



www.barnet.gov.uk



“

As we celebrate our achievements, we also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. We remain committed to our social investment plans, and using our skills, resources and partnerships we can build a brighter and more equitable future for all.

”

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Barnet Council's very first Social Investment Impact Report for 2023/24, a milestone document that celebrates our commitment to uplifting and empowering our communities. This report captures the collective efforts of Barnet Council and our partners in delivering meaningful social value across various initiatives.

Social investment is not merely a nice to have; it is crucial if Barnet is to remain an attractive place to live, work, study, start a business and raise families.

Given the tough challenges many of our residents are facing, including the cost-of-living crisis and inequalities, along with the looming impacts of climate change, it is essential that we demonstrate the impact we are making and raise awareness of the opportunities available to residents.

Our efforts have led to remarkable outcomes in Barnet, with 845 residents securing employment opportunities, injecting £14.1 million into the local economy in wages.

Our investment in skills development, including £150,000 allocated for apprenticeship training, empowers local businesses and individuals. Additionally, through our community events, we have helped foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity in the borough.

Furthermore, our commitment to environmental sustainability is demonstrated through many initiatives including the construction of new net zero carbon homes, retrofitting our existing housing stock, the installation of electric vehicle charging points, and our tree planting efforts.

As we celebrate our achievements, we also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. We remain committed to our social investment plans, and using our skills, resources and partnerships we can build a brighter and more equitable future for all.

I am thankful to the many suppliers, developers and partners who have contributed to the report, and we would not have seen such impact in the borough without your contributions. I invite you to take a moment to read the report and share with us how we can maximise the impact of social investments in Barnet.



Portfolio Holder for
Community Wealth Building,
Cllr Anne Clarke

Contents

CLICK TITLE TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE PAGE

Introduction	5
Summary of impact	6
Challenges we are addressing	7
Our social investment and social value definitions	8
Our Social Value Policy's journey	8
How we measure Social Value	9
Tackling the gaps internally	9
Caring for People	
Procurement	12
Employment and Skills	16
Borough of Sanctuary	20
Corporate Parenting	22
Community Events	23
Business Engagement and Support	28
Caring for our Places	
Local Spend Analysis	31
New Developments and Section 106	32
Brent Cross West	34
Highways Improvement	36
Community Infrastructure Levy	37
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy	39



Caring for the Planet

Sustainability	44
BarNET Zero Challenge	47
Green spaces	48



Engaged and Effective Council

Community Participation	51
Barnet Together	55
Community Innovation Fund	56
Barnet Food Hub	58
Live Unlimited	60
Closing Comments	62
Appendices	62
References	63



Introduction

Guided by Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026, which outlines our commitment to ‘care for people, our places, and the planet’, this report explores the impact of several of our social investments across the borough during the 2023/24 financial year. Structured around our corporate themes, we delve into the social value created, our spend, successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

This report covers investments tied to our traditional levers, including reinvestment from suppliers and developers through Social Value and Section 106 requirements, as well as our grant schemes and other investments generating social, economic, and environmental benefits in the borough.

We highlight some of our services and initiatives that have improved infrastructure, stimulated the local economy and contributed to our goal of achieving net-zero carbon status by 2042.

Moreover, our ongoing efforts to address inequalities, both within the council and externally, reduce poverty, build community wealth, and strengthen bonds within the community are prominently featured throughout the report.

The council delivers many initiatives that contribute to social value across Barnet. However, this report offers only a glimpse into the impact of some of our investments. Therefore, we have not covered all of them to ensure the report remains compact.

While our initiatives have brought positive benefits to our communities, we accept that challenges still persist. In this report, we openly acknowledge the hurdles we have faced and recognise the areas where we can improve. Through introspection and transparency, we seek to learn and adapt, ensuring our services remain responsive to the evolving needs of Barnet residents.

Join us as we celebrate achievements, confront challenges, and forge a path towards a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient Barnet.



PEOPLE

- Tackling inequalities
- Reducing poverty
- Family Friendly
- Living well



PLACES

- Safe, attractive neighbourhoods and town centres
- Quality, affordable homes
- Borough of Fun



PLANET

- Journey to Net Zero
- Enhancing the local environment
- Enhancing green spaces



ENGAGED AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

- Community participation
- Neighbourhood working
- Improving access to services
- A great place to work
- Working in partnership
- Financially responsible



CLICK HERE!

**to read
Our Plan for
Barnet 2023-2026**

Summary of impact

CARING FOR PEOPLE:

845 Barnet residents securing work (including apprenticeships)

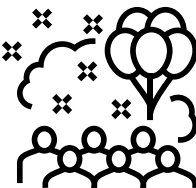


£14.1 million wages to Barnet residents



611,725 meals provided

Over **86** community events held



Business support programme has helped local construction companies secure more work from developers and the council, retaining

£7m in the local economy.



£150,000

made available to businesses for apprenticeship training



67

refugee families successfully housed



CARING FOR OUR PLACES:

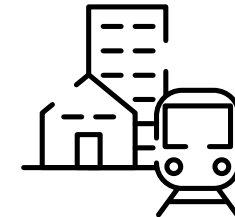


779 new affordable homes built

£23.2m collected from developers to reinvest in local infrastructure.

