans need to be done.'
– Male, 35-44, White, Colindale*

*"Giving someone a step ladder, putting people in a position to be able to compete. Need real life examples to visualise what we are trying to achieve."
– Female, 35-44, Black African, Colindale*

- **Further reflections on language**: words mentioned often in discussions include fairness, respect, representation, community, belonging and access. There was a general agreement that the EDI policy should be 'easy to understand and visual'.

"On the language we are using in this discussion ... most people won't know or care what we are on about. There is far too much jargon" – Female, 55-64, White British, High Barnet

""..My perspective as a resident is don't get too hung up about the terms , just deliver the outcomes. If you think people won't understand the words in the policy, just give examples." – Female, White - Turkish / Turkish Cypriot, 55-64, Whetstone

"Fairness and belonging should be part of the EDI policy locally. Also, focus on equality of opportunity and not of outcome will ensure equity for all" – VCS workshop

Differences and discrimination: summary of the views and experiences shared

- Acknowledgment that anyone can be discriminated against but some are more susceptible. Often listed the Equality Act protected characteristics without promoting.

- Other types of discrimination mentioned include social class, language, long-term illness and unnecessary stipulations e.g. requiring a certain qualification to get a job.

- Some participants recounted times when they experienced and/or witnessed unfair treatment. Note some examples were from experiences outside the borough.

- Young people emphasised the impact of social media and that it normalises discriminatory behaviours, branding them as 'jokes', which young people emulate.

- Although there was support for championing EDI principles, discussions highlighted competing beliefs among groups and the need to tactfully address nuanced topics.

Differences and discrimination quotes

Broadly speaking, comments related to unfair treatment were caused by assumptions about visible characteristics and/or failure to recognise less visible ones.

"Many physically disabled people in wheelchairs cannot get into buildings, shops, meetings, organisations to be able to participate"	*"Discrimination is all about money/status, POVERTY. The other in ethnic minority should have a space to identify not a tick box."*	*'Bullied at school/local area due to weight and background (Hungarian). Often wake up extra early to avoid bullies on way to school.'*
"Acts of racism within communities. taxis not picking up me and my boyfriend (interracial gay couple)"	*.."lack of women-only facilities at New Barnet Better swimming pool. The showers and cubicles have big gaps at top and bottom, which as a woman makes me feel vulnerable…Muslim and orthodox Jewish women would not be able to swim there due to the proximity to men."*	*"I haven't felt discriminated against in Barnet - but I am a white woman (a lot of privileges) and do not outwardly look Muslim or queer (both of which I am). I can easily hide/disguise these characteristic – and I do on purpose - out of fear I think"*
"Lack of inclusion of neurodiversity and disability. Not sufficient funding for children's yp to access psychology education assessments"	*"I have seen twice in the Post office when customers been told to go back to their home country"*	*"[At a swim pool outside Barnet] General Manager stopped me swimming to ask who gave me permission to wear modest swim wear outfit! I felt small"*

Summary of priorities for the EDI Policy

EDI Priority Theme	Quotes from participants
Access to services: ensure everyone can access service and prioritise supporting those most in need, e.g. people who not can access online services	*"Let people have the same opportunity to access information / services without any barriers. Offer priority support to those most in need to ensure inclusion and equity"* *"Website to have an easily found directory of services with their contacts"*
Communication: use inclusive language, reflect Barnet's diversity & promote EDI work	*"Translate the jargon into [plain] English first please!"* *"Barnet Council to be proactive and take positive actions for a more proportionate representation of local communities"* *"Make it obvious to Barnet residents that these conversations are happening"*
Community events: more initiatives that foster community togetherness	*"Bringing communities together and continuous dialogue with community groups and residents once the EDI strategy is in place (not just the discussions now)"*
Education/Training: ways to learn about on EDI matters and get involved	*"Advocacy/champions in the borough"*
Protection against discrimination: ideas include increasing Police presence, heavier sanctions and re-educating offenders	*'Commitment borough wide including schools .. to tackling racism, homophobia, toxic masculinity.'*

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EDI vision for Barnet

Proposed by..	In the future, we want..	We will know we have made a difference because…
Residents	*"People to feel respected, understood, celebrated, educated, heard and included.*	*"There will be harmony, peace + a strong sense of community where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil and achieve their potential."*
Residents	*"People to feel ownership and empowered to be able to engage + contribute to the full diverse community."*	*"Residents enjoy well being and see themselves represented at every level in the Council."*
Residents at Barnet Mencap	*"[The Borough to be] more inclusive / respectable to all communities and [Barnet Council] to actually do what they say – follow up on actions!"*	*There will be more caring people and a better atmosphere where everyone is [considered] normal / ordinary – even people with disabilities*
VCS session	*"everyone to feel that Barnet is their home and part of the community"*	*"everyone should feel part of the community. No one should feel like a second class citizen"*
Young people	*'people to be more opened minded, educated about different cultures/beliefs, feel safer and not feel like outliers because of a specific different trait they have'*	*we will see ideas not repeated in sessions like these often and inequality would stop*

A New Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy for Barnet

Emerging recommendations to date

The findings from this engagement should be considered with other insights to enhance the Council's approach to EDI. Key recommendations include:

- **EDI Policy**: keep it simple, visual and accessible while addressing EDI priorities

- **Accountability**: produce and publish an EDI action plan, implement robust processes to monitor progress.

- **Research**: adopt an evidence based approach to identify and support those most in need, bringing in specialist advice where necessary.

- **Embed engagement**: raise greater awareness of the EDI work and consistently involve residents, living the Community Participation Strategy.

- **Partnerships:** work closely with VCS organisations, businesses, schools, police, NHS and other partners to improve EDI in the borough.

A New Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy for Barnet

EDI Policy Engagement
Phase 2 (Sept – Dec 2023)

Introduction and Context

- This presentation reports on the phase 2 engagement (Sept – Dec 2023) which gathered views on possible EDI themes, priorities, vision and inclusive language.

- This builds on the insights from phase 1 (Feb - Aug 2023), reinforcing the council's commitment to co-producing the new policy.

- Resident workshops were promoted on Engage Barnet, Comms channels, internal teams and external partners. There was also a focus on engaging with under-represented groups.

- Eight resident workshops were delivered during the period with 80 people participating:
  o Resident workshop on 17 Oct (26 residents)
  o Young peoples workshop on 23 Oct (13 residents)
  o Resident virtual workshops in Nov (18 residents)
  o Young peoples workshop led by F.U.S.E Youth Project on 27 Nov (7 residents)
  o LGBTQ+ communities workshop led by Inkluder in Nov (8 residents)
  o Barnet Mencap workshop on 7 Dec (8 residents)

Profile of residents: 70% female, 25 % with disability and 25% aged 11 – 17 years old

Age	Total
11-17	20
18-34	5
35-44	11
45-54	11
55-64	11
65+	6
Unknown	16

Gender	Total
Male	21
Female	49
Unknown	10

Ethnicity	Total
Asian	24
Black	7
Other	1
White	30
Unknown	18

Disability	Total
Mobility	5
Reduced physical capacity	7
Vision	2
Mental illness	3
Hearing	1
Physical co-ordination	1
Learning difficulties	5

Religion	Total
Buddhist	2
Christian	14
Hindu	5
Jewish	4
Muslim	10
No religion	12
Unknown	7

Sexual Orientation	Total
LGBT	13
Heterosexual	36
Unknown	32

General insights from the EDI phase 2 engagement

- Demonstrating how EDI is woven into the Corporate priorities of 'caring for people, place and planet' solidifies the Council's commitment to driving equality.
- Recognising that EDI is a multifaceted topic that evokes various emotions, it is crucial to clearly articulate the purpose and scope of the policy e.g. responsibilities, timeframe and resources.
- Although there is general support for the emerging EDI themes and priorities, concrete actions need to be outlined to make the ambitions real and get residents fully on board.

"So you've got the vision and then you've got the emerging policy areas, which are, if you like, the outcomes, but perhaps what's missing is what do you need to do in order to get them the action… It's just, I suppose, a language is a bit vague. Those words could mean almost anything, and it's making it meaningful."

"While there is hope that the emerging priorities will foster inclusivity, the skepticism arises due to past experiences and the need for concrete actions to support individuals. People felt like it was another empty commitment until proven otherwise….because the language is not directly relating to LGBTQ specific experiences it leads to there being allowances for a lack of commitment to the diversity of all queer identities when actioning the plan"

Insights on Theme 1: Tackle inequalities and gaps between communities

- General support for this theme but requires more details on what 'inequalities and gaps between communities' will be tackled and what actions will be taken.
- There is a need for a nuanced approach that recognises differences between communities as well as differences within communities.
- Careful not to pitch communities against each other and create further divisions.

"Some communities may not consider one problem as a gap between another community. This can cause tensions between communities because of different opinions." – young person

"I'm not sure what gaps between communities mean. Do you mean that they're not integrating with each other? Do you mean the difference in how different communities access different services? Funding that's provided to different groups?"

"I mean obviously there's got to be some filtering and criteria for services, but one feels that it's just obstacles that are put in your path, you know, and sort of perhaps [in the] hope that you'll give up and not try and pursue your requests or needs."

Insights on theme 2: Improving understanding of residents lived experiences

- This theme was initially worded 'Improving our understanding of our community and residents' experiences' but residents fed back that it was too broad.
- The revised focus on understanding 'residents lived experiences' was welcomed.
- Clarity needed around what actions will be taken to meet this priority.

"I'm not sure about the lived experience priority…. "improve understanding of residents' individuality and diversity" is the greater priority/goal and improving the understanding of residents' lived experiences is one of the methods, goals and objectives that serves the higher goal"

"They're like they're the Council of what, like an area and then what's in the areas, communities and homes, and we make up the communities. And we live in the homes --- young person

"we should encourage people to be responsible for their own learnings and be more proactive to try to understand different people's lived experiences as well. So maybe some campaigns regarding that because it shouldn't be people's responsibilities to educate them about their experiences like you should be proactive in trying to learn yourself as well."

Insights on theme 3: Work in partnership to develop capability in the community

- This theme was initially worded 'better engage residents from all communities' but residents fed back that it was too vague and similar to theme 2.
- There was more support for the rephrased wording but need clarify what 'develop capability in the community' entailed.
- Several examples shared of how residents and local groups can solve issues. However, many stressed the need for the Council to actively contribute to this partnership.

"[work with local groups to develop] a partnership based on responsibilities, clearly defined duties, clearly defined framework and not you know the way we have campaigns wherever people just want to be seen on paper.. Just want to be seen to be working together…. But more like real.."

"charities has stepped in and created something where there was a need for it. The Council could then tap into those and rather than building infrastructure from scratch again, which is a huge investment… you basically piggyback on the infrastructure that's already been set up."

"All my neighbours think that that Community Centre is just for one group of people. So if we want to think to put people together, everyone to feel like is very welcome, we need to open the spaces for everyone and create the events for everyone and let people to learn from each other"

Insights on theme 4: Promote and celebrate the diversity of the borough

- Overwhelming support for celebrating the borough's rich cultural diversity.
- Activities need to be meaningful, go beyond mere promotion of diversity and recognise that people have different beliefs.
- A greater focus could be put on promoting common values such as respect, fairness and unity.

"I think there was some events which have been really effective at bonding and less effective at bridging. I think there needs to be funding and support for both type events. I do think it is legitimate for people from a community of interest to come together, but if you if it's going be more effective, it also then draws other people in their interest in learning about understanding"

"Celebrating diversity, I agree with. However, we should split the priority of promoting diversity as it can be used in a [bad] way by some people e.g. propaganda, could be used to oppress different communities." – young person

"Windrush celebration is a GREAT example of positive celebration of a specific event and community – not a diversity soup"

Insights on emerging EDI vision statements

- Residents reviewed several emerging vision statements, which included an extract from the Corporate Plan and suggestions from the EDI phase 1 engagement.
- Though an ambitious vision was welcomed, many residents felt they needed to see 'the whole picture' to better grasp its purpose and how it aligned with the emerging priorities.
- Residents shared mixed feelings when they considered tone and language for the vision e.g. some thought the phrase 'fighting inequalities' was too strong while others welcomed it.
- This highlighted the need for a unifying EDI vision that has been carefully considered and can be expressed in various ways.

"the 'vision' feels a bit of an over-reach. Basic services complying with Equalities Act 2010 are the priority."

Insights on inclusive language

Discussed collective terms for ethnicities and less engaged communities in 3 sessions, involving 36 residents. No clear preferred terms emerged which demonstrates the importance of considering different perspectives and justifying the chosen approach whilst recognising its limitations.

Collective terms	Resident quotes
Ethnicity - 'ethnically diverse' seems to be the most popular option	*"These terms are not desirable because of connotation. We need to have proactive/engaging words for people to feel welcome. The only word has a good element is 'Ethnically Diverse'. But we have to find more positive/inclusive/welcoming words please"* *"Nothing stands out to me for being untoward or wrong. But I think the best people to ask for this question is that people that fit into these categories and see how they would like to be addressed. I think it would be wrong with me to say, well, I think that one it's the best."* *"How can you have one term to cover collective ethnicities?"*
Less engaged communities – no clear preferred option	*"I oppose any of these terms being used because no matter how well-chosen the term is, it would become tomorrow's cliché or hijacked phrase"* *"I don't like any of these terms. Some just sounds like they're not listening. Some sounds like it's Their fault."* *"No one should be labelled as deprived, but an area may be deprived"*

Recommendations

Refine the emerging EDI themes
- Embrace the themes but incorporate resident feedback to ensure the messages resonate with the wider public e.g. outline actions
- Explicitly demonstrate how the themes are integrated into the overarching Corporate plan priorities

Create a unifying EDI vision
- Develop a concise and easy to grasp EDI vision
- Ensure the vision is adaptable, allowing for varied articulations while maintaining a strong unifying message

Follow robust inclusive language principles
- Establish inclusive language principles to guide approach to using collective terms
- Demonstrate consideration of diverse perspectives to foster greater understanding

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Building a Fairer City

The London Recovery Board

Who we are; what we do
The London Recovery Board brings together leaders from across the capital, working together to agree a set of actions that will help our citizens recover from the impacts of the worst global pandemic in a century.

Long-standing, socially embedded inequalities made many people's experience of COVID-19, and life afterwards, significantly worse. This has strengthened our resolve to make lives better for those who now face even greater challenges to getting fairer opportunities, whether in jobs and education, homes or healthcare, and in accessing public services.

The board is chaired jointly by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the Chair of London Councils, Councillor Georgia Gould. Our members are drawn from London's government, businesses and public bodies, education, the NHS, trade unions and the police.

All of us are committed to putting in place changes and actions that will secure lasting recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, with targeted support to those most disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

About this report
The research, consultations and data gathered for this report was overseen by a sub-group of the London Recovery Board, led by Kim Wright, Chief Executive for the London Borough of Lewisham.

You can see Recovery Board members, sub-group delegates and other contributers listed in the Appendix.

Contents

Foreword

**By London Recovery Board
co-chairs Sadiq Khan and
Georgia Gould**

**The pandemic shook us all,
turning our lives upside down.
Many of us lost loved family
members, friends or workplace
colleagues. People experienced –
and many continue to live with
– some of the impacts of covid,
including mental and physical
ill-health issues, social isolation,
financial loss, unemployment
or disrupted education.**

Those who were hit the hardest were
Londoners already familiar with
hardship and unequal living standards.
Those who could least afford to lose
were those who lost the most.
Black, Asian and other ethnic minority
Londoners, deaf and disabled Londoners,
LGBTQ+ Londoners, older Londoners
and women all face inequalities that
worsened during the pandemic. For these
communities, it is not only a story of
two years of disproportionate struggle,
but also an intergenerational history of
perpetuated injustice. Covid laid bare
and exacerbated those inequalities.

As we continue to emerge from the
pandemic, we must ensure we build fairer
city for all, through policies and actions
that combat inequality, discrimination
and racism.

Last June, the London Recovery Board
assigned a sub-group of its members
to co-produce, in partnership with
representative bodies of communities,
a candid and realistic vision for
addressing structural inequalities within
London. Together they have forged a
plan that hones-in on four key priorities
where change is needed most: living
standards; equality in the labour market;
equity in public services; and civil
society strength.

Within these four priorities are 14 key
actions, and our mission now is to
promote these across London and
ask every organisation, whether from
the private, public or not-for-profit
sector, what they can do to take those
actions off the page and turn them
into tangible reality.

We appreciate this is a big ask.
It is rightly not the role of the London
Recovery Board to seek to compel
organisations to adopt actions as
policies. What we are asking for is a
coalition of the willing - a body of
partner organisations inspired and
united by the common cause of
challenging structural inequality.

Many of the actions we are setting out
are far from easy fixes. The entrenched,
long-standing perceptions and practices
that underpin inequalities and injustices
need long-term work to be eradicated.
For decades communities have

lobbied and campaigned tirelessly and tenaciously for change. But set against persistent, structural inequalities, progress remains too slow.

Through this plan we have focussed on solutions and actions that lie within our organisations not outside. We also have to accept that long-term dysfunctions demand sustained commitment to achieve permanent, lasting change. And the actions we put in place have to run through the core of our organisations from the board room to the front line. It does not matter if organisations are large or small, or from public, private, voluntary or charity sectors – we all have work to do.
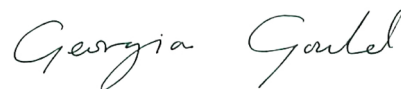
The London Recovery Board is aware that we all work within a fluid policy environment, and that we need to stay responsive to other changes and events that influence how we all live and work. We must salute and celebrate our best successes, while remaining open and honest about where we are falling behind.

This plan is about London's growth and development. Our city is strong, and abundant in its diversity of skills, talent and energy, and together we have the potential to create change that is striking, positive and enduring.

We thank everyone involved in producing this plan of action and all of you ready and willing to take this forward in your respective organisations. This work is a fine example of dedication and collaboration across our city. Now is the time for all of us to commit to its vision: to build a better, fairer London for everyone.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
Co-chair of the London Recovery Board

Cllr Georgia Gould
Leader of Camden Council
Co-chair of the London Recovery Board

Summary

Our city: **An action plan for fairer futures**

We want to build a better city for every Londoner – to make where we live and work a safer, fairer, greener and more prosperous place for us all.

This plan aims to reduce the inequalities that drove the disproportionate impact of the pandemic, or were created by it.

In June 2021, a sub-group of the London Recovery Board was formed to focus on the structural inequalities that caused certain communities to experience disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and new inequalities that have arisen because of the crisis. The sub-group's remit was informed by a number of sources of evidence from the first year of the pandemic – not least Prof. Kevin Fenton's review of the impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and minoritised communities for Public Health England[1].

The sub-group's members worked closely with established, equity-led organisations representing the communities who, compared with other Londoners, experienced higher mortality, greater rates of infection, more job losses, sharper falls in income, poorer treatment by public services and increased social isolation.

Together a series of 'vision statements' were produced, an account of the inequalities communities experience, and which had caused the pandemic to disproportionately impact their lives. The statements captured each community's view of what changes in approach and practice organisations could make to lessen the inequalities they face daily. This work helps ensure the plan reflects people's experiences, and forms the foundation of the action plan.

Using these vision statements, the sub-group, collaborating partners and communities agreed a programme of work that would focus on aspects of life in London with the strongest link between COVID-19 impacts and inequality. The actions chosen had to be achievable through the London Recovery Board members, not significantly duplicate any existing programme of work and have a 'multiplier effect', meaning they have the potential to tackle several underlying socioeconomic issues.

There are 14 actions and these fall under one of four priority areas:

- **Labour market inequality**
- **Financial hardship and living standards**
- **Equity in public services**
- **Civil society strength**

This plan aims to reduce
the inequalities that drove
the disproportionate impact
of the pandemic, or were
created by it.

The resulting actions are ones that London Recovery Board members can take on as employers, service providers and influencers. We welcome other London organisations to join us, using the plan and actions as a routemap to their own progress against entrenched inequality and injustice.

This action plan brings London's recovery partners together around a common vision for a future where…

- **Everyone has a fair chance at getting a job, promotion or training, with less pay disparity and fewer barriers to work and where everyone feels the workplace is a safe place to be.**

- **Londoners have better financial resilience, with more organisations paying the London Living Wage as minimum; policies and services better considering people with low or insecure incomes; and, more safety nets for tough times.**

- **Public services tackle structural discrimination head on to eradicate all forms of inherent bias. Communities are involved in service design, having a say in how services are run and organisations look like the communities that they serve.**

- **Civic society plays a central role, with thriving community and neighbourhood networks. Funding for civil society makes long-term continuity easier and rewards expertise in working with, and reaching out to, communities.**

Summary of Actions

Labour Market Inequality

ACTION 1

Ensure our workforces reflect London, at all levels

This means being more transparent with our employee data, including information on disability, gender and race pay gaps. And not only reporting on these, but also openly setting objectives for progress with practical steps like skills provision for under-represented groups.

ACTION 2

Actively promote employment rights to ensure equity and fairness at work

Many people need help to understand their legal rights in the workplace, and how and when to use them or get advice. We need to identify senior people willing to be employment rights champions, and prioritise training for higher managers and board members so that fairness and dignity at work are core values shared and understood throughout an organisation.

ACTION 3

Increase opportunities for London's diverse businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations

Many small local London companies, especially those run by Black, Asian and minoritised people, disabled people, and women, miss out on tenders for public or voluntary contacts. Yet their specific experience and expertise brings a wider social value to the product or service they can supply. We need to take steps to ensure that more supply chain spend goes to local, micro or small diverse, minority-owned businesses.

Financial Hardship and Living Standards

ACTION 4

Make London a Living Wage City

Wealth inequality, especially among the most disadvantaged Londoners is now pernicious. It is imperative that as employers we step up our commitment to pay the London Living Wage to every staff member, whether they are on permanent or temporary contracts. We should also encourage our partner businesses, including supply chains, to do the same.

ACTION 5

Implement the spirit of the socio-economic duty of Section One of the Equality Act

UK Government has yet to enact this duty, one that should help tackle the inequality and social exclusion that stems from low income. While the duty remains absent, we believe it is right to adopt it 'in spirit', and act accordingly.

ACTION 6
Support the financial wellbeing of staff

Anxiety about meeting bills or falling into debt contributes to poor morale, sickness and productivity rates, so it makes sense to ensure financial wellbeing is included in any employer's overall wellbeing provision. We are encouraging our organisations to make financial wellbeing part of staff benefits.

ACTION 7
Support Londoners to know and access their rights and entitlements

Those most at risk from missing out on benefits information are disabled Londoners, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, and people who speak English as a second language. We need to work more closely with advice and debt organisations and charities to improve how we highlight financial and welfare advice available to these groups and other low-income Londoners.

Equity in Public Services

ACTION 8
Put London's communities at the heart of service provision

We need a cultural step change in how we co-produce services to our communities, including increased working with civil and voluntary bodies with excellent local networks. Co-production is especially crucial in tackling structural racism in public health. Properly consulted and, where, needed, financially supported, co-production is the future route to culturally competent, accessible, unbiased and inclusive public services.

ACTION 9
Improve communities' levels of trust and confidence in public service providers

We are asking all public bodies in London to gather – and publish – data about the trust and confidence people have in them. This information should transparently show any differences in the views between communities and include the whole potential customer base, not just current service users. Where gaps in trust and confidence are identified, we need to set targets for improvement.

ACTION 10
Prioritise work to address structural racism

We are asking organisations to renew, publicly and unequivocally, their commitment to challenging and defeating the structural racism embedded in UK society. London is one of the world's most diverse cities – 43% of our residents are from Black, Asian or minoritised communities, yet structural racism and discrimination continues to be an endemic problem within our organisations. During COVID-19 these communities experienced disproportionate rates of mortality,

illness and financial hardship – acute, visible manifestations of an unfair society.

ACTION 11
Address the impact of eligibility criteria on accessing public services
We need to listen more closely to communities' anxieties about data collection, including real or perceived concerns about knock-on impacts to other services. While many of these checks are legally necessary, such fearfulness can cause people to decline vital services, contributing to unequal mental and physical health outcomes and educational exclusions. This is a particular issue for migrant Londoners: anxieties about eligibility and the consequences of information sharing between other organisations creates barriers to services, compounding existing inequalities.

ACTION 12
Make digital services accessible and provide alternatives for people without digital access
Many Londoners find digital services inaccessible or hard to access, with older, and Deaf or disabled people disproportionately affected. Frustration with using online services can isolate people from essential services.
We recognise that we need to more comprehensively test our online services with all potential service users, while developing better compatibility with accessibility software, or continuing to offer quality alternatives to digital access.

Civil Society Strength

ACTION 13
Increase the proportion of funding for equalities-led, equity groups and civil society work that supports Londoners facing discrimination
Organisations led by or representing Londoners facing discrimination and inequality have historically experienced underfunding, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made this situation worse. We are therefore asking that public bodies responsible for allocating or awarding funding set themselves targets to ensure a fixed proportion of that money goes to equalities-led organisations working for communities facing institutionalised discrimination and disadvantage.

ACTION 14
Support strong relationships between equalities-led civil society, funders, public bodies and private companies
The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us all that a strong civil society – comprising community groups, faith organisations, and informal collaborations among neighbourhoods – plays a remarkable and essential role in resilience. We need to build on this good work, listening and engaging more closely with civil society organisations, especially when they speak for communities facing systematic bias.

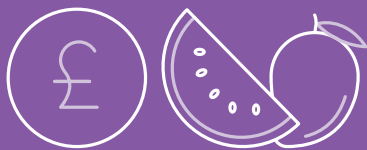# The disproportionate impact of the Pandemic in numbers

78

Disabled people

6 in 10

people who died from COVID-19 were disabled. Disabled people's increased risk of COVID-19 related mortality links to them being more likely to have poorer living conditions[2].

35%

With disabled households having entered lockdown with lower levels of financial reserves, 35% of disabled people say their finances have become worse during the pandemic. Disabled Londoners have experienced food poverty and struggled to meet bills as a result of the pandemic[3].

37%

During the pandemic, 1 in 6 (17% of the working population) were facing redundancy, but the rate was 1 in 4 (27%) for disabled people, rising to 37% for those people whose disability has a substantial impact on their activities[4].

Ethnicity

1.9 times
at risk of death

The risk of COVID-19 related mortality compared with White men and women was 1.9 times greater for Black men and women, 1.8 times greater for Bangladeshi and Pakistani men, 1.6 times greater forBangladeshi and Pakistani women, 1.3 times greater for Indian men, and 1.3 times greater for men in the 'Other' ethnic minority group[5].

CLOSED

Civil society is essential to the fabric of London, including in helping address many of the underlying causes that either led to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic or were exacerbated by the pandemic. While Black and minoritised-led organisations played a critical role providing vital services during lockdown they experienced increased risk of closure[6].

9 in 10

Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led micro and small organisations were at risk of closure at the beginning of the lockdown[7].

79

Migration status

Although COVID-19 treatment has been exempted from hospital charging, some asylum seekers and undocumented migrants have been reported to be avoiding hospitals, because they worry that they will be charged if their symptoms are not a consequence of COVID-19. They were also reported to have concerns about their NHS data being shared with the Home Office, leading to increased risk of detention and deportation[8].

Women and girls

47%

Women experienced disproportionate economic, social and psychological impacts as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Mothers were 47% more likely than fathers to have lost their jobs or resigned from their jobs, and 14% more likely to have been furloughed[9].

Many pregnant women experienced discrimination in the workplace during the pandemic, such as being forced to take unpaid leave, forced to start maternity leave early, or redundancy[10].

LGBTQ+

79%

Almost four in five (79%) LGBTQ+ people said that their mental health had been negatively impacted by the coronavirus lockdown, and many young LGBTQ+ people reported feeling unsafe during lock-down in their homes[11].

Older

During the pandemic's period of most severe social and economic restrictions employees over the age of 60, Londoners and people with low qualifications were more likely to be furloughed and then made redundant than their counterparts, compounding this impact on older Londoners[12].

32%

of those who had never or not recently used the internet were aged between 50 and 69 (over 1 million individuals)[13].

Introduction

This plan aims to reduce the inequalities that drove the disproportionate impact of the pandemic, or were created by it.

To help shape those actions, and focus on what matters most to those who face the greatest socioeconomic inequalities and barriers, the London Recovery Board asked equality-led, representative organisations to gather evidence and experiences from the most affected communities[14].

With these representative groups we developed five 'vision statements', one for each of the communities who face the greatest socioeconomic inequalities and who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010[15]. These five communities are:

- **Black, Asian and minoritised Londoners**
- **Deaf and disabled Londoners**
- **LGBTQ+ Londoners**
- **Older Londoners**
- **Women in London**

Within these communities there is enormous diversity and people are members of multiple communities. This also means that people experience discrimination and inequality in interconnected and intersectional ways. These statements capture people's experiences and also reflect what success in tackling structural inequalities might look like for them. Their statements have helped shape this action plan and drive a wider single vision for this work.

THE FOUR PRIORITY AREAS
Together, the London Recovery Board and the equality-led organisations agreed there were four key priority areas for tackling inequality within London:

Labour Market Inequality

The pandemic highlighted labour market inequalities, notably how those in insecure or low-paid employment experienced disproportionate risk not only to their employment tenure and income, but also in exposure to the virus.

Those in insecure or low-paid employment are also more likely to be treated unfairly or illegally, and to be exploited in the workplace. People with insecure contracts will often have fewer employment rights. It is not uncommon for people to feel nervous or frightened about speaking out about unfair treatment. They fear losing work, or being treated even more unfairly. Many people do not have access to reliable information about their rights in law, or advocacy support in reporting unfair pay, working conditions, or discrimination.

While there are already statutory protections for workers, often backed by industry standards, we feel there is more action needed to give greater numbers of people fairer access to jobs, to combat recruitment and promotion bias, and to ensure employees are properly and holistically protected in the workplace.

Financial Hardship and Living Standards

Structural inequality can lead to income inequalities which then drives a whole host of wider inequalities. Those who experience the greatest income inequality are more likely to have poorer outcomes in education, housing, access to green spaces, health and life expectancy. Low-income households also have a disproportionate over-representation of people with one or more protected characteristics.

London has above-average levels of deprivation for the UK. Groups at highest risk of living in deprived areas include young people, disabled people, and Black, Asian and minoritised Londoners[16]. As a consequence this is a priority area for our plan.

Equity in public services

While the pandemic had a disproportionate impact on certain communities, so too did people's experience of public services vary considerably, with those in greatest need often finding they were overlooked or treated less favourably. This has diminished people's trust and confidence in healthcare, social services, local authorities, the education system and the police.

To rebuild this trust, public bodies all need to review how they serve everyone equally and fairly. Leadership teams need to think if new approaches to addressing inequalities can help restore trust. For example, connecting with communities and offering greater representation or involvement in creating services that treat people more equitably.

Civil society strength

The pandemic response depended greatly on the work of community-led organisations, mobilising like a neighbourhood army, filling gaps where statutory services were stretched or unable to cope with demand. This civil society response was astonishing in its power to reach out and connect with people, often providing direct, tailored provision. Faith and community groups played an especially critical role during the vaccine roll-out, reaching out and providing vital links between vulnerable people and the NHS.

Yet these community-led organisations have often survived for years on shoestring budgets, struggling to stay afloat and unable to plan beyond the short term. We need to find better ways to keep civil society flourishing, and to identify geographical civil society 'cold spots' in London that would benefit from neighbourhood organisations.

The 14 actions

Within these priorities we have agreed **14 actions**. These are set out in detail on **pages 21 – 39** of this report. Each responds directly to our overarching aim of building a better London for everyone – making London a more equal, fair, and age-friendly city. These actions include steps that organisations can take as employers, as service providers, and as organisations who can influence others – for example, by making the London Living Wage a required commitment of subcontractors. Many are designed to reinforce one another, and each action sets out suggested steps that can be taken to help meet the action. The plan is not intended to be prescriptive – all organisations will be at different points in their work to address inequality with different priority areas to focus on.

"The community provided interpreters, food and Imam services within the community. Local mosques and family members met those needs, but following the lockdown it has really highlighted inequalities/lack of access of services. Covid has highlighted the gap in services, and has made the community avoid going to hospital or accessing mainstream services due to fear or lack of transparency and trust[17]."

Somali-led civil society organisation, The London Community Response Survey 2020

Vision for this plan

This action plan brings London's recovery partners together around a common vision for a future where…

84

Everyone has a fair chance at getting a job, promotion or training

Age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic background will have **no bearing on what work a person does, or how far they progress.** Employers develop more insightful data on recruitment and promotion rates for people from communities that experience disproportionate inequalities – and act on the findings to secure better representation at all levels of their organisation.

With less pay disparity and fewer barriers to work. Communities with a history of disproportionate income will see **pay gaps close.**

Family-friendly policies, including **more flexible, affordable childcare,** will allow more women to stay in paid employment. There will be **more Deaf and disabled people in jobs** as employers comply fully with the Equality Act and make workplaces more accessible and job opportunities more flexible. Older Londoners will have the choice of working or not working, with **no bars to training** because of age. There is a growth in business start-up advice and support aimed at helping people from disproportionately under-represented communities start their own enterprises.

Everyone feels the workplace is a safe place to be.

Londoners will have **better support and guidance about their job rights**, and know how to speak out when they are being treated unfairly. They will feel their working environment is **free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation, prejudice or abuse**.

Londoners have better financial resilience

More organisations make the **London Living Wage** their **minimum pay for all** staff, while the needs and experiences of Londoners living on low or insecure incomes shapes policies and services.

With more safety nets for tough times, Londoners will know where to turn for financial advice, including benefits and debt guidance, with approaches tailored to suit the needs of different communities and more outreach support for those disproportionately affected by poverty and income inequality.

Public services tackle structural discrimination head on

Organisations renew their efforts to tackle racism and prejudiced mindsets, behaviours, and working practices to **eradicate all forms of inherent bias**.

With services designed for communities, by communities, trust and confidence in the public sector grows as communities have more opportunities to be part of service design, shaping them to be culturally competent, inclusive, and suited to users' needs.

Where organisations look like the communities they serve, communities **get a greater say in how organisations are run from the inside,** including at the highest levels of decision-making.

Civil society plays a central role

London is celebrated for its **thriving community and neighbourhood networks**, run by Londoners, for Londoners, with **funding that makes their long-term continuity easier.**

With community groups connecting more people to more services the success of local, voluntary, faith and charitable community bodies during COVID-19, as they linked people to the services they needed, is developed further with increased co-production and joint working.

Expertise is recognised, more procurement and tendering opportunities rewards expertise in working with, and reaching out to, communities. And more people from diverse communities are encouraged to participate in civic life, including at senior levels within the charity sector.

14 actions in full

Labour Market Inequality

ACTION 1
Ensure our workforces reflects London, at all levels

Steps organisations can take:

- Set out a clear plan of action for how their workforce, at all levels, will reflect the demographic makeup of London's working age population.

- Set interim objectives for the progress they want to see every three years[18].

- Fulfil all Excellence actions in the Diversity and Recruitment pillar of the Mayor's Good Work Standard (or equivalent industry/professional standard) within three years.

- Publish information on disability, gender and race pay gaps, and develop action plans to address them.

- Ensure that work to support the growth of London's economy addresses labour market inequality. This includes ensuring that skills provision supports those currently underrepresented in London's labour market.

Evidence shows that labour market inequality directly contributed to COVID-19's unequal impact on London's communities. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated that women were a third more likely to work in sectors 'shut down' over the first national lockdown[19]. This meant they were particularly at risk of job loss.

The pandemic both increased inequality overall, and highlighted existing inequalities. Women were more likely to do unpaid care work, and more women than men left their jobs or cut their hours to do this. The unemployment rate for women therefore increased more than for men.

Some Black, Asian and minoritised communities were far more likely to work in frontline roles where the risk from COVID-19 was much higher. Overall, they are also more likely to be unemployed, or in low paid, insecure work. In the pandemic, older workers were more likely to be furloughed and have their hours reduced. Disabled employees were at a higher risk of redundancy. They were also more likely to have to shield during the pandemic. Some of those shielding or with long-term health conditions were pressured by employers to use low paid sick leave entitlements. This was instead of being supported through the furlough scheme.

By taking the steps set out within this action plan, employers can help address the inequality we see across the workforce. Employers must be more aware of the causes of this, such as discrimination, skills mismatch, and a lack of qualifications and networks. A truly diverse workforce allows employers to access a wide range of perspectives and maximise the potential of their employees. As a result, diverse and inclusive workplaces earn deeper trust and more commitment from their staff. This reduces turnover and increases organisational expertise.

ACTION 2
Actively promote employment rights to ensure equity and fairness at work

Steps organisations can take:

- Actively promote employment rights within their workforces.

- Develop and roll-out strong dignity at work policies, working with employee representatives and trade unions.

- Identify an organisational senior sponsor for employment rights.

- Provide training for staff, members and boards on employment rights and entitlements. This will boost understanding of workplace policies and practices to protect employees.

During consultation for this report, we found that many people find it hard to understand and exercise their rights as employees. In the pandemic, organisations faced challenges around how best to maintain their business, and had to make far-reaching changes to their operations. In that context, rights – such as employment contracts, sick pay, flexible terms and conditions, recourse to employment tribunals,

access to advice – were vital. We heard that many communities are unaware of the minimum wage, or contracts of employment. Communities also reported unfair treatment at work during the pandemic that put some Londoners at greater risk.

Many organisations have been putting in place dignity at work policies. These aim to sustain a positive and thriving working environment for all staff, free from inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. Good practice ensures that staff are clear about acceptable employment practices and behaviour at work. Such policies should be adopted more widely. By leading on rolling-out and promoting employment rights and responsibilities in the workplace, our organisations can influence other London employers. This will help to raise standards throughout the city, and ensure that more employees are treated with dignity and respect.

ACTION 3

Increase opportunities for London's diverse businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations

Steps organisations can take:

- Ensure that commissioning properly considers the wider social values of the product or service being sought.

- Ensure providers in supply chains pay at least the London Living Wage.

- Within three years, commit 20% of supply chain spend on goods and services from local micro and small businesses, diverse businesses and voluntary, community, and social enterprises (VCSEs).

- Support smaller providers to work towards achieving the Mayor's Good Work Standard[20] or equivalent industry or professional standard.

Evidence shows that it is harder for small businesses to bid successfully for public or voluntary sector contracts[21]. Yet those contracts might benefit from the 'lived experience' of those businesses. This includes those owned or run by Black, Asian and minoritised people, disabled people, and women. SMEs experienced disproportionate losses in the pandemic, especially in London.

Over 80% said they did not get enough support from Government[22].

Some sectors, such as personal care, hospitality and tradespeople were harder hit than others. These are sectors in which pay is already low.

Putting a supplier diversity policy in place can help to counteract the difficulties faced by minority-owned businesses. This is because it makes explicit the requirement to take the wider social, environmental and economic issues into account when awarding contracts. By targeting a proportion of their spend on minority-owned businesses, organisations can help to shape London's labour market. Taking this action can also enhance products and services as people with directly related experience and expertise are commissioned. This will also support different employment routes and entrepreneurship for Londoners.

81%

of small businesses said they did not get enough support from the Government through the pandemic

Low-income Londoners were hit harder by the pandemic, both in terms of mortality and financially[23].

Financial Hardship and Living Standards

ACTION 4
Make London a Living Wage City

Steps organisations can take:

- Become an accredited London Living Wage employer, and pay all staff including permanent and temporary staff, including contractors, at least the London Living Wage.

- Use procurement practices to champion payment of the London Living Wage and ensure suppliers pay it to their staff.

- Promote and highlight the benefits of the London Living Wage among London's businesses and partners.

Low-income Londoners were hit harder by the pandemic, both in terms of mortality and financially[24]. In addition, low-paid workers were most likely to see their income reduced due to the pandemic, and were least likely to have savings to fall back on.

Following the pandemic, the gaps between rich and poor have become even starker in the city. The unequal impact of the pandemic is visible when it comes to wealth inequality in London. The distribution of wealth within the capital is far more unequal than in other parts of the country. The least wealthy 30% of households in London own just 1% of London's wealth; the top 10% own nearly half (43%)[25].

Work is the best route out of poverty, yet 58% of people in poverty are in working families. The London Living Wage reflects the higher cost of living in the city. As such, it can help to ensure that work remains a route out of poverty.

Within low paid groups, Black, Asian and minoritised workers were more likely than White workers to be impacted financially by the pandemic. The most affected were Bangladeshi followed by Black African groups. We also know most low paid workers in London are women. Black, Asian and minoritised women are the most likely to be low paid.

The implementation plan of London's Health Inequalities Strategy aims to make London a Living Wage City[26]. Currently, 23 London councils and seven other London Recovery Board organisations are accredited London Living Wage Employers[27]. In total, 2,500 London employers are accredited. Taking steps to ensure all Londoners are paid a living wage as a minimum will prevent financial hardship. It will also have a positive ripple effect on other local businesses and organisations.

58%

Work is the best route out of poverty, yet 58% of people in poverty are in working families.

ACTION 5

Implement the spirit of the socioeconomic duty of section one of the Equality Act

Steps organisations can take:

- Consider the needs and experiences of Londoners on low or insecure incomes in all policies and services. Take active steps to address the impact of policies and practices on the cost of living.

- Identify and prioritise actions to address issues of financial hardship and exclusion.

- Encourage the use of effective Equality Impact Assessments[28], and share good practice with partners and other stakeholders.

People on low incomes are always impacted by how public services are designed and delivered, as they're more likely to rely on them. The socioeconomic duty in section one of the Equality Act 2010 is meant to redress the inequality faced by people on low incomes. It aims to create a powerful foundation for a fairer society.

However, it has not yet been enacted by the UK Government. The pandemic, and the rise in the cost of living, has shown how critical this duty is. Income inequality underlies many other inequalities experienced by Londoners, and became even starker during the pandemic. The financial strains from self-isolating or loss of work, and differences in COVID-19 mortality rates, were all linked to deprivation[29].

By implementing the spirit of the duty, organisations can ensure their actions address issues of financial hardship and exclusion. We must take a more holistic approach to support people experiencing financial hardship. This includes helping people to access additional support through the benefits system, and through other sources like social tariffs[30].

Support should also be targeted at people who are in poverty or at risk of it. Organisations should track the impacts of their policies, and the effectiveness of interventions designed to help alleviate poverty. We should also offer debt support and advice to prevent financial crises because such events link to poor health outcomes.

One way to act on this duty is by carrying out comprehensive Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)[31], in consultation with representatives from different equalities groups. These assessments can lead to strong and meaningful development of policies and services that reflect and meet communities' actual needs. Commitment to actions on how policies, services and provisions impact low-income Londoners will help prevent more people from falling into further financial hardship.

ACTION 6
Support the financial wellbeing of Londoners

Steps organisations can take:

- Develop a financial wellbeing policy. This includes boosting workers' financial wellbeing through staff benefits and support, including hardship loans, early-access to pay, and help with childcare.

- Provide access to debt counselling and high-quality financial advice and work. This will ensure that more of those in work take up their benefit entitlements.

- Commit to achieve excellence level on the 'Fair pay and conditions' pillar of the Mayor's Good Work Standard[32] or equivalent industry or professional standard.

- Work with London's businesses to ensure that economic activity in London addresses issues of financial hardship and inequality.

The pandemic led to worse financial outcomes for many Londoners. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) found that, in 2021, one in five workers in manual and low-skilled jobs (21%) were constantly struggling or falling behind with bills[33]. Financial wellbeing is also an employment issue, as research shows that it can affect health, morale, and performance at work.

Most low paid workers in London are women, with Black, Asian, and minoritised women the most likely to be low paid workers. One in three (33%) low-paid workers saw their household income fall during the pandemic. This compares to just one in five (19%) of other workers. This group was also least likely to have savings to fall back on[34]. London has higher poverty rates than any other English region, with living costs up to 58% more than elsewhere in the UK[35].

The CIPD found that half of employers do not have a financial wellbeing policy[36]. They have now set out guidelines around financial wellbeing for employers to adopt. Having a financial wellbeing policy can make a meaningful difference to employees' health and financial security.

Every employer should recognise the business case for this policy as part of their wider wellbeing strategy. Employers must act quickly as low-income workers have suffered the sharpest drop in earnings during the pandemic. Indeed, the Financial Conduct Authority found that a quarter of the UK adult population now has low financial resilience[37]. As well as affecting a person's health and wellbeing, money and debt worries can impact on work performance. This can have knock-on implications for productivity and absence rates.

ACTION 7

Support Londoners to know and access their rights and entitlements

Steps organisations can take:

- Work with civil society organisations, and other partners, to strengthen and increase the availability of financial and welfare advice services for low-income Londoners.

- Encourage service providers to refer Londoners to online tools that can help them better understand benefit entitlements and statutory protections relating to debt.

- Use data analytic tools to identify those missing support, and help them access the support they need.

- Promote council-sponsored support schemes, such as Local Welfare Support[38].

The pandemic has made it even more vital that people entitled to support claim it. Welfare benefits make up a greater share of the income of Black and minoritised communities than for other Londoners[39]. Benefits also make up a greater share of income for women than for men[40]. Disabled households entered lockdown with lower levels of financial reserves. More than a third (35%) of disabled people said their finances worsened during the pandemic[41].

Evidence shows there are gaps in the advice that certain communities receive. Disabled Londoners, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, and those with English as a second language may need more support to claim benefits[42].

Various organisations promote rights and entitlements to different communities. Examples include Citizens Advice, local councils, charities, and social enterprises which provide online tools to help people understand their rights and entitlements.

Some councils have also used data to identify which residents are missing out on benefit income they're eligible for. This allows them to target support and improve take-up. Many organisations working in this field have seen their income fall while demand has increased. As a result, they have had to reduce or adapt their services.

This action will help to increase both the provision and the visibility of financial and welfare advice services to Londoners. As we recover from the pandemic, it will support access to good quality advice to help Londoners escape from, or avoid, financial hardship.

35%

More than a third (35%) of disabled people said their finances worsened during the pandemic[41].

Equity in Public Services

ACTION 8
Put London's communities at the heart of service provision

Steps organisations can take:

- Set out plans to strengthen approaches to the co-design of service provision – this includes designing, adopting, and publishing co-production principles for use across services.

- Look at improving community engagement. This should include compensating organisations for their time and effort in working with public bodies on co-production.

- Evaluate the impact of co-production in practice across their work, building on that of the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH)[43].

- Collect and analyse data that actively explores trends and intersectional barriers for individual communities.

- Use the social model of disability in all service design and delivery.

We must all lead a cultural change in how public services are designed, developed and delivered. Communities' experiences must be central to service development, to help remove barriers and improve access to services. We must also consider the intersectional nature of the inequalities many

Londoners experience[44]. Public Health England's 'Beyond the Data' report identified co-production as a priority for London's Black, Asian and minoritised communities[45]. This is echoed in the ADPH action plan to tackle structural racism in public health.

More robust approaches to co-production will strengthen community engagement. It will also ensure the needs and experiences of Londoners living with inequality contribute to shaping and improving services. In this way public sector partners who commit to co-producing with communities will develop services that are culturally competent, accessible, unbiased, and inclusive. This will give them an advantage as it means their services will be more effective. However, success also relies on civil society organisations being appropriately compensated for their contribution.

This work should also account for socioeconomic factors when considering impacts. By so doing, it will help produce policies, services and provisions that take poverty into account, and find ways to mitigate it. This allies closely to action 5 of this plan.

The COVID-19 vaccination programme is a great example of putting communities at the heart of local or regional service provision. Joint team working between the NHS, local government and the

voluntary sector improved vaccine roll-out success because it enhanced local knowledge and delivery.

Similarly the vaccine equity tool[46] meant it was easier to track take-up rates down to a very local level, allowing faster identification of gaps in provision remedied by additional vaccine sites set up in key locations. Community and faith leaders were involved as volunteers, offering their venues as vaccination sites and encouraging local take-up. This helped to build trust, both in the vaccine and in the NHS.

We must all lead a cultural change in how public services are designed, developed and delivered. Communities' experiences must be central to service development, to help remove barriers and improve access to services.

ACTION 9
Improve communities' levels of trust and confidence in public service providers

Steps organisations can take:

• Gather, monitor, and publish data about levels of public trust and confidence in them and their service provision. This should include information drawn from an organisation's entire public audience, not just current service users. Data should also be easy to break down by protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and, where possible, at a more detailed level.

• Set targets to increase trust and confidence overall, and close gaps between different communities of Londoners.

• Work with community partners and the voluntary and community sector to use this data to inform priority setting and co-production of service design and delivery.

Some groups of Londoners said that the pandemic dented their trust and confidence in public service providers. This includes Deaf and disabled people, LGBTQ+ Londoners, Londoners with insecure migration status and Black, Asian and minoritised Londoners.

For some Londoners, trust and confidence were low before the pandemic because of the long-term impact of institutional biases and discriminatory practices.

Public bodies already track service users' views, but relatively few track levels of public trust and confidence. Restoring public trust and confidence is an important part of London's recovery. To do that, public bodies must know how much trust and confidence communities have in them now. This action asks all public bodies in London to gather data about levels of trust and confidence. Data should be collected in ways that will allow any differences between communities' perspectives to be visible.

Tracking levels of trust and confidence will help organisations build stronger relationships with the communities they work with and serve. Improvements in public trust are particularly relevant within the current context of COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, and wider public health programmes. Increasing confidence in public health agencies will further encourage Londoners to access services that help improve life chances, raising overall health outcomes.

ACTION 10
Work with communities to address structural racism

Steps organisations can take:

- Publicly renew their commitment to tackling structural racism. This includes understanding how it manifests within their sector; acting in response to what Black, Asian and minoritised communities tell them about the design and delivery of their services; and, drawing on the 'lived experience' of these communities to inform service provision.

- Appoint a board-level champion to lead on developing measurable action plans to deliver change and build trust within communities affected by racism.

- Identify gaps in work at regional and local levels where the impact of structural racism on service outcomes, access and experience is greatest. Then rollout urgent plans to address them.

- Ensure training equips managers and frontline staff with the knowledge, mindset, and skills to understand structural racism, including its root causes. This will create a continual learning culture so that good practice to address structural racism is shared across London.

Before the pandemic, structural racism already had a devastating impact on the lives of Black, Asian and minoritised communities. Compared to White Londoners this has led to socioeconomic disparities including higher average levels of unemployment, insecure work, low wages and poverty. These disproportionately negative outcomes, seen across generations, take an emotional toll and leave a legacy of trauma for Black, Asian and minoritised communities.

In turn, COVID-19 had a worse impact on Black, Asian and minoritised Londoners. It has badly affected their physical and mental health outcomes, and education and work opportunities. It has also impacted their confidence that public bodies, like the police, will treat them fairly.

Structural racism cuts across the four topics in this plan – and some 'asks' are included under other actions. However, structural racism is embedded into UK society. As such, it must be tackled through explicit action if we are to successfully address the pandemic's disproportionate impact. Solutions must also be co-produced with communities affected by racism.

Action is already being taken by many London organisations. This includes through the Health Inequalities Strategy and the Association of Directors of Public Health's action plan on structural racism[47]. However, more must be done in London to change how policies and services are experienced by Black, Asian and minoritised communities. Organisations must step up their work to tackle structural racism as a priority, supporting and learning from each other.

Structural racism is embedded into UK society. As such, it must be tackled through explicit action if we are to successfully address the pandemic's disproportionate impact.

ACTION 11
Address the impact of eligibility criteria on accessing public services

Steps organisations can take:

- Listen to communities to more closely understand the impact of eligibility checks, including the impact of:

  – communities' ability and willingness to use services, including the impact of perceptions of how information will be used and shared

  – racial profiling in decision-making when people from certain communities are asked to prove eligibility

  – exclusion from public services for those who are not eligible.

- Review existing service guidance for frontline staff to ensure it is clear, consistent, and inclusive of and for all communities.

- Run community-based awareness campaigns to promote awareness of this pledge.

During the pandemic, access to public services has been vital in ensuring the survival and wellbeing of those Londoners in greatest need. This includes advice and support from local authorities, volcom[48] organisations, education and health services. Access to such services must be protected and enhanced, ensuring that all Londoners who need support can get it.

In some cases, service providers must carry out eligibility checks to comply with their legal requirements. However, the impact of these checks can put off London's vulnerable communities from using some public services. This can potentially exclude some of the most marginalised groups.

Some communities face barriers around their actual or perceived migration status. Racial profiling can deter some from using services or reporting problems. Anxiety about being refused a service and about information sharing between local services and immigration enforcement can compound existing inequalities. For example, by contributing to unequal mental and physical health outcomes and educational exclusions. These issues affect a range of services but are significant in relation to policing, secondary health services[49] and GP registration.

This action will be an important tool in rebuilding trust and confidence among some of London's communities. This is a complex and technical area, where important processes can sometimes obscure the underlying principle of ensuring all Londoners can access their rights. But improving practice will enable some of London's most vulnerable communities to access services they desperately need without fear of legal repercussions.

ACTION 12

Make digital services accessible, and provide alternatives for people without digital access

Steps organisations can take:

- Engage continually with current and prospective service users to test the accessibility of digital interfaces.

- Ensure all digital interfaces that provide information or access to services are fully compatible with accessibility software – for example, screen readers.

- Provide realistic, good-quality alternatives to digital access.

The pandemic has accelerated the move towards 'digital by default' service delivery. This is detrimental to digitally-excluded Londoners, or people who need in-person help to access services digitally. In particular, the inability to access the internet can prevent people getting the health services and treatment they need. It also exacerbates the socioeconomic drivers of health inequality, as people find it harder or even impossible to access benefits, employment, and education opportunities. There is also the impact of increased social isolation.

More must be done to include Deaf and disabled Londoners when developing services. Some online systems used by service providers are simply incompatible with the software that Deaf and disabled people use to access digital resources. As a result, some groups of Londoners may never be able to access services or information online.

The Digital Inclusion mission action plan[50] is tackling access to devices, skills and the resources needed for broadband connection. This work and further action means that all Londoners should be better able to participate in public life. For example, both through appropriate alternatives to digital provision, and by public services using systems compatible with accessibility software.

More must be done to include Deaf and disabled Londoners when developing services. Some online systems used by service providers are simply incompatible with the software that Deaf and disabled people use to access digital resources.

Civil Society Strength

ACTION 13

Increase the proportion of funding for user-led groups and wider civil society work that supports Londoners facing discrimination

Steps that funding organisations, including public bodies, can take:

- Set targets for the proportion of funding that goes to equalities-led organisations supporting communities who face systemic bias[51]. In doing so, funders should identify ways to provide core funding for these organisations to support their sustainability.

- Publish data about the proportion of applications received from user-led organisations and whether they are more or less likely to be funded than others.

- Use funding criteria, grant conditions and reporting requirements to ensure all civil society organisations meet the needs of Londoners facing institutionalised discrimination and disadvantage.

- Address the gap in the presence of specialist organisations for Londoners impacted by discrimination and disadvantage. For example, set out strategies to support the growth and sustainability of infrastructure organisations focused on helping communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Civil society organisations told us that access to sustainable, equitable funding was the biggest issue for organisations supporting those who face discrimination and inequality. These organisations have historically been under-funded and are less likely to have reserves to fall back on.

The pandemic has made this worse. Some organisations have had emergency funding during the pandemic, for example, through the London Community Response, but remain concerned about long term survival. Others have seen big increases in demand caused by the pandemic and the impact of lockdowns.

Funders, including public bodies, are therefore asked to increase funding for groups led by, or acting for, Londoners facing discrimination and inequality. The co-production approach to public services set out in action 8 can only succeed if equalities-led civil society organisations are sustainably funded.

London Recovery Board members are already working to address gaps in funding and provision through the Building Strong Communities mission and London Funders' work. These proposals focus on actions that will complement this existing work, and should be used to set targets to support more funding for equalities-led groups. In addition, there must be more work by civil society to address structural inequalities.

ACTION 14
Support strong relationships between equalities-led civil society, funders, public bodies and private companies

Steps organisations can take:

- Make plans to strengthen links with civil society partners, building on good practice developed during the pandemic.

- Develop continuous dialogue between London's equalities-led civil society organisations and London Recovery Board members.

- Invest in the skills needed to share learning, and build effective partnerships between civil society, funders, public bodies and private companies.

During the pandemic, the strength of civil society – including new and established community and faith groups, and informal collaborations – was crucial to London's resilience. Civil society organisations worked closely with public services and the private sector to support Londoners, forming effective partnerships between stakeholders across all sectors.

Londoners told us that one strength of these partnerships was that civil society organisations could contribute meaningfully to policymaking and service delivery. In addition, public bodies listened and engaged with them. These partnerships must be supported, strengthened and sustained with adequate funding to continue this good work.

Creating these constructive relationships is time consuming and skilled. Part of civil society organisations' role is to hold public and private sector organisations to account for their actions and to articulate community concerns. This can make the work quite challenging.

Persistent structural inequalities affects organisations representing Black, Asian and minoritised Londoners, Deaf and disabled Londoners, LGBTQ+ Londoners, older Londoners and women and girls. It means often they must explain their communities' concerns to public and private organisations, and convey what it is truly like to live with systemic biases.

Good practice does exist. However, these community organisations told us that sometimes they do not feel heard, understood, or visibly represented. For other actions in this plan to have maximum impact, organisations must work closely and constructively with equalities-led civil society. Strong relationships are vital for tackling structural inequalities, and restoring trust and confidence where they have been damaged by the pandemic.

Next steps

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This plan should be used as a framework to help organisations decide what:

- **structural inequalities need to be tackled**
- **changes that should be made now**
- **entrenched perceptions and practices will need a long-term approach.**

Organisations should think about how to co-produce change by working with equality-led organisations who speak for communities that experience injustice and discrimination.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

This work is a collaboration of willing London partners who work supportively and positively for the common cause of greater equality and an end to entrenched injustice. Our approach for the plan's implementation is through communities of practice. These are a bit like open-source software developers, who come together voluntarily to share ideas, exchange views on how actions are working, resolve difficulties – basically to learn and improve together in a challenging yet supportive environment.

Supported by the GLA and Recovery Board partners, we will set up four virtual and in-person forums, with each dedicated to issues and actions that fall under the four plan priorities.

Each will have a nominated 'champion' – a person, most likely from the London Recovery Board, who will help push forward on the actions and act as guardian to the network, ensuring shared ownership where all voices are heard.

UNDERSTANDING PROGRESS

Overall accountability for the action plan rests with the London Recovery Board. While the board does not seek to introduce any governance arrangements for the action plan, as we know there will be many local systems for tracking progress. We will ask that the communities of practice consider how the board can track progress in each of the four priority areas.

These will not necessarily attribute changes directly to the actions taken by board members' organisations. They will, though, show the direction of London's progress, highlighting inequalities that require more attention. They may also flag groups of Londoners on whom more targeted support is needed. For example if the gaps in inequality are greater for that group compared with other groups.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If your organisation wishes to sign-up to the plan or join one of the communities of practice, please contact **recovery@london.gov.uk**

Appendix

Thank you to all the individuals, communities and organisations that contributed to this report.

London Recovery board members

Member	Organisation	Representing/sector
Sadiq Khan	GLA	Mayoralty
Cllr Georgia Gould	LB Camden	London Councils
Diana Beech	London Higher	Higher education
Baroness Bull	Kings College London	Individual
Richard Burge	London Chamber of Commerce & Industry	Business sector
Andy Byford	Transport for London	Transport for London
Laura Citron	London & Partners	London & Partners
John Dickie	London First	Business sector
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	LB Sutton	London Councils
Florence Eshalomi MP	APPG London	All Party Parliamentary Group London
David Farnsworth	London Funders	Voluntary and Community Sector
Matthew Fell	Confederation of British Industry	Business sector
Professor Kevin Fenton	Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	Public Health
Jake Ferguson	Black Equity Organisation	Individual (Social inequalities expert)
Sam Gurney	Trades Union Congress	Trades Unions
Manny Hothi	Trust for London	Voluntary and Community Sector
Sir Stephen House QPM	Metropolitan Police Service	Metropolitan Police Service
Rowena Howie	Federation of Small Businesses	Business sector
David Hughes	Association of Colleges	Further education
James Lee	N/A	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group
Catherine McGuinness	CoL	London Councils
The Venerable Father Luke Miller	Diocese of London	London Resilience Faith Sector Panel
Sir Bob Neill MP	APPG London	All Party Parliamentary Group London
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	LB Bexley	London Councils
Simon Pitkeathley	Camden Town Unlimited	Individual
Andrew Ridley	NHS London	NHS Equality and Inclusion
Cllr Darren Rodwell	LB Barking and Dagenham	London Councils
Paul Scully MP	BEIS	Her Majesty's Government
Beccy Speight	RSPB	Environment sector
Angela Spence	Kensington & Chelsea Social Council	Voluntary and Community Sector
Andrew Travers	LB Lambeth	Chief Executives of London Councils Committee
Professor Tony Travers	London School of Economics & Political Science	Individual (London government expert)

London Recovery board action plan subgroup members

Member	Organisation	Representing/sector
Kim Wright (Chair)	LB Lewisham	Local government
Professor Paul Plant	Public Health England (London)	Health
Jake Ferguson	Black Equity Organisation	Individual (Social inequalities expert)
Jordan Cummins	CBI	Business
Dianna Beech	London Higher	Education
Chloe Bukata	London Higher	Education
Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard	Greater London Authority	Regional government
Sam Gurney	TUC	Trade Unions
Tom Pickup	London Councils	Local government
Ellen Clifford	Disability consultant	Deaf and disabled community

Vision statement engagement partners

Action on Race Equality (formerly Black Training and Enterprise Group – BTEG)
The Consortium
Inclusion London
London Age-Friendly Forum
The Ubele Initiative
Women's Resource Centre

"My experience is not an isolated one. There are so many LGBTQ+ young people who face rejection or abuse at home because of who they are, and who struggle to find support elsewhere and be independent. Together, it's really important we all do our bit to help make life easier and less lonely for those people, like me those years ago."

AKT,
The LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness Report (2021)

Footnotes

1. Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups (Public Health England 2020) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

2. Source: Health Foundation response to ONS data on COVID-19 related deaths by disability status in England (2021)

3. Source: Inclusion London, Locked Down and Abandoned, (2021)

4. Source: ONS, Coronavirus and redundancies in the UK labour market: September to November 2020, (2021)

5. Source: GLA, Rapid Evidence Review - Inequalities in relation to COVID-19 and their effects on London (2020)

6. Source: Ubele Initiative, Impact of Covid-19 on BAME community and voluntary sector (2020)

7. Source: Impact of Covid-19 on the BAME Community and Voluntary Sector (2020)

8. Source: JCWI, Migrants deterred from healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic (2021)

9. Source: According to GLA Economics, in London, female unemployment was 7.2% in the three months to December 2020, compared to 6.7% for men. The unemployment rate for women in London is currently 0.5 percentage points higher than for men. The female unemployment rate has increased 3.5 percentage points over the last year, compared to 2 percentage points for men.

10. Source: The EHRC described instances of pregnancy and maternity discrimination as one of "the most urgent, immediate threats to equality" during the pandemic https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/4597/documents/46478/default/

11. Source: LGBT Hero, LGBTQ+ Lockdown Wellbeing Report (2021)

12. Source: ONS, Living longer: impact of working from home on older workers (2021)

13. Source: Age UK London, Mind the digital gap: older Londoners and internet use during the pandemic (2021)

14. We worked with the following organisations as engagement partners who then involved their wider networks: Action on Race Equality (formerly BTEG), The Ubele Initiative, The Consortium, Inclusion London, Women's Resource Centre and London Age-Friendly Forum.

15. The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination, harrassment and victimisation. It is unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise anyone because of one or more of these protected characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation

16. data.london.gov.uk/dataset/equality--diversity-and-inclusion-evidence-base

17. Quote from Week 7 data (26th – 28th May 2020) of The London Community Response Survey. The dataset presenting results of a weekly questionnaire sent to a cohort of frontline civil society organisations from April 2020 can be found here: https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-community-response-survey

18. Source: London Recovery Board Communities of Practice Guidelines (2022)

19. Source: HMRC, 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: September 2020', (2021)

20. Source: The Good Work Standard https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/business-and-economy/supporting-business/what-mayors-good-work-standard

21. Source: FSB Experts in Business, Small Business Access to Public Procurement Processes (2021)

22. Source: The impact of Covid-19 on UK small business (Simply Business June 2021) https://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/downloads/simply-business-report-covid-19-impact-on-small-business.pdf

23. COVID-19 related mortality rates for the most deprived areas in England have been approximately double those of less deprived areas (as in Nazroo et al 2020). Rapid Evidence Review: Inequalities in relation to COVID-19 and their effects on London

24. https://centrallondonforward.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/WPI-Economics-CLF-Interim-report-FINAL-V3-002.pdf

25. Source: EPI Economics, Inequality and poverty in central London before and during the Covid-19 pandemic (2021)

26. www.livingwage.org.uk/accredited-living-wage-employers

27. www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/business-and-economy/london-living-wage

28. For example, see https://www.health.org.uk/publications/build-back-fairer-the-covid-19-marmot-review

29. Social tariffs are ways of providing people with more affordable utilities like gas, electricity and broadband

30. Source: Policy in Practice, The Challenges Ahead for Low Income Families (2022)

31. Source: Equality and Human Rights Commission https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-impact-assessments

32. See reference 8

33. Learning and Word Institute, The impact of the coronavirus outbreak on London's low paid workers (July 2020)

34. trustforlondon.fra1.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/Londons_Poverty_Profile_2020.pdf (published prior to the pandemic)

35. www.cipd.co.uk/about/media/press/050321half-employers-dont-have-financial-wellbeing-policy

36. Source: CIPD call to action https://www.cipd.co.uk/about/media/press/050321half-employers-dont-have-financial-wellbeing-policy#gref

37. Many local authorities have schemes to help low income households during financial crises or emergencies

38. Source: London Councils www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/tracking-welfare-reforms/local-welfare-provision

39. Around 30% of London's Black, Asian and mixed/other households are located in the poorest 20% of households nationally, versus 16% of London's white households. In addition, 45% of London's Black, Asian and mixed/other households have children, versus 26% of London's white households. These factors have an impact on reliance on welfare benefits and therefore these groups are most affected by any changes. For example, see the GLA's cumulative impact assessment of welfare reforms (2019) which showed that Black Londoner's were likely to lose more income than other ethnic groups as a result of welfare cuts: https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/welfare-reform-2019/

40. Scope, The disability report: Disabled people and the coronavirus crisis, May 2020

41. GLA Briefing/Dr Dalia Ben-Galim, Universal Credit and Disabled Londoners (May 2020)

42. Source: GLA Briefing/Dr Dalia Ben-Galim, Universal Credit and Disabled Londoners (2020)

43. https://adph.org.uk/networks/london/2021/02/15/policy-position-supporting-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-communities-during-and-beyond-the-covid-19-pandemic/

44. Source: Scottish Government, Using intersectionality to understand structural inequality in Scotland: evidence synthesis (2022)

45. Source: Beyond the Data Report https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

46. Source: COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Toolkit https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/content/dam/kp/mykp/documents/instructions/covid-19-vaccine-equity-toolkit-external.pdf

47. Source: ADPH (London) Action Plan on Structural Racism https://adph.org.uk/networks/london/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/For-publishing-ADPH-London-action-plan.pdf

48. Specialist treatment and support provided by health professional after referral, normally in hospital settings

49. Source: Institute for Public Policy Research, Towards True Universal Care, (2021)

50. (i.e. where an institution implements existing rules or norms that result in certain social groups being unintentionally advantaged or favoured and others being disadvantaged or devalued. Institutional racism is a common example.).

51. Source: https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/recovery-context/building-strong-communities

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