

Cultural
S'STRATEGY
for Brent
2010-2015

It's yours... Join in

Cultural **STRATEGY** for Brent 2010-2015

It's yours... Join in

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Foreword

We are delighted to be able to introduce the Brent Cultural Strategy 2010 – 2015. This strategy has been produced by the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum. It is the first time that partners from local businesses and arts, sports and learning providers in the area have worked together with the council to develop a shared cultural strategy for the borough. Through our partnership working we have identified the eight key principles which will help us to develop and deliver a joint cultural offer for Brent.

The Forum recognises that culture makes a major contribution to the development of dynamic, thriving communities. We also agree that culture plays a crucial role in tackling social exclusion, encouraging healthier lifestyles, promoting safer communities and is a catalyst for lifelong learning.

In preparing this cultural strategy the Forum undertook an extensive period of public consultation and we thank everyone who took part and helped to shape this final document. With all organisations working together to the same principles articulated in the strategy, we are convinced we will be able to achieve our shared vision for culture in Brent.



Paul Lorber

Cllr. Paul Lorber
Leader of Brent Council and
Chair of Partners for Brent,
Local Strategic Partnership



Rachel Evans

Rachel Evans
Chair of the Brent Culture,
Sport and Learning Forum

Background

This strategy has been produced by the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum, a thematic partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership ('Partners for Brent'). This strategy replaces the previous Brent Cultural Strategy which expired at the end of 2009. When discussing the development of this cultural strategy there was consensus amongst the Forum that the old strategy was too long and too 'wordy' and that this one should be a much briefer document that identifies key principles that will drive the development of cultural opportunities in Brent over the five year period between 2010 and 2015.

It was also agreed that this cultural strategy should be an overarching 'umbrella' document that provides direction to all cultural service providers in the borough rather than a document with specific partner's actions laid out in a detailed action plan. To this end, this strategy highlights the key principles that are considered the main issues that all cultural partners and providers need to consider when delivering cultural opportunities if our shared vision for culture in Brent is to be achieved.

Therefore, it is up to the various partners to use these principles to help shape and develop their own action plans.

Definitions of Culture

The Culture, Sport and Learning Forum has adopted the following definitions of what is meant by culture and sport:

The term 'culture' includes: arts, creative employment, festivals, libraries, museums, heritage, architecture/design of the public realm, children's play, parks, tourism and other forms of leisure and recreation.

The term 'sport' includes all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aims at improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels.

In this strategy 'culture' is used to include all the activities defined above. Engagement in culture is taken to mean both active and passive participation in a cultural activity, contribution to the creation or development of it, or attendance at its public expression.



Our shared
vision for
culture in
Brent...



Importance of culture to the borough

The partners in the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum believe that culture is an essential ingredient of a thriving and confident borough and contributes to a safe, healthy and cohesive community. Whilst culture is important in its own right, it can also provide ways to include the excluded, create new pathways to learning, engage with disenfranchised and disadvantaged groups and can provide the basis for positive local action. This cultural strategy will contribute to the delivery of actions within the Brent Community Strategy and Brent Council's own Corporate Strategy as well as many other related strategies such as the Brent Regeneration Strategy and the Brent Health and Well-Being Strategy. The overall policy context for culture and the need for organisations to work together in delivering cultural services are outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.

Culture is important on a national level as evidenced by the contribution it makes to wider agendas such as crime and community safety, formal and informal learning, community cohesion and health and well-being. Whilst there are seven national indicators for local government which relate directly to culture and cultural services provision, cultural outcomes make a contribution to the achievement of many others such as the levels of overall satisfaction with an area, reducing obesity in primary-aged children and improving biodiversity in an area. Though much of this contribution is made by the local authority services in Brent there are clearly many more providers who help with their achievement, which is why this document relates to all service providers and not simply the council.

Brent has a relatively well developed cultural programme although it is not always recognised and often the simple reason people give for not taking part in activities is that they don't know what is available. The cultural offer in Brent should reflect the diverse culture of the borough and recognise the influences of local neighbourhoods in terms of shopping, food and restaurants and the general vibrancy of an area. Brent has a number of important iconic cultural assets such as Wembley Stadium, Wembley Arena and the Tricycle Theatre, in addition to a range of sports centres, libraries, parks and open spaces and a museum. (Our main cultural assets are listed in Appendix 2). There are recognised gaps in provision, such as the need for a third pool in the borough as well as the need to

make better use of existing assets. While a wide range of activities and services are delivered at these facilities and venues by a range of providers or simply by allowing people 'to do it for themselves', more could be done to improve cultural leadership by shouting louder about what's on offer.

It is extremely likely that during the life of this strategy, economic conditions will become more challenging, financial resources may be reduced, competition for audiences may increase and new funding sources may be harder to obtain. It is crucial therefore that partners work together to create a sustainable, cohesive cultural offer, to avoid unnecessary duplication and to identify funding opportunities to support and develop new and existing cultural activities. Building Schools for the Future is one such funding stream which provides an opportunity for co-location of cultural facilities, provision of new exhibition and performance spaces and public art within the design of new schools.

Whilst this strategy focuses on cultural partners within Brent working together to develop a single cultural offer, it is recognised that people do not remain within borough boundaries and will travel to places or activities that most suit their needs. Therefore, we also need to work with partners in neighbouring boroughs and within the sub-region to maximise cultural opportunities for Brent people.

Brent Council's role in delivering the Cultural Strategy

This document is not solely Brent Council's cultural strategy but a strategy for the development of cultural opportunities in the borough. It is intended to provide common ground for all cultural service providers and partners working together within the borough. However, it is recognised that the council is a significant provider of cultural services and opportunities. In addition, the council has a key role to play in cultural leadership and in brokering and developing partnerships across all cultural providers to ensure the best possible opportunities flourish within the borough.

To this end, Brent Council commits to using the principles identified within this document to influence the detailed strategies it will produce for each of its main cultural services; the Parks Strategy, the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy, the Library Strategy, the Arts and Festivals Strategy and the Museum and Heritage Strategy.

Vision and principles

Vision

To develop a range of cultural opportunities that are engaging, accessible and enriching for all local communities.

By 2015 Brent will be a place that is confident in its belief in culture as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of everyone who lives or works in the borough regardless of their individual circumstances. Brent's culture will be the direct product of people's sense of pride, identity and connectedness. A relevant and exciting offer of cultural activities will be available and will provide a route for harnessing and developing the local distinctiveness of the borough. The creation of an accessible and vibrant local culture and shared community activities will prove to be an integral part of a sustainable and successful community.

Eight headline principles have been identified as being key to the successful delivery of this vision.

These are, in no priority order:

- Enhancing cultural vibrancy
- Increasing participation
- Raising the profile of culture
- Encouraging young people to take part
- Developing public space
- Making the most of London 2012 and other major events
- Supporting the cultural economy
- Promoting health and well-being

...the direct product of people's sense of pride, identity and connectedness...



PRINCIPLE

Enhancing cultural vibrancy

Brent is one of only two local authorities in the UK where the majority of people are from black and minority ethnic communities. More than 130 languages are spoken in Brent. There are over 150 places of worship spread across the borough representing a wide range of faiths.

It is often through places of worship that communities initially come together, while it is on our streets, in our parks, on our sporting fields and in our iconic venues that a rich variety of cultures are celebrated. This celebration of cultures is a clear expression of shared values by the whole Brent community.

The exciting range of restaurants, cafes and bars across the borough will continue to be at the forefront of this cultural vibrancy and London 2012 will provide an excellent opportunity for local people and visitors to celebrate the rich variety of food and drink enjoyed in Brent.

To enable the growth of strong communities it's essential that both individual cultural identities are celebrated and a shared cultural identity for Brent is formed. This shared identity should be one that is grounded in the local rather than the national context with cultural services helping to develop this sense of community. Establishing the right cultural infrastructure across Brent, including, increasingly a virtual one, will allow the growth and development of communities that are cohesive, successful, confident and forward thinking.

It's essential that both individual cultural identities are celebrated and a shared cultural identity for Brent is formed...

CASE STUDY



Graffiti Partnership Board

An innovative multi-agency partnership has paved the way for a holistic approach to tackling the problem of graffiti on the streets of Brent. In 2007 graffiti levels in Brent were running at an all time high and by viewing the problem from multiple perspectives the Graffiti Partnership Board was able to better share resources, information and expertise in cleaning, apprehending and educating young people in a cohesive manner with almost immediate success.

Part of this approach included innovative consultation techniques, which took the subject matter directly into the heart of schools. Young people told us that they were often bored with the current look and feel of their immediate neighbourhood and engaged in tagging and graffiti art because it was 'cool'. Based on this, diversionary schemes have been developed that focus on young people's creative skills and specifically enable them to engage positively with both their environment and their community in the development of murals and other pieces of public art to enhance the local environment for all.

Through this multi-agency approach Brent has had a 25 per cent reduction in one year in graffiti levels and the community as a whole has benefited from this innovative and wide ranging solution to an age old problem.

PRINCIPLE

Increasing participation

Brent currently has low levels of participation in a number of areas across the cultural sector, illustrated by a range of annual national indicators. Over half of the adult population don't take part in any form of physical activity and only 41 per cent of residents engage in arts based activities. Further details of general participation levels across a range of cultural services are included in Appendix 4, but overall it is clear that there are low levels of participation and engagement in cultural activities by Brent residents. These participation levels drop even further when issues such as age, disability, ethnicity, gender and sexuality are considered.

Fundamental to successfully increasing participation levels across the cultural offer is the need to heighten the awareness of Brent's residents to what is available to them. Customer awareness and satisfaction levels relating to cultural services vary ward by ward across the borough but, when asked why they don't participate, people often say they are simply not aware of what is available in the borough. There is a clear need to articulate and promote what's on offer to residents in an easily accessible manner to ensure that more people take up the opportunities available. Digital media is increasingly ensuring access both to general information and to specific engagement. From both formal and informal on-line learning, through to the digitisation of previously inaccessible materials to portals for self expression and promotion, pre-existing barriers to access and participation are being broken down by the virtual world.

Ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone who lives or works in Brent...

The identification of barriers to participation (including perceived barriers) and helping people to overcome these is inherent to the successful delivery of the vision of this strategy. We need to ensure services are affordable and accessible. Where possible facilities should be accessible by public transport and should contribute to developing thriving town centres. For example, in recent years the Brent Museum and Brent Archive have relocated to the easy-to-reach, centrally-located Willesden Green Library Centre. In addition, collections are simultaneously being catalogued online and together these two actions ensure greater access to these local resources.

In order to increase participation levels we need to develop a clear picture of demand and key drivers to encourage people to join in. Once we have this picture and barriers that stand in the way have been removed, a cultural offer can then be developed which ensures equality of opportunity for everyone who lives or works in Brent. Increased levels of volunteering and the development of links between cultural providers and the voluntary sector will also play a crucial role in delivering the vision and provide services which are relevant to people's needs.

CASE STUDY

Divine Cat

In May 2009 Brent Museum was the first organisation to benefit from a nationwide scheme to bring national treasures to local audiences.

The British Museum lent the iconic Gayer-Anderson Cat dating from 600BC for an exhibition called Divine Cat – Speaking to the gods in Ancient Egypt. The exhibition also included a display of Brent Museum's own local collections, including Egyptian tomb goods, acquired by local businessman and philanthropist George Titus Barham in the early 20th century.

An extensive public programme included formal lectures as well as family and school activities (during which time children focused on what can be learned from archaeological evidence and objects from the past using original and replica Egyptian objects). School groups made their own Ancient Egyptian-style objects and the public were invited to visit both Brent Museum and the British Museum.

The scheme was a huge success with many people visiting the museum for the first time. In all 10,000 people visited or took part in an activity related to the Divine Cat Exhibition over an eight week period. Brent Museum aims to host further national loans in the future.

www.brent.gov.uk/museumarchive



PRINCIPLE

Raising the profile of culture

To realise their true value and worth to the community, the benefits of cultural activity need to be better articulated and become more integrated into the day to day life of residents. Successful cultural projects and schemes need to be highlighted and celebrated to demonstrate the contribution they make to developing healthy, cohesive communities. Participation in sports, learning and creative activities has been proven to improve physical and psychological health, tackle antisocial behaviour and reduce drug and alcohol dependence, as well as bring communities together. All providers of culture need to be able to demonstrate the impact of culture on Brent residents and how it affects people positively in their daily lives.

In order to embed the central role of culture in the identity of the local community it's essential that strong leadership is developed across Brent's cultural sector, including members of community groups, local organisations and the council. More needs to be done to increase awareness of how culture can contribute to the outcomes of other services within the council. There is a role for cultural champions as key ambassadors for raising the profile of culture throughout the borough and ensuring increased penetration to a wider audience.

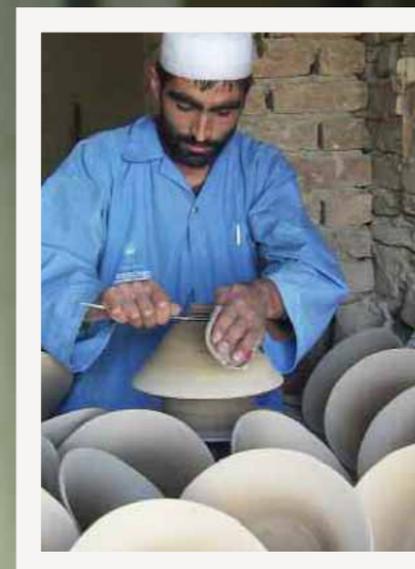
There is a role for cultural champions as key ambassadors for raising the profile of culture throughout the borough...

Playwrights Kwame Kwei-Armah, Bola Agbaje and Roy Williams presented *Not Black and White* at the Tricycle Theatre in Kilburn, autumn 2009.

CASE STUDY

Afghan Theatre Festival

Each week more than 130 young people who are newly arrived in the UK, have English as an additional language and are not in mainstream education, attend drama and art sessions at the Tricycle as part of the 'Minding the Gap' Education and Social Inclusion Programme. Fusing drama, visual and creative art to explore culture and tradition while improving confidence, self-esteem, language skills and nurturing the transition to life in London, the project provides an alternative form of self-expression (which builds confidence and improves academic achievement in young people whose first language is not English) as well as a safe and supportive environment (which in turn helps address the emotional issues associated with transition and migration). In the summer of 2009, while the Tricycle Theatre was showing *The Great Game* – the largest festival of Afghan culture in Britain – 'Minding the Gap' focussed on the traditional stories and artwork of Afghanistan. The work culminated in a large-scale on stage performance, involving more than 100 young people. Afghan kite-making workshops were delivered to school children by the Tricycle's artist in residence as part of the project, as well as to the Afghan community. www.tricycle.co.uk



PRINCIPLE

Encouraging young people to take part

The opportunity to begin a lifelong journey of cultural appreciation...

Every Child Matters identifies the five outcomes that are of the highest importance to all children and young people, regardless of their individual circumstances.

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Cultural activities play a significant role in contributing to these outcomes through employment, education, entertainment, sports and leisure activities and a range of specific projects working with young people. Engaging a person in cultural activity when they are young offers that individual the opportunity to begin a lifelong journey of cultural appreciation. Looked after young people and young people with disabilities have less opportunity to participate and should be a focus for developing life-long participation.

Young people are a corporate objective and priority for Brent. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is the strategic document setting out the vision and local priorities for children and young people in the borough. The Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) was established in 2007 as the elected voice of young people in the borough. The BYP manifesto identifies three priorities for Brent: crime and safety, health and well-being, and sports and leisure. One of the recommendations made by BYP is that activities for young people need to be advertised more widely on places such as school notice boards and websites, libraries, radio stations and places where young people congregate. New digital media will increasingly create new ways to engage with and allow young people to join in.

The development of creative partnerships has a crucial role to play in increasing the take up of the cultural offer in both a sporting and arts context, thereby contributing to improved educational standards. Recognition needs to be given to the importance of ensuring that the cultural offer to children and young people is sustainable and that successful projects are built upon as part of the wider offer.

Pupils at Preston Manor School

CASE STUDY

Black music events

Using music and the arts to develop potential, raise aspirations and promote social cohesion, voluntary organisation BTWSC is unique in that it not only works with young people, but with adults, and inter-generational audiences alike. Delivering a range of programmes from accredited event management courses to youth crime reduction activity and community concerts, BTWSC has been recognised by national organisations including Arts Council England (ACE).

Giving young people an opportunity to develop skills and then perform as in *Roots to Branches* as well as engaging in film through the creation of mini video documentaries such as *Love in the City*, BTWSC champion the notion that young people truly see value in engaging with other generations through creativity.
www.btwsc.com



PRINCIPLE

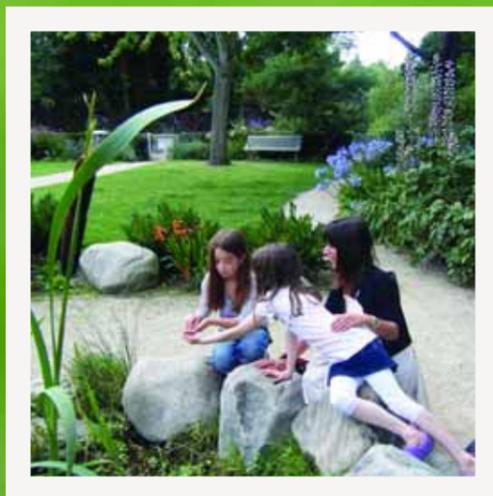
Developing public space

The culture of a community is expressed in the spaces which that community creates for itself. From Wembley's regeneration area to the vibrant bustle of Ealing Road through to the leafy streets of Queen's Park, Brent's built environment is as diverse as its communities. Both the built environment and the spaces between buildings need to be flexible, modern, distinctive and well equipped. They will also need to be sustainable and flexible in order to accommodate the changing needs of Brent's communities and the future interests and pastimes of generations to come. Cultural facilities and activities are a key part of this environment and as such should be planned for from the outset, along with design and public art considerations. Closer working between cultural providers and those with responsibility for planning infrastructure will be crucial to the success of this process, especially within the proposed growth areas in the borough.

Culture will continue to make a huge contribution to the development of Brent's public space in a number of ways:

- The creative design and animation of public spaces, including the imaginative use of public art.
- The provision of a broad range of well-designed, well-equipped facilities including libraries and learning centres, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, parks and open spaces and other buildings used for cultural activities.
- A range of festivals, events and activities which animate the borough and offer all members of the community the opportunity to come together to celebrate Brent's rich diversity.
- Green spaces of all types in the borough will contribute to maintaining and improving local biodiversity and helping to adapt to climate change.
- Well-managed buildings and assets will contribute directly and indirectly to a reduction in CO₂ emissions. Examples of how this contribution can be made include reducing energy use in sports centres and encouraging residents to travel to Brent's facilities by means of public transport, cycling or on foot.
- Open House and similar pan-London and national events promote the built heritage of the borough and allow people to experience and learn from some of our most exciting buildings.

CASE STUDY



Mapesbury Dell Project

A proactive relationship between the Parks Service and the Mapesbury Area Conservation Trust (MACT) has ensured that Mapesbury Dell evolved from what local residents described as an 'ugly lobster pot' into a vibrant community open space asset.

School groups, local volunteers and the eclectic mix of members from the MACT have offered their time and skills to sustain the improved infrastructure and landscape. Enthusiasm to participate in a calendar of projects, schemes and workshops has been harnessed, local businesses approached for sponsorship and donations secured. A buzz of anticipation emanates throughout and there is an earnest desire to continue improving the area and achieving positive results.

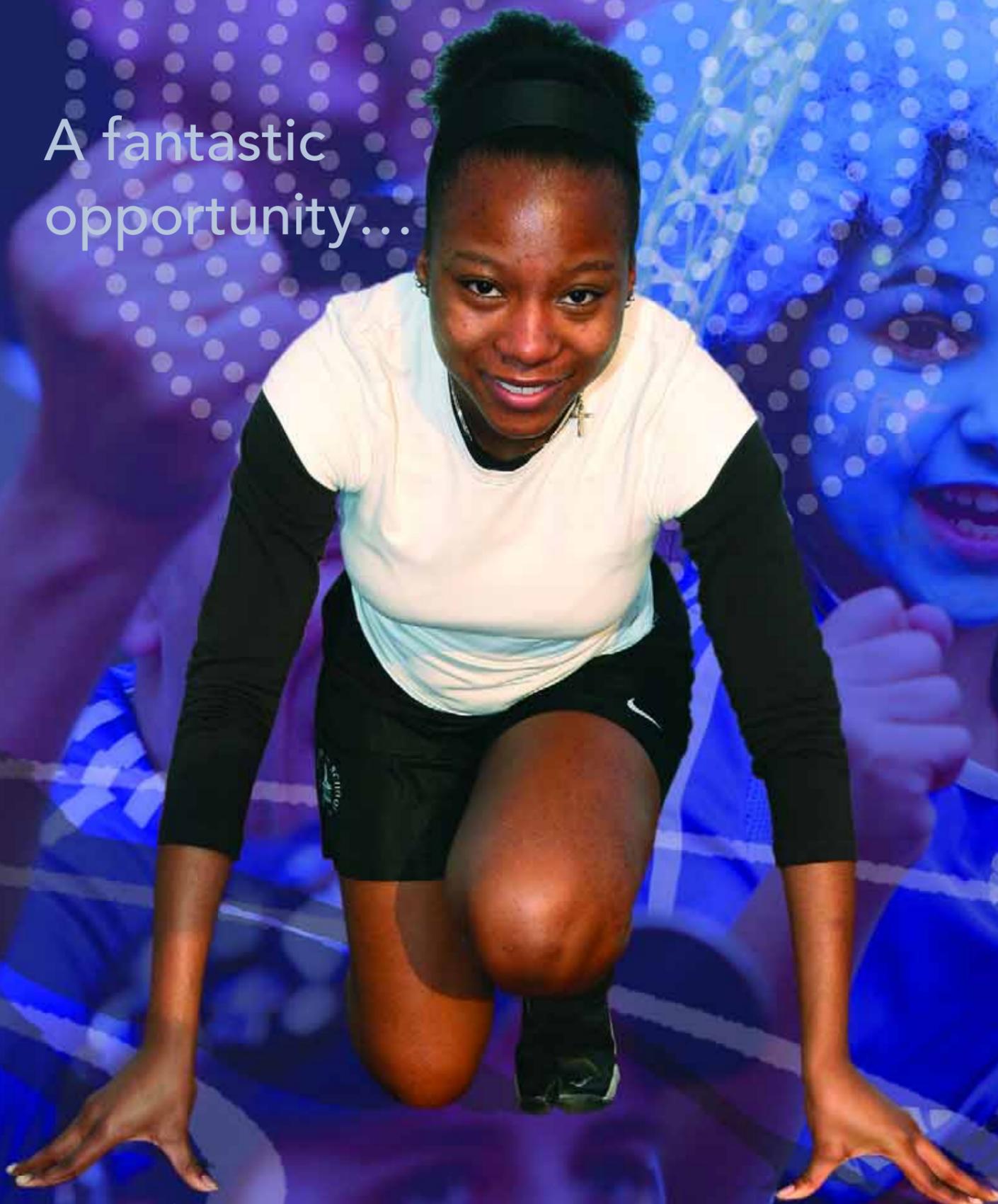
Extensive consultation undertaken as part of the project has led to residents feeling that they have created a unique green space that is representative of the needs of this diverse community.

This project is a shining example of how good partnership working can deliver good quality open space in the often polluted urban lung for the benefit of all the community. www.mapesbury-dell.org

Culture will continue to make a huge contribution to the development of Brent's public space...



A fantastic opportunity...



PRINCIPLE

Making the most of London 2012 and other major events

In Brent we are committed to London 2012 and to ensuring a lasting legacy from the Games for residents, local businesses and young people. Brent will play a leading role during the Games with events being held in Wembley. However, the Olympic and Paralympic Games are not just about competitive sport being played in the borough. They will also be an important opportunity for a celebration of Brent's cultural heritage by ensuring Brent plays a role in the Cultural Olympiad promoting Brent as an exciting and dynamic borough.

London 2012 is a fantastic opportunity for services and providers in Brent to increase the take up of sports and arts activities by using the Games as a catalyst for residents to engage fully with the wider cultural offer. It is also a great opportunity to build a stronger local economy by looking at opportunities for local businesses and skills development and for developing the volunteering base within the borough. Volunteers play a crucial role in the provision of many cultural services and many people are only able to take part in activities and events because volunteers make it happen. Developing volunteers and volunteering opportunities across the cultural sector will contribute to the creation of a broad and inclusive cultural offer.

With facilities such as Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena, the borough is able to attract major events with subsequent social and economic benefit. The 2011 UEFA Champions League Final and the 2015 Rugby World Cup will both take place in Wembley. We should also look to build on other major events held in West London and London as a whole, such as the annual Notting Hill Carnival and the World Pride event in 2012, securing direct benefits for the local area.



CASE STUDY

2012 and Wembley Stadium

In the summer of 2012 London plays host to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, welcoming more than 200 countries to the world's biggest sporting event. Brent will have a crucial role to play as Wembley Stadium will host the football finals and semi finals, welcoming the Games back after sixty four years.

In April 2008, Brent kicked off its 2012 celebrations by welcoming the Olympic flame back to Wembley for the official opening ceremony of the London leg of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Torch Relay. Sixteen year old Brent student Cheyenne Green was chosen from thousands of young hopefuls to participate in the handover of the torch. Receiving the torch from Olympic gold medalist Sir Steve Redgrave, Cheyenne then carried it from Wembley, through Harlesden (where Cheyenne grew up) and onto the next leg.

But London 2012 is not the only opportunity for big events at Wembley. Wembley Stadium will also play host to the UEFA Champions League in 2011, the Rugby World Cup in 2015, and is all set to host the Football World Cup should London be successful in its bid.

The 2012 Games together with other international events taking place in the shadow of an iconic landmark will bring together sports, culture and education, providing us with the opportunity to engage with our communities, welcome new visitors and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the borough.

www.brent.gov.uk/brent2012

PRINCIPLE

Supporting the cultural economy

With its iconic international landmarks and some equally enchanting smaller locations, Brent is ideally placed to fully develop its cultural economy to ensure it reaches its maximum potential. Creative industries provide employment opportunities within the borough and contribute to its prosperity by encouraging investment. The continuing success of this element of the local economy depends on the continuing development of Brent's cultural vibrancy.

With venues of regional and national significance in the borough, good transport links ensuring access into and away from central London, and wide open spaces, Brent is well placed to capitalise on this national growth area (percentage GDP growth for creative industries is second only to financial services in London). By providing the correct mix of premises and by ensuring our schools and colleges help people to develop creative skills, we will be able to ensure culture contributes to a successful economy in Brent.

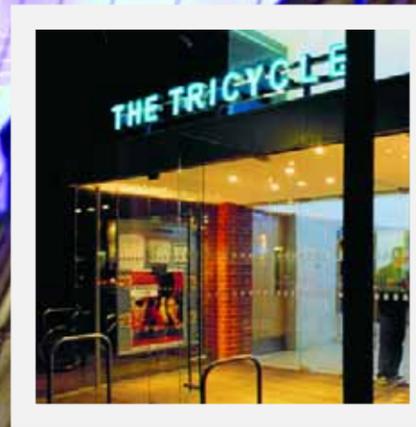
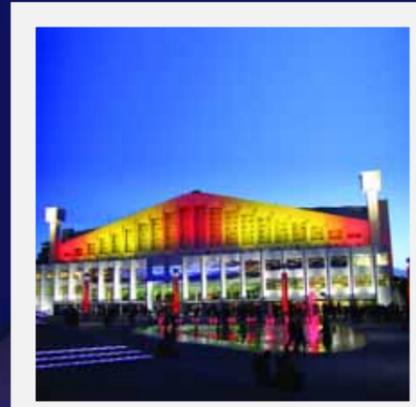
Parks make an important contribution to the wealth of the borough by helping to attract visitors and inward investment. Historic parks have a particular appeal and their enhancement is crucial both for their inherent cultural value and their contribution to local wealth creation.

CASE STUDY

Fountain Studios

Since the first production of *An Arabian Night* with Orson Welles in 1960, Fountain Studios has been making film and television programs at the Brent site. Fountain Studios are the largest purpose built television studios in the UK, with a history of classics such as *On the Buses* and *Upstairs Downstairs* through to contemporary landmark television including *Friends*, *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, *Pop Idol*, *The Kumar's at Number 42*, *Test The Nation*, *The X Factor* and *Britain's Got Talent*. Fountain continues to create and transmit some of the most watched and iconic television of our generation in the UK.

Fountain, who already owned a studio in New Malden, bought the Wembley site in 1993. Since then, Fountain has been an instrumental part of Brent's cultural economy, employing a host of staff and freelancers, as well as driving revenue to local businesses through association. With long term loyal clients and committed staff, the studio, has an exciting future in supporting Brent to boost cultural and creative enhancement that is communicated through broadcast across the world. www.ftv.co.uk



Venues of regional and national significance...

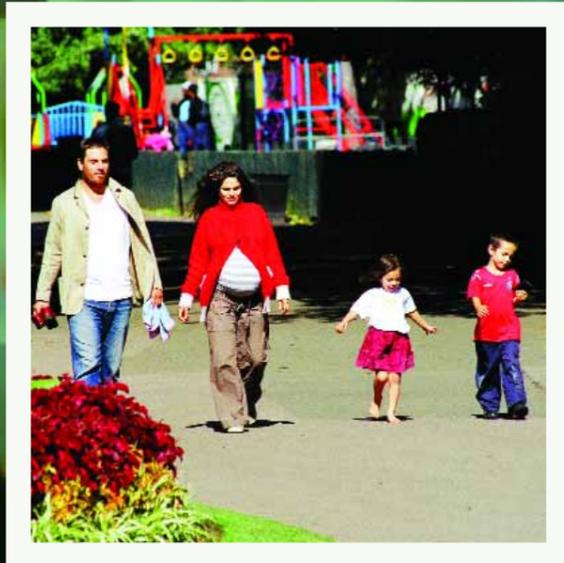
PRINCIPLE

Promoting health and well-being

Participating in cultural activity can contribute to an improvement in an individual's health and well-being, both in terms of supporting an ongoing healthy lifestyle and aiding recovery from long term illness or a period of rehabilitation.

There are significant health inequalities in the borough linked to location, gender, level of deprivation and ethnicity. For example, a high proportion of Brent residents rate their health as "not good" and almost one in five people are classed as obese. Engagement with culture through participation in activities or volunteering enhances the physical, intellectual and emotional well-being of individuals.

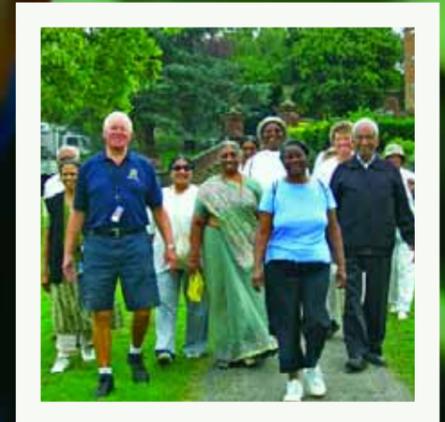
The use of parks and open spaces for physical activity and sport can have a huge influence on improving the health of the borough e.g. contributing to a reduction in the mortality rate from circulatory diseases and tackling obesity in both adults and children. Libraries provide a range of activities which contribute to the well-being of individuals including informal learning, bibliotherapy sessions and information, advice and guidance sessions. The launch of the 'Books on Prescription' scheme and the expansion of reading group provision will further enhance the role of libraries in promoting health and well-being.



Engagement with culture through participation in activities or volunteering enhances the physical, intellectual and emotional well-being of individuals...



CASE STUDY



Healthy walks

Established in April 2006, Brent's free Healthy Walks Programme aims to encourage adults, especially those new to physical activity, to improve their health through physical activity.

Set in parks across the borough, the programme has been instrumental in promoting mental health and social benefits alongside the traditional messages of living a healthy lifestyle. Each walk is led by a walk leader, with over twenty local people having been trained as volunteer walk leaders.

Currently eleven walks take place across the borough every week with some attracting nearly 50 adults for a single walk. Walkers have fed back how the programme has improved their health and well-being in general.

A Walkers Forum, established in 2007, enables individuals to comment and input into the ongoing development of the programme to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community.

www.brent.gov.uk/sport

ACTIONS *for Delivery*

Four key actions will ensure the successful delivery of the vision and principles of the cultural strategy.

1 To make sure people know what's on offer

There are already a wide range of cultural activities and opportunities open to people living, working and visiting Brent. Many people when asked why they don't take part in the offer say that they don't know what's available. It is important therefore that we become more confident about the cultural offer in Brent and take every opportunity to let people know what's available locally.

2 To enable more people to engage with culture by ensuring equality of access.

Cultural activities should be encountered by all residents as part of the fabric of everyday life with everyone able to participate in and benefit from the cultural experience. It is recognised that some people face greater barriers to engaging in cultural activities and we will work to minimise these barriers.

3 To increase and improve appropriate locations, facilities and opportunities to encourage participation and creative expression.

Venues, equipment and the range of activities on offer need to be fit for purpose and appropriate to the needs of the local community. We will work to ensure Brent has a range of good quality, affordable facilities that are accessible to local people and provide opportunities to engage in culture at any chosen level.

4 To maximise the wider benefits of culture for Brent residents through strong cultural leadership.

Culture provides a wide range of benefits to everyone who takes part, including developing an enhanced sense of health and well-being, contributing to community cohesion, improving educational achievement and making a significant contribution to the local community. Cultural leaders in Brent need to champion the cultural services to ensure other service providers are aware of these benefits and the importance of culture to life in the borough.

Cultural activities will be part of the fabric of everyday life...



Monitoring **PREVIEW**

This cultural strategy has been produced by the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum to ensure cultural activities and opportunities are planned and developed in an agreed and co-ordinated way within Brent. The strategy recognises the range of organisations and agencies involved in delivering a wide cultural offer in Brent, the role they will play in delivering this strategy and the benefits of working together to ensure our joint cultural vision is achieved.

The strategy has highlighted the contribution that culture can play in Brent in terms of improving health, creating safe places, tackling worklessness and increasing community cohesion. All these issues are addressed within the key principles in this strategy.

The delivery of the actions will be overseen by the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum and fed through to the Local Strategic Partnership on an annual basis. The forum will review the strategy, comparing achievements against the key actions, taking account of changing circumstances and new opportunities, thereby allowing all partners to plan and identify resources with which to deliver key actions. Improvement in participation rates as measured through the national indicators will allow us to determine whether the vision is being met.

A comprehensive review of the strategy will take place in 2014 to allow sufficient time for a subsequent strategy to be produced.

The strategy has highlighted the contribution that culture can play in Brent in terms of health, creating safe places, tackling worklessness and increasing community cohesion.



Cultural **STRATEGY** for Brent **2010-2015**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Policy context for the cultural strategy

A Passion for Excellence – the improvement strategy for culture and sport – was published in March 2008, linked to the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy, and outlines support to local authorities and their partners to deliver better outcomes in the role that cultural services make. It sets out a framework for culture and sport to:

- improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of culture and sport in the delivery of economic, social and environmental outcomes in local communities,
- improve performance within the sector,
- build capacity and leadership and
- coordinate the regional improvement infrastructure

The London Cultural Improvement Group is leading on this work across London and Brent is involved in a number of work areas including the library service improvement programme, the museum improvement programme and the peer-led self-assessment programme.

The new National Performance Framework sets out the 198 national performance indicators for local government. Of the 198 indicators, four relate directly to cultural services and three require a significant contribution from cultural services to deliver the outcomes. These are:

- NI 8: Adult participation in sport and active recreation
- NI 9: Use of public libraries
- NI 10: Visits to museums and galleries
- NI 11: Engagement in the arts
- NI 6: Participation in regular volunteering
- NI 57: Children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport
- NI 110: Young people's participation in positive activities
- NI 197: Improved local biodiversity
- NI 199: Children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas.

In addition there are a number of indicators that require an input from cultural services, including:

- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with an area
- NI 7: Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI 55: Obesity in primary school age children in reception
- NI 56: Obesity in primary school age children in year 6

Local Area Agreements reflect the shared view of local priorities as agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership (Partners for Brent) in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The indicator relating to sports participation was included as part of the first LAA within Brent reflecting the locally recognised importance of the link between levels of physical activity and improving health in the borough. The current LAA includes targets linked to reducing obesity.

Towards the end of 2008, the London Mayor launched an outline of his new cultural strategy; *Cultural Metropolis*. Whilst, the final version of the strategy is still to be published, the draft document clearly recognises the need for a range of partners to work together to deliver cultural services across London.

APPENDIX 2: Profile of Brent

The following provides a broad profile of Brent, concentrating on the main issues that have a potential impact on the provision of cultural services. For example, the diversity of the population itself needs to be considered to ensure a range of events and activities relevant to the whole community are on offer, the contribution that sporting and cultural activities can make to improving health and well-being needs consideration, whilst low levels of private car ownership suggest services should be provided in areas which are easily accessible by public transport. More detailed information on the issues outlined in this section can be found in a range of documents including Brent's Corporate Strategy, the Health and Well-being Strategy and the Brent Regeneration Strategy.

The London Borough of Brent is situated in north west London and in general can be characterised by a divide between the relative affluence of the northern wards compared to those in the south of the borough. Whilst there are pockets of deprivation in the north, the north is generally suburban in character with an older population whilst the south has more characteristics of inner city London, with a younger population.

The population of Brent is growing with recent figures indicating significant numbers of people moving into the borough creating new emerging communities. The GLA estimate Brent's population at 279,200 (2007) although independent research commissioned by the council estimates it to be nearer 289,000 (2007). As part of the Mayor's London Plan it is expected that there will be around 11,000 new homes; mainly in the growth areas of South Kilburn, Alperton, Wembley, Church End, Burnt Oak and Colindale. Population growth has largely been in the south of the borough and is predominately the result of an increase in the number of young adults, often with pre-school or young children. The total population is expected to grow to over 305,000 by 2017; this increase will be focused around the housing growth areas mentioned above.

Brent has the second highest number of new national insurance registrations in the country and nearly eight per cent of Brent's population are refugees or asylum seekers. Brent has a slightly higher male than female profile (ONS 2006 mid-year estimate).

Fifty four per cent of Brent residents are from black and ethnic minority communities, which compares with an average for London of approximately 40 per cent. These groups comprise of established Indian, Black Caribbean, Black African and Irish communities as well as emerging Somali and central and eastern European

communities. Brent has a relatively young population; a quarter of residents are aged 19 years or under. The highest concentration of young people is in the south of the borough and within the most deprived wards one third of residents are aged under 16 years. 62 per cent of residents are aged under 40 years, compared with 52 per cent nationally and only 14 per cent of Brent's population are of pensionable age. Seventy four per cent of children in Brent are from ethnic minorities and over 130 languages are spoken in Brent schools.

The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation identified Brent as the 53rd most deprived area out of 354 boroughs. Whilst the main areas of deprivation are in the south of the borough, particularly Stonebridge, Harlesden, parts of Kensal Green, Willesden Green and Kilburn wards, there are emerging pockets in the north and west in parts of Barnhill, Welsh Harp and Wembley Central wards. This deprivation is characterised by high levels of long-term unemployment, low household incomes and a dependence on benefits and social housing. Children and young people are particularly affected by deprivation with a third of Brent's children living in low incomes households, a quarter in social housing and a fifth in single adult households.

There are significant health inequalities in the borough, linked to location, gender, level of deprivation and ethnicity. The most deprived wards in the south of the borough have a higher death rate and lower life expectancy than the less deprived wards in the north. Nearly 20 per cent of Brent's population are classified as obese and the percentage of children in year 6 classed as obese is 22.5 per cent. The prevalence of diabetes in Brent is high compared to the national average and Brent also has one of the highest rates of TB in London.

Brent has good public transport links to central London and the rest of the country. However, it also has very low car ownership: 37.3 per cent of households do not have access to a private vehicle which means public transport plays a key role in transportation terms within the borough. This is particularly the case in the south with the lowest income levels and car ownership rates. There are some areas of Brent with both poor public transport accessibility and low car ownership, including St Raphaels and Brentfield estates.

A further aspect of accessibility is linked to the physical and psychological barriers created when main roads or railways effectively cut off communities from services in an area. Key examples in Brent are the A406 North Circular Road and the West Coast Mainline railway.

APPENDIX 3: Key cultural assets

The following table lists key cultural assets across the borough. It is by no means an exhaustive list and it is recognised that there are many buildings across the borough that are used for sporting, social and cultural activities that are not included here. In

addition, there are 86 listed buildings within Brent. The list below includes those that are considered to be of most interest in terms of adding to the cultural heritage of Brent.

Ace Café	This internationally renowned café on the north circular road was opened in 1936 and was used in the 1963 film <i>The Leather Boys</i> .
Advait Sattavis Gam Centre	A cultural and conference centre, predominately utilised by the Asian community.
Brent Adult and Community Education Service	A wide range of personal and community development learning programmes covering arts, dance, music, sport and fitness are delivered from 6 main sites and over 60 locally based venues across Brent.
Brent Archive	A resource of maps, photographs and other artefacts about Brent and its local history.
Brent Museum	Brent Museum hosts a range of objects, documents and interactive exhibits which tell the story of Brent and the diverse range of individuals who have lived here over the past 150 years.
Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre	5-court sports hall, two fitness rooms, dance studio, sauna and steam room, function hall and conference rooms.
Buck Lane Conservation Area	A site consisting of a collection of 'fantasy' housing including thatched cottages and a castle designed by an architect in the 1920's.
Charteris Sports Centre	4-court sports hall and fitness facilities.
College of North West London	The College of North West London has multiple sites across the borough offering cultural, learning and sporting opportunities.
Education facilities	There are approximately 83 schools, 22 of which are secondary schools, located within Brent, many of which offer community access to cultural and sporting facilities. Capital City Academy has sports college status and Claremont School is a specialist school for the performing arts.
Faith buildings	A number of faith-based buildings exist across the borough and offer a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, as well as offering heritage interest.
Fountain Studios	Largest independent television studios in the United Kingdom.
Granville Plus Youth Arts Centre	Facilities include a dance studio, live music room, digital media suite, IT suite and a music production suite.
Kingsbury Manor and Summer House	These properties are Grade II listed sites. These are two of 86 listed buildings across Brent.
Lexi Cinema	Independent cinema based in Kensal Rise.
Libraries	There are a number of libraries distributed across the borough from Willesden Green in the south up through to Kingsbury in the north. An outreach service is also provided for residents across the borough.

Moberly Sports and Education Centre	Owned by Westminster Council but located within South Kilburn. Facilities include sports hall, fitness room and synthetic pitch.
Old Oxgate Farm	This is a Grade II listed site. This is one of 86 listed buildings across Brent.
Old Saint Andrews Church	This church located in Kingsbury is a Grade I statutory listed building. This is one of 86 listed buildings across Brent.
Parks and open spaces	There are over 100 parks and open spaces in Brent of varying size and with a range of amenities on offer. Parks and open spaces are designated within the Parks Strategy according to size and facilities, such as sports pitches, tennis courts, changing accommodation, play grounds and cafes. There is a recognised deficiency of open space in the south of the borough compared with the north.
Park Royal Industrial Park	A diverse range of film and media related industries.
Patidar House	This Federation of Patidar Association purpose built centre houses a 250 seat performance area, conference spaces and dance and music workshops. Provides a year round programme of Asian cultural events.
Poplar Grove Youth Centre	Located in Wembley, this centre include an 11-a-side football pitch and a hard court area catering for basketball, football and netball.
Roundwood Centre	Based in Harlesden, adjacent to Roundwod Park, this centre will fully open in 2011 providing sports and cultural activities including performance space for young people.
Swaminayan Hindu Temple	BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, London – popularly known as the 'Neasden Temple' – is the first and largest traditionally built Hindu stone Mandir in the Western hemisphere.
The Gallery at Willesden Green	Managed by Brent Artist's Resource (BAR). Provides support for artists in their professional development, including the creation of opportunities to participate in the visual arts through exhibitions, workshops, mentoring schemes and information.
The Stables Gallery and Arts Centre	Art gallery and arts centre staging various exhibitions. The gallery aims to exhibit a wide variety of media and styles of work by artists living in the Brent area.
The Welsh Harp Reservoir	The Welsh Harp or Brent Reservoir is 170 hectares of open water, marshes, trees and grassland. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Reservoir provides a valuable habitat for wildlife and a centre for water sports.
Tricycle Theatre	The Tricycle Theatre is a performing arts venue containing a 230 seat theatre, 300 seat cinema, workshop space, studio space, visual arts studio and art gallery.
Vale Farm Sports Centre	6-lane, 25m pool and separate learners pool. Sports hall, fitness room, dance studio, squash courts and floodlit synthetic pitch.
Wembley Arena	Internationally renowned performance space used mainly for music but also some sporting events.
Wembley National Stadium	90,000 seat stadium for sporting and outdoor concert use. Home to the Football Association.
Willesden Green Library Centre	Located on Willesden High Road, in addition to a library, this site houses the Brent Museum, the Brent Archive, a bookshop, cinema and an art gallery.
Willesden Sports Centre	6-lane, 25m pool and separate learning pool, 4-court sports hall, fitness room, dance studio, indoor athletics 'tube' and floodlit synthetic track.
Youth and Community Centres	There are a number of multi-purpose youth and community centres across the borough which provides access to sporting/cultural activity. Granville Youth Arts Centre in Kilburn in particular is focused on arts and creative activity for young people.

APPENDIX 4: Participation in cultural activities

Participation in cultural activities in Brent is relatively low when compared to other London boroughs. There are several factors contributing to low participation rates which are addressed elsewhere in this strategy. This appendix provides an overview of participation in cultural activities within Brent, based mainly on the findings of the Active People Survey. Many cultural services in Brent measure usage and attendance at facilities and activities and set targets to increase use year-on-year, particularly by targeting low-user groups. However, this measures participation that is happening in Brent and not general levels of participation by Brent residents that could be taking place out of borough or not through an organised activity. The Active People survey measures total levels of participation regardless of where it takes place.

The Active People Survey is a survey of adults aged 16 and over living in England. It was first conducted in 2006 and covered participation in sport and physical activity. The second survey was conducted in 2007/08 and also included other cultural national indicators (NI):

NI 8: Participated in 30 minutes of *moderate intensity level sport and active recreation* on three or more days in the past week

NI 9: Used a *public library service* at least once in the past 12 months

NI 10: Attended a *museum, gallery or archive* at least once in the past 12 months

NI 11: Engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months

The partners in the Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum recognise that some people face barriers that prevent them from taking part in cultural activities. The second principle within this strategy recognises that helping people to overcome barriers is crucial if people are to be able to participate in a chosen activity at their chosen level. Age, disability, ethnicity, gender and sexuality all influence people's ability to join in and if we are to increase levels of participation we need to develop a better picture of demand in order to best provide services that will genuinely increase participation levels.

Sport and physical activity

The Active People Survey (APS), overseen by Sports England, provides information on adult participation levels in sports and physical activity within the borough and measures NI 8. It was first conducted in 2006 and was repeated in 2008, allowing for any changes to be identified. The survey covers five areas of participation; general levels of participation, volunteering, club membership, tuition and competition.

Brent was one of a handful of councils that increased participation rates in all the above areas between 2006 and 2008. However, despite this slight increase, participation in general remains low when compared to London as a whole or with the national figure.

In 2006 only 18.2 per cent of Brent adults participated in three 30 minute sessions of physical activity per week. In 2008, the Active People survey noted a slight increase in participation in Brent taking it to 19.5 per cent. More of a concern is that over half (53.5 per cent) of Brent's adult population is not taking part in any form of physical activity, with associated impact on health within the borough. It is also acknowledged that participation levels vary greatly across the borough by geographical area and by gender, ethnicity, age and disability. (This is discussed in more detail in the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy).

As shown in the table opposite, the survey also measured participation in competition, volunteering in sport and club membership. With all these areas Brent has a tendency to be below both the London-wide and national average.

Use of libraries

Library usage was also measured by the Active People Survey for the first time in 2008 and results show that use of libraries by Brent residents is above both the London and the national average. Overall, Brent is 5th highest in London in terms of people who use libraries.

However, Brent is in the lowest quartile for London in terms of active borrowers, a measure of the percentage of residents who have borrowed an item from a library in the past 12 months. The upper quartile for London ranges from 25.6 per cent of the population with the median at 23.2 per cent. Brent is the 19th highest borough in London in terms of numbers of active borrowers but only 30th in terms of percentage of active borrowers (17.9 per cent).

Table 1: Participation in sport and physical activity 2006 and 2008

Area of Participation	Brent '06	Brent '08	London '06	London '08	National '06	National '08
% adults doing at least 3 days per week of 30 mins of moderate activity	18%	19.5%	21.3%	20.1%	21%	21.73%
% adults doing zero participation in sport or physical activity	56.5%	53.3%	49.5%	48%	50.6%	48.1%
% adults volunteering to support sport for at least 1hr per week	2.7%	4%	3.5%	3.7%	5%	5.24%
% adults who are members of a sports club or club where they do sports	20.5%	20.6%	26.5%	25.3%	25.3%	25.1%
% adults receiving tuition to improve sports performance	13.4%	15.9%	18.7%	19%	18.3%	18.5%
% adults participating in competitive sport	10.3%	12.1%	12.9%	12.48%	15.5%	15.3%

Table 2: Active People Survey results (April-October 2008) – libraries

National Indicator:	Brent	London average	National average:
NI 9: Use of public libraries	56.3%	51.9%	48.5%

Participation in the arts

As with libraries, in 2008 the Active People Survey also measured people's engagement in the arts. In Brent, engagement with the arts was measured at 41.3 per cent which is below both the London and the national average.

The Arts Council has given councils a banding based on the propensity to engage in the arts by local residents; this being based on demographics and lifestyle characteristics. The banding is from A (most likely to engage in the arts) to J (least likely). Brent has been classified as being in band H; this is a low engagement score, suggesting that Brent residents are less likely to engage than other London boroughs.

Table 3: Active People Survey results (April-October 2008) – arts participation

National Indicator:	Brent	London average	National average:
NI 11: Engagement in the arts (by adults)	41.3%	49.4%	45.2%

Use of museums and galleries

The Active People Survey also measured visits to museums and galleries by Brent residents. This survey measures visits to all museums and galleries and not just those in Brent. Current levels of participation, in terms of Brent residents visiting

museums and galleries, is low with just over 50 per cent of residents having visited a museum or gallery in the previous 12 months, which places Brent in the lower quartile and 28th in London overall.

Table 4: Active People Survey results (April-October 2008) – museums and galleries

National Indicator:	Brent	London average	National average:
NI 10 : Visits to museums and galleries	50.3%	59.5%	53.8%

Use of parks and open spaces

The extent and quality of Brent's parks and open spaces are one of the borough's greatest assets with approx 455 hectares of public open space for residents and visitors to enjoy. Increasingly used as a venue for schools and colleges to support curriculum activity, as well as a venue for cultural activities and festivals, sporting, entertainment and play activity. Brent Parks Service conducts a survey on usage of parks and open spaces amongst ten per cent of households in Brent each year. The 2008 survey results indicated that an estimated 16 million visits are made to Brent parks and open spaces each year.

Additionally, our parks and open spaces are measured by national indicator NI 199: Children and Young People's Satisfaction with Parks and Play Areas. This is measured by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) via a survey undertaken amongst young people and the results are used to inform the CAA. The 2008 survey results place Brent third in the country, after Richmond-upon-Thames and Camden Council for satisfaction with parks by young people. Whilst it is measuring satisfaction and not use, it does suggest that high numbers of young people are using parks in Brent.

Table 5: Department for Children, Schools and Families 'Tell Us' survey results 2008

N1: 199	Brent :	London:	National:
2008-09	59.6%	52.3%	44.7%

Brent Culture, Sport and Learning Forum Membership

Arts Council England (London) ~ www.artcouncil.org.uk/regions/london

Brent Community Sports and Physical Activity Network ~ www.brent.gov.uk/sports

BTWSC ~ www.btwsc.com

College of North West London ~ www.cnwl.ac.uk

Federation of Patidar Associations ~ www.patidars.org

Fountain Studios ~ www.ftv.co.uk

London Borough of Brent ~ www.brent.gov.uk

MLA London ~ www.mlalondon.org.uk

Park Royal Partnership ~ www.parkroyal.org

Pro-Active West London ~ www.pro-activewestlondon.org

Tricycle Theatre ~ www.tricycle.co.uk

Wembley Arena ~ www.wembley.co.uk

Wembley Stadium ~ www.wembleystadium.com

Wembley Plaza Hotel ~ www.hilton.co.uk/wembley



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