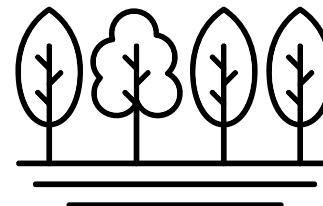
£9m

spent on improving roads and pavements



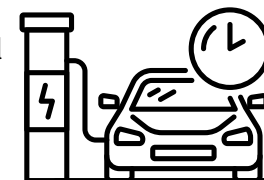
CARING FOR THE PLANET:

1205 trees planted



915

Electric Vehicle charging points installed



Some of the challenges we are addressing

CARING FOR PEOPLE:



Poverty rate sits at **26%**, which is just 1% higher than other London boroughs.¹



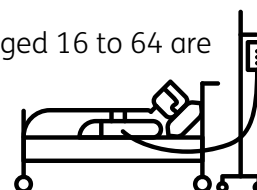
65.5% of people aged 16 to 64 are employed, which is 10.6% less than the employment rate across London, which is 76.1%.³

Between April and September 2023, three Barnet food banks distributed

14,522 emergency food parcels, a substantial rise from the previous year's 9,026.²



28.8% of people aged 16 to 64 are economically inactive, which is 7.3% higher than the rate across London, which is 21.5%.³



CARING FOR THE PLANET:

Recycling by households stands at **29.8%**, ranking 24th out of the 32 London boroughs in terms of recycling rates.⁷



1.76 million tonnes of carbon are emitted in the borough every year from energy use by homes and transport.⁸



Over the three-year period from 2018-2021, the council's supply chain equated to over

95% of the total emissions of the council itself.⁸



CARING FOR OUR PLACES:

Barnet has **26** total miles of roads in poor condition, which is 9 miles more than the second highest London borough.⁶



There are **4,149** households on the housing waiting list, which is 5,942 households fewer than the London average.⁴

The average house price is **£577,548**, ranking it as the 11th highest among all London boroughs.⁵



How we define social investment and social value?

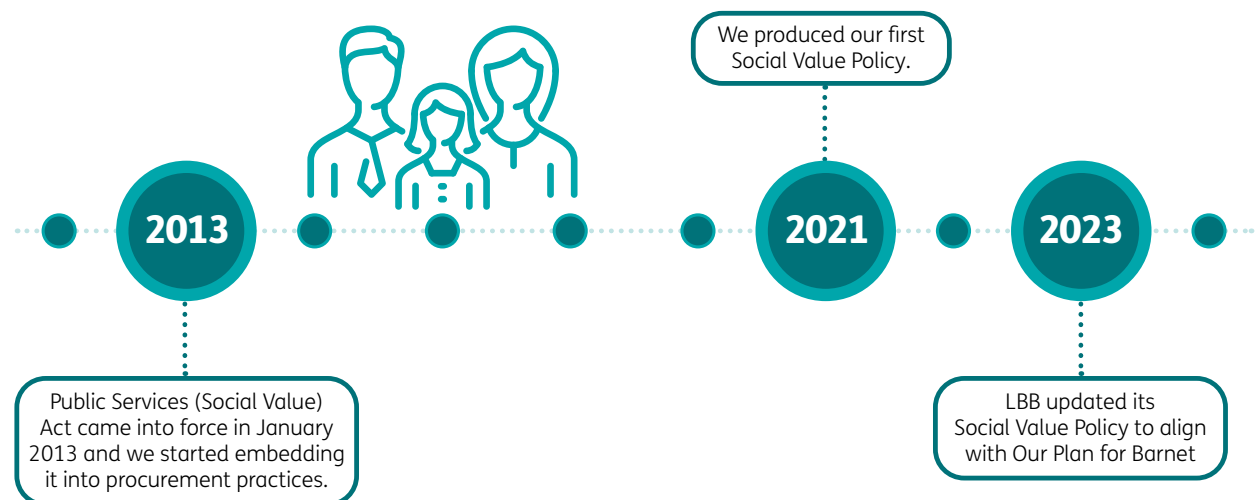
To Barnet Council, social investment means deliberately allocating resources to create a positive societal impact, whereas social value is the positive impact that is generated by investments, initiatives, or organisations. The council is committed to ensuring that all its activities improve the well-being and quality of life of our communities thereby creating social value in the borough.

Since the implementation of the Public Services (Social Value) Act in 2012, the term “social value” has become widely used in the UK to describe the social, economic and environmental benefits generated by procurement activities.

However, it is important to clarify a common misconception: while the Act does emphasise incorporating social value considerations in public procurement processes, it does not limit the concept of social value solely to procurement as the term predates the Act.

Therefore, in this report, we use the term to describe the broad positive impact created by many of our social investments, many of which are not statutory services.

Our Social Value Policy journey



How we measure social value

The council uses The National TOMs Framework (2022 version) which has been developed by the Social Value Portal and is the most widely used social value measurement tool across the UK. The TOMs are built around five key themes, supported by several outcomes and specific measures. The themes are centred around promoting jobs and skills, supporting regional growth, empowering communities, protecting the environment, and promoting social innovation.

The framework uses financial 'proxy values' to help organisations measure the social value delivered by initiatives. Proxy values use public sector data to provide an average sum that correlates to the yearly uplift in life satisfaction for the individual, public services and the community.

In this report we have used this framework, where possible, to measure the impact and societal benefits generated by our social investments.

Tackling gaps internally

Before delving into our social investments, let us first explore our internal efforts to tackle gaps. At Barnet Council, our commitment to equality extends to everything we do, from the money we spend to the services we provide.

We want Barnet to be an inclusive borough, where everyone's hopes and aspirations can be made real. Our diverse communities allow people of many different ethnic backgrounds, faiths and life experiences to live side by side, and we aim to support our communities to thrive in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. We want to ensure people are not held back by poverty and that our success is shared. These principles guide our recruitment practices, aiming for a workforce that mirrors the communities we serve.

From 2021 to 2023, we made significant strides in enhancing equality, diversity, and inclusion in the council:

The representation of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnicity staff increased to **37.4%**, up by 2.1% from 2021.



Staff members disclosing disabilities rose to **6.7%** from 3.9% in 2021.



LGBTQ+ identifying staff increased to **3.7%** from 3.5% in 2021.



These figures highlight our ongoing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, with continuous initiatives to support underrepresented groups.

	Number	Council %	Barnet % (population)	London % (population)
Female	1149	59%	52%	52%
Male	800	41%	48%	48%
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	728	37.4%	42.3%	46.2%
Disability	131	6.7%	12.8%	14.2%
LGBTQ+	73	3.7%	2.8%	4.5%

Significant progress was achieved in narrowing the pay gap.

Gender Pay Gap:



Barnet's average Gender Pay Gap per hour (-11.8%) remained consistent with 2021. However, our Street Scene services saw a decrease to 9.9% in 2023, down from 12.9% in 2021.

In 2021, males earned 9.2% more than females, which narrowed to 6.7% in 2023. Notably, the Leadership Team, previously showing a 7.6% gap, saw this reduce to -0.4%.

Ethnicity Pay Gap:



The average hourly pay Ethnicity Pay Gap remained at 8.5% in 2023, unchanged from 2021.

At the Manager, Senior Management, and Assistant Director levels, the Ethnicity Pay Gap decreased to 9.2% in 2023 from 10.5% in 2021.

To see our Annual Equalities Report demonstrating our endeavours in advancing equality, diversity and inclusion within our communities, please click here.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Caring for People

- Procurement
- Employment and Skills
- Borough of Sanctuary
- Community Events
- Business Engagement and Support



Procurement

Procurement is process through which we acquire goods, services, and works to support the council's operations. Social value in procurement refers to the added benefits provided by suppliers, such as supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and promoting sustainability, to enhance the well-being of communities and society.

In 2021, the council introduced its first Social Value Policy, which received a significant update in October 2023 to align with key strategies: Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026, Sustainability Strategy, Sustainable Commercial Strategy, and our approach to reducing poverty and building community wealth.

Please click here to see the updated Social Value Policy.

[CLICK HERE!](#) 

Before the update, the council faced challenges in monitoring social value outcomes. We identified systemic inconsistencies both internally and externally which led to being unable to demonstrate the impact of our supply chain on our communities, and we were unable to maximise benefits from our investments. This was compounded by our procurement services returning in house, limiting our access to various datasets.

To address this, the policy underwent a transformative update, drawing insights from successful social value models. This has introduced innovative systems and practices that have established a robust monitoring, reporting, and contract management framework.

Since the updated policy was approved by Cabinet members, the council has been diligently implementing it in new procurements, aligning as many existing contracts as possible with its provisions, socialising it with services areas across the council, and increasing engagement with local businesses, providing them insight on how to access and approach our procurements.

A more comprehensive report detailing the impact of our supply chain on our communities will be included in next year's Social Investment Impact Report. By then, the updated policy will have had just over a year to embed, allowing for consistent tracking of outcomes, enabling us to establish a baseline.

But in the meantime, please take a moment to see some of the wonderful accomplishments achieved by businesses in our supply chain.

Case studies

Capita donating £150,000 of their apprenticeship levy to Barnet businesses.

Capita, as part of their commitment to social value, has pledged to donate £150,000 of their apprenticeship levy over three years to support businesses in the borough.

This fund covers 100% of apprenticeship training costs, alleviating financial pressures for businesses, whilst enabling access to the skilled workers they need to thrive. This investment by Capita will contribute to developing the workforce and economic growth in Barnet. To learn more or register interest,

[CLICK HERE!](#)



Kier Group supported local charity to pack and deliver 6,000 festive hampers.

Six Kier Group colleagues volunteered their time to support Christmas Lunch on Jesus, providing festive hampers filled with essential ingredients for a tasty Christmas lunch to those that are struggling financially during the holiday season. For 15 years in a row, the House of Jesus have worked tirelessly the week before Christmas to build, pack and deliver over 6,000 hampers across the UK.

Tasks included clearing chairs, handling ingredients with pallet trucks, and setting up tarpaulins. When pallets ran short, two Kier operatives supplied more that day and the following day. Kier Group said: “they can’t wait to help again next year!”



Case studies

KOMPAN contributed to the first of its kind 'Fair Play' playground.

CAs part of their dedication to social value, KOMPAN provides a 1% rebate on all sales to the council, with the funds earmarked for supporting community initiatives. Over the length of the contract, the council accumulated £15,979, which was used to contribute towards building the groundbreaking 'Fair Play' playground in Victoria Recreation Ground, East Barnet.

Designed to facilitate inclusive play experiences for individuals with learning and physical disabilities, this park is the first of its kind in the UK and it enables people to play alongside their friends and family, irrespective of their ages and abilities. To hear more,

[CLICK HERE!](#)



Case studies

Case Study: Marlborough delivered road safety sessions to primary school students.

Marlborough Highways delivered two road safety sessions to a total of 180 Year 5 and 6 students at Martin Primary School, following the completion of a major road surfacing project on High Road Barnet; the street on which the school is situated. The sessions covered pedestrian safety, highway site safety, traffic management signs, and included an interactive visibility exercise, delivered in partnership Road Haulage Association (RHA), where students gathered around a Marlborough HGV grab lorry to learn about safety around large vehicles and their features.



Sophie, Year 6 Class Teacher:

“Thank you for delivering the workshop for the children, the feedback was all really positive. The pupils enjoyed seeing real images of the road and having their knowledge tested in the hall. They all especially enjoyed being able to see a vehicle up close and of course they loved it when your driver honked the horn!”



Employment and Skills

Barnet's Employment and Skills Programmes include those directly commissioned from BOOST and Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), alongside delivery through a wide range of partners. BOOST provide a comprehensive employment support offer with access to wraparound services including help with debt and finance, digital connectivity, and wellbeing, from outreach locations across the borough.

Specialist services for young people are provided by BELS, with targeted support for care leavers, SEN and supported internships, Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), and those at risk of becoming NEET. In addition, we work closely with Shaw Trust to provide the Work and Health Programme (WHP) in Barnet.

The Employment and Skills Team also lead on employment and skills outcomes generated through Section 106 (S106) planning obligations, working closely with developers and their supply chains to ensure outcomes are delivered to benefit Barnet residents.

Outcomes monitored, reported, and counted for this report comprise BOOST, BELS, WHP and S106.

In this financial year, the programme helped **845** people start work (including apprenticeships) and generated **£19,290,633** in social value benefits, resulting in a social return on investment ratio of **17.58**. In essence, every **£1** invested in the Welfare, Employment and Skills Programme delivered **£17.58** in societal benefits.

Key achievements in 2023/24:

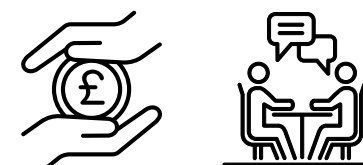
845 people supported into employment (including apprenticeships) which generated an estimate of £14.1 million in wages to Barnet residents.



111 young people at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET) supported into education or training.



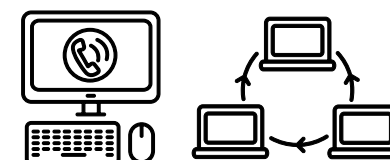
£496,079 allocated through the Household Support Fund, benefitting 2,509 households.



2,765 face-to-face welfare benefits adviser appointments helped residents navigate the welfare system effectively.



544 digital equipment provided to Barnet residents improving digital inclusion in the borough.



“

Because of the kindness you did to me and my wife, today I got a job in the best place in London, and they were very satisfied with my work. You gave my home a light of hope. Thank you very much.

Local Resident

”

“

You are life savers. Thank you so much.

Local Resident

”

“

I am deeply grateful for your time and support, and I don't know what I would've done without your help in this very difficult financial time.

Local Resident

”

Employment and Skills

Opportunities for Improvement

The programme continually assesses its performance, celebrating successes and identifying opportunities for improvement. However, recent updates to the council's Social Value Policy revealed discrepancies in aligning our practices with the adopted social value measurement framework, resulting in social value we could not measure for this report.

To address this:

- We will improve our outcome monitoring by capturing finer details on outcomes, such as differentiating between full-time and part-time positions, to accurately calculate social value created.
- We will ensure our data aligns with the new social value measuring framework to enable us to give a better representation of the programme's impact.



Case study from BELS

Hitham fled the war in Sudan at the age of 14, arriving in the UK as an unaccompanied minor seeking sanctuary without knowledge of English.

Placed in overcrowded accommodation with fellow asylum seekers, he said he faced an unsettling and scary time.

As his Care Leaver Coordinator, I supported Hitham through college, where he pursued a Plumbing Diploma, and I referred him to Live Unlimited who were able to support him with free driving lessons, and he shortly obtained his driver's license.

Post-diploma, our persistent efforts in applying for plumbing opportunities seemed futile until Joe Brennen Training enrolled him in a Plumbing Apprenticeship months later. I provided ongoing support through regular meetings with Hitham and his employer to make sure both were settling in okay. Two years later, Hitham, now a fully qualified plumber, has a promising future. His resilience and determination has made supporting him from beginning to the end a truly gratifying experience.

Our journey reached a high point when Hitham invited me to join him as his guest at the Skills Centre Builder of the Year Awards held at the House of Commons. He achieved the runner up position, a significant accomplishment given the barriers he had to overcome. The company overseeing his apprenticeship is keen to retain him, adding to the heartwarming success of Hitham's story.

Humbled by Hitham's gratitude, I take pride in being able to be a pillar of support for him. His aspiration to save for his first home reflects a journey he once thought unimaginable. Hitham's story highlights the importance of providing every young person with opportunities and support, and emphasising their potential.



Hitham pictured with his Care Leaver Coordinator, Alexa.

Borough of Sanctuary

We're dedicated to making Barnet a welcoming place for all, including those seeking safety. Introduced in December 2023, our Borough of Sanctuary Strategy focuses on providing sanctuary and opportunities for people fleeing conflict, including migrants, refugees, and survivors of trauma.

Through our internal teams and partnerships with New Citizen Gateway and the Young Barnet Foundation, we offer housing, employment support, therapy, and integration activities. We also assist asylum seekers to access essentials like education and healthcare. Our goal is to create a cohesive community where everyone feels valued and supported.

CLICK HERE!

to read Borough of Sanctuary Strategy



This contributes to social value in the borough by enhancing inclusivity, solidarity, and social cohesion.

Key achievements in 2023/24:

- Outreach support in hotels provided vital services like asylum assistance, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses, GP registrations, food, clothing and social activities, enabling people seeking asylum to integrate into the community.
- We successfully provided housing for 55 refugee families through our collaboration with Barnet Homes and extended assistance to two more families via BEAM.
- Resettled 10 families this financial year through the Afghanistan Resettlement Scheme, making a total of 16 resettled Afghan families.
- We received £30,000 from the Greater London Authority Welcome Hong Kong Fund, which we used to commission Meridian Wellbeing. They delivered workshops and social sessions for Hong Kongers in Barnet under the BNO scheme, engaging 487 participants.
- The war in Ukraine causes emotional trauma for children, leading to depression and behaviour issues. Our Homes for Ukraine team funded therapy sessions in 14 schools to help children cope with their experiences and express their feelings. This helps them feel safer and more stable in their new environment.

Challenges

Councils aspiring to be a Borough of Sanctuary face numerous challenges due to the complexities of supporting those seeking sanctuary and doing it within budget constraints.

These are some of the challenges we have faced:

- Limited government funding for asylum seekers at the national level puts pressure on council resources and local services, such as food banks and GP practices.
- The Home Office has announced plans to transition away from using hotels to accommodate asylum seekers nationwide. While Barnet has not been notified of any imminent closures among the five hotels in the area, this scenario poses challenges for the council.
- Asylum seekers granted refugee status are often given 28 days' notice to vacate their hotel accommodation, leading to many being unable to find sustainable housing due to a shortage of affordable private rentals and limited council housing availability.

Despite these challenges, our commitment to supporting people seeking sanctuary remains firm. These barriers have only strengthened our resolve and determination to build a community that celebrates diversity and provides unwavering support to everyone.

Aims for next financial year:

- Achieve Borough of Sanctuary accreditation by implementing City of Sanctuary UK recommendations.
- Strengthen our partnership with Home Office to ensure we receive rapid responses to policy changes.
- Expand Colindale Garden project to house 50 households and offer support to 70 Ukrainians with BEAM.
- Launch our Borough of Sanctuary award during Refugee Week in June.



Corporate Parenting

Barnet Council is responsible for the care and support provided to children and young people in our care. Corporate parenting is a responsibility shared by the entire council, including councillors, community services, education support, schools, and health services.

This financial year, 8.4% of the council's total service budget was allocated to Children's Family Services. This investment has generated significant social value for young people in the borough, leading to improved educational and employment outcomes, easier access to stable and affordable housing, better health and well-being, and stronger community connections.

As 'Corporate Parents,' we are dedicated to being effective caregivers, ensuring the safety and well-being of those in our care. We strive to provide opportunities for children and young people to achieve their best throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

In 2023/24, the council joined the Care Leaver Covenant, a nationwide scheme uniting private, public, and voluntary sectors to support care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently. Through this collaboration, care leavers have access to employment, training, and holistic support with organisations ranging from global media companies to law firms and government departments.

Additionally, we were successfully accredited as a Fostering Friendly Employer with the introduction of our Fostering Friendly policy. In October 2023, we relaunched our staff referral programme, allowing staff to earn a £2,000 bonus when referring friends or family to become foster carers. As a result, we received 15 enquiries.

To see all our achievements, please read our Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2023-24

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Our approach to corporate parenting goes beyond just fulfilling a statutory duty; it represents a crucial investment in the lives of children and young people in care. By providing necessary support, care, and opportunities, and exceeding minimum requirements, we help young individuals succeed and thrive.

We want our supply chain to add this type of social value and will endeavour to drive that through our approach to procurement. We will continue to work with children and young people as part of our procurement activities to ensure that they get the services they need.



Community Events

The community events programme focuses on key occasions that the council marks throughout the year to celebrate Barnet's rich cultural diversity. It arranges council-led events and offers support to local groups through a small grants scheme to host their own events.

In 2023, the Policy and Resources Committee approved a budget of £120,000 to fund a year of the grant scheme, and a post for a Community Events Officer was created to manage the programme.

Over 90 events took place across Barnet in 2023, ranging from community festivals to significant cultural and awareness occasions like International Women's Day, Pride, and Black History Month. These events have collectively reached thousands of people, enabling many to celebrate community festivals, and commemorations for the first time in Barnet.

Events are just one part of the Council's ongoing efforts to engage and strengthen communities, celebrate diversity, and enhance the capabilities of our voluntary sector.

The following pages show some of the events that were held:

International Women's Day, March 2023

Barnet Council launched a new awards scheme to celebrate the borough's inspirational women and girls of the past, present and future at a special event at StoneX stadium. The event attended by over 150 people from the voluntary, community and faith sector, and key partners including the Met Police.

As part of a month-long celebration, the council funded 13 community organisations to host events that celebrated and empowered women. Successful applications included a mothers and daughters programme for the Somali community in Grahame Park, and a synagogues and refugee communities' event in Finchley.



Big Iftar at Middlesex University, March 2023

Middlesex University brought over 200 people together for an interfaith celebration of Ramadan. The event was staged in partnership with Barnet Council and the Barnet Multi-faith forum.

Monna Rizvi, Co-Chair of Middlesex Inter Faith Network: “a beautiful demonstration of interfaith dialogue at its best. The main objective of bringing people together from different faiths and none, from different communities and sharing a delicious meal with a common desire for interfaith dialogue was realised and this says a lot for the successful partnership between Middlesex University, Barnet Council and Barnet Multi Faith Forum.”

Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, May 2023

Over 70 events took place in Barnet to mark the Coronation His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort. Working in partnership with the City of London, Barnet Council held a celebratory event at Golders Hill Park which brought together people from all walks of life.

Attendees indulged in a diverse selection of delicious food and drinks offered at stalls dotted around the park and enjoyed live music performances.



South Asian Heritage Month, July to August 2023

South Asian Heritage Month (SAHM) is a month celebrates South Asian communities and culture. The Mayor of Barnet marked the start of SAHM by hosting a flag-raising event, that was attended by Cllrs, council officers and members of Barnet's South Asian community.

The council also hosted a community cricket match in Mill Hill. Whilst Cricket was brought to South Asia, it is a sport that is enjoyed across all the countries, generations and people that live in South Asia and the diaspora. Cricket is a unifying factor in the fabric and narrative of these communities.



First-ever Pride in the Park, August 2023

We were delighted to see nearly 1000 attendees at Barnet's first ever Pride in the Park. This event, coordinated in partnership and led by Barnet's LGBTQ+ community group Inkluder CiC, marked a significant step towards becoming a more inclusive borough. George Nicholls, Inkluder CIC Director, said:

"We believe that true equality can only be achieved when everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, is able to live their lives without fear of discrimination or persecution.

"As a lifelong resident of Barnet, I am committed to working towards this goal by raising awareness, promoting inclusivity, and advocating for the rights of LGBTQ+ people in our community. Together, we can transform Barnet into a community where everyone is free to be who they are, and love who they choose."



Black History Month, October 2023

Throughout October, we celebrated the contributions, achievements, and experiences of black people throughout history. Black History Month (BHM) provided a platform to raise awareness about the often overlooked or marginalised history of black individuals and communities in Britain, highlighting their significant role in shaping society and culture.

The council held events that engaged people of all backgrounds in discussions about race, equality, and diversity, promoting understanding and empathy. Additionally, we allocated £13,000 to fund 13 BHM events delivered by grass-root and community-led organisations.



Diwali, November 2023

The Diwali event at Middlesex University, attended by 200 guests, was a vibrant celebration of lights, culture, and community unity! The Quad buzzed with energy as guests enjoyed captivating dances, rhythmic drumming, and delicious food. Professor Sean Wellington emphasised the university's commitment to interfaith cooperation.

Dignitaries like the High Commissioner of Bangladesh and the Mayor of Barnet joined in the festivities, which included six dynamic dance performances. This collaborative event showcased Barnet's rich diversity and inclusivity, marking Diwali as a joyous occasion that is integral to the borough's culture.



2024 Calendar

Month	Event Theme
January – February	Winter Festivals (Lunar New Year)
March	International Women's Day Nowruz
March- April	Ramadan / Eid al Fitr
June	LGBTQI+ Pride Windrush Day
July- August	South Asian Heritage Month
October	Silver Week Black History Month
November - December	Winter Festivals
Year-round	Support for other events which do not fit any of the listed marked occasions and / or larger-scale Barnet events which might be considered of cultural importance.

Want to host an event in Barnet?

The events grant fund has become a key element of the council's community investment.

It supports community groups who want to organise events that:

- promote community cohesion
- celebrate a cultural occasion or event
- celebrate a faith or religious event

Community organisations can apply for a grant between £500 - £1,000 to host an event.

If you are interested in hosting an event, click here for guidance and to access the application form.

CLICK HERE!



Business Engagement and Support

Our business engagement focuses on actively listening to businesses, understanding their needs, and delivering tailored support to address those needs.



Barnet has more than **25,000** registered businesses employing **166,000** people.



The borough's economy is heavily dominated by small businesses, in particular micro-businesses, with **94% having fewer than nine employees.**



Around **17%** of Barnet's workers are self-employed.

We aim to reduce poverty in the borough by building the confidence and skills of business owners and ensuring businesses capitalise on available opportunities. This contributes to social value as it promotes local entrepreneurship, thereby stimulating economic growth within the borough.

Key achievements in 2023/24:

- We restarted quarterly in-person business breakfast briefings with the council leadership with more than 100 local people attending to date. One of the briefings launched the **£150,000 apprenticeship fund** we made available for local employers in partnership with Capita and Workwhile.
- We delivered a new business toolkit to more than 8,000 business rate payers to help make our services more accessible and restructured our business webpages based on business user testing.
- We piloted a voucher scheme that connected 40 West Hendon retailers with 4 Barnet-based marketing service providers, encouraging local business-to-business links.
- As part of our **Discover Barnet** initiative, we ran two shop local high street campaigns (**Hidden Gems** and **Festive Window Display Competition**) to celebrate the independent businesses and charities in the borough, and encourage residents to shop locally. The Hidden Gems campaign reached more than 11,000 people and the winter competition saw 207 votes. Winners were recognised with certificates from Barnet's Small Business Champion, Cllr Anne Clarke.
- We supported local construction suppliers to help them win more work from developers and the council, retaining almost £7m in the local economy.

DISCOVER BARNET

HIDDEN GEMS

FESTIVE WINDOW

Aims for next financial year:

- Provide tailored and practical guidance to 150 town centre businesses to improve their online presence and utilisation of digital tools.
- Launch a £50,000 grant programme for business associations and town teams to implement initiatives that support local businesses.
- Promote our BarNET ZERO business pledge, inviting businesses, who have not done so yet, to publicly commit to climate action and join Barnet Council on the journey to being a net zero borough by 2042.
- Offer sustainability support, including carbon audits, reduction action plans for up to 50 North Finchley businesses, and micro-grants.
- Implement an arts and culture capacity building programme for up to 50 local entrepreneurs and arts organisations to enhance their administrative and bidding skills and strengthen the local arts and culture network.
- Organise four more business breakfasts with the council leadership and initiate key service briefings with planning, procurement, and licensing departments.
- Explore how we bring data and intel from key services like business rates, licensing, and commercial waste together to improve the efficiency of our services, reduce the administrative burden on businesses, encouraging greater civic participation.
- Encourage and empower more business-to-business networks and associations in our town centres and employment clusters, as well as at the borough level through the Federation of Small Businesses, North London Chamber of Commerce. These networks can enable businesses to deliver more together and speak to the council with a collective voice.



“

Being part of this [construction supply chain] project has allowed us to directly engage with some of the big buyers operating in Barnet. With the guidance and support received during the programme we successfully tendered for a substantial contract, contributing to our growth. We are also incorporating sustainable practices to help us reduce our carbon footprint.

”

Michael Gavin MD, from MPG Contracts Ltd
(local business)

MPG

Caring for our Places

- Local Spend Analysis
- New Developments & Section 106
- Brent Cross West
- Highways
- CIL
- NCIL



Local Spend Analysis

Barnet Council planned to spend £369 million in 2023/24 on services, including procured contracts such as waste management, highways improvement, IT services and more.

On our most recent contracts register, 5.5% of contract spend went to Barnet-based businesses. To fulfil our economic development goals, we aim to increase this figure.



To improve our support for local businesses and contribute to the prosperity of Barnet, we are delivering on actions outlined in our Reducing Poverty Action Plan and are working on a new Economic Development Framework. Procurement plays a crucial role in both as it is a lever that, when used to its full capability, can have a significant impact in our borough.

Our procurement team has been presenting at local business networks, including the North London Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, and the Barnet Construction Supply Chain.

These engagements offer guidance and insights to local businesses on accessing and succeeding with our procurements, as well as updating them on relevant aspects of the new Procurement Act 2023, set to come into force in October 2024.

The aim is to empower local businesses and provide them with the tools needed to succeed with public sector tenders. Our objective is to increase the percentage of local businesses securing our procurements using 5.5% as our baseline.

In addition, we are enhancing our monitoring processes with a new contract monitoring portal to comply with the new Act.

New Developments and Section 106

In addressing housing needs, the council is investing substantially in building new homes across the borough, in partnership with developers. From 2021 to 2036, the council plans to deliver 35,460 new homes, averaging 2,364 new homes annually⁹.

In 2023/24, we delivered 779 new affordable homes, and overall housing delivery figures for the entire borough will be available in late 2024. Our aim is to ensure we meet the housing needs of our growing population.

Barnet is home to about 389,300 people, making it the second most populated borough in London. By 2030, we expect the population to increase by around 5% to about 408,765 residents.

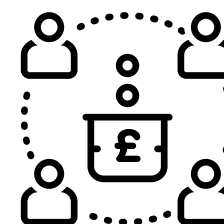
Among our projects are flagship developments such as Brent Cross Town, which will introduce 6,700 new homes, and Colindale Gardens, bringing 3,878 new homes.

However, beyond providing homes, developments in the borough have also brought economic benefits to our community. Many local businesses and individuals have been involved in the construction process, whether through securing employment opportunities or being part of the development's supply chain.

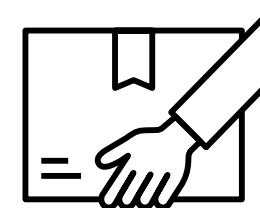
This is attributed to Section 106 agreements. These agreements, governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, allow local authorities to negotiate planning obligations with developers, covering aspects such as local employment, local supply chain, affordable housing, infrastructure improvement, and contributions to community facilities.



In the 2023/24 financial year, **129 Barnet residents** secured employment across various sites in the borough, while an additional **36 residents obtained apprenticeships**.



£23.2 million of funds were collected from developers through section 106s agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy to be used to improve infrastructure in the borough.



Members of the Barnet Construction Supply Chain Network have secured contracts totalling nearly **£7 million in combined value**.

Testimonials from those who have benefited

Zinedine, a care leaver from the local community, recently spent a week working at The Hyde construction site, thanks to London Square (LSQ).

This initiative aims to provide valuable experience and potentially lead to a job. Social Value and Community Manager, in collaboration with BELS and BOOST, ensured targeted support for local community members like Zinedine. Despite facing challenges, Zinedine is determined to pursue a career in construction, inspiring others from similar backgrounds.

Expressing gratitude, Zinedine said: “Thank you to LSQ for this opportunity. I am looking forward to showing how much of a hard worker I am and hopefully getting the labourer job”. This story exemplifies LSQ’s commitment to social value and empowering individuals like Zinedine to realise their potential in the construction industry.



Hugo, 23, is doing a Level 2 Plumbing Apprenticeship at The Hyde development, supported by LSQ. Inspired by family members in construction, he chose the apprenticeship route for a sustainable career path and to develop the skills he would need to set up a trade business in the future.

Hugo finds camaraderie with fellow apprentices to be a highlight of his role. He values the learning experience and support from the London Square team, particularly enjoying the opportunity to develop electrical skills.

Hugo said he appreciates the tangible progress and personal growth this apprenticeship has offered, and encourages others to pursue construction apprenticeships, saying: “Go for it! The process is long, but the reward is greater.”



Some great social value delivered at Brent Cross Town:

In addressing housing needs, the council is investing substantially in building new homes across the borough, in partnership with developers. From 2021 to 2036, the council plans to deliver 35,460 new homes, averaging 2,364 new homes annually⁹.

- Brent Cross Town will be a net zero carbon town by 2030.
- Our partners Related Argent, the developers for Brent Cross Town, have developed a Flourishing Index in collaboration with the University of Manchester. This tool helps us understand what the local community needs right now, so we can work towards a brighter future. It specifically looks at sustainability, health, and wellbeing, measuring how their efforts on the site have influenced these areas.
- The first five retailers that have secured units on the town's high street are local retailers.
- The Brent Cross Town Community Fund, now in its fifth year, allocated a total of £50,000 for local groups and initiatives in 2023. This marked the first time the community was invited to vote on how to distribute £10,000 of this funding for 'people's projects' awards. The Community Fund aims to support local small charities, community organisations, and individuals in making a positive impact in the local area. To date, 50 local projects have been supported, with a total of £180,000 awarded.

- The 108 is the UK's first indoor baseball and softball destination in Brent Cross Town. It's popular among local clubs, offering year-round practice, coaching, and games for all levels, along with well-equipped facilities for newcomers. It opened in January 2024.
- Brent Cross Town aims to create 27,000 quality jobs within the development. Our goal is for 20% of the workforce to be local residents and 6% to consist of apprentices or trainees.
- We are supporting local businesses and SMEs to capitalise on procurement opportunities and capacity-building programs.



Highlight development achievement

The opening of Brent Cross West was a remarkable achievement for Barnet Council and its partners, VolkerFitzpatrick Ltd, Mace and Network Rail, representing years of dedicated work. As London's first new mainline station in over a decade, Brent Cross West connects central London to Brent Cross in just 12 minutes. Situated on the Midland Main Line between Cricklewood and Hendon stations, it is an entry point to the new neighbourhood, Brent Cross Town.

A key feature of Brent Cross West is its public overbridge, allowing people to walk across that part of the Midland Main Line for the first time since it was built more than 150 years ago. This development promotes sustainable travel options for local communities and has made it easier for people to get around the area.

"The opening of Brent Cross West marks the end of a significant journey," said Leader of Barnet Council, Cllr Barry Rawlings. "For existing communities, it provides new ways to get around and unlocks opportunities for much-needed homes and jobs."

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan emphasised its transformative impact, stating: "Brent Cross West will better connect Brent Cross with the capital, driving wider development in the area." He added, "Investment in London's transport network is critical in driving economic recovery."



The successful delivery of Brent Cross West highlights the importance of investment in London's transport infrastructure. Through partnerships and government funding, Barnet Council secured the £419 million needed to build the station.

Brent Cross West stands as a testament to Barnet Council's commitment to growth. It is integral to the Brent Cross Town project, enabling sustainable economic growth and accessibility in the region.

Notably, over 100 Barnet residents were involved in the construction phase, fulfilling our social value commitment of having a minimum of 20% of the team being from Barnet, Brent, or Camden.



Highways Improvement

Barnet faces a significant challenge with its road infrastructure, having the highest number of poor condition principal roads in London, totalling 26 miles. Recent surveys highlighted the urgent need for strategic investment to address deteriorating road conditions.

Responding to this pressing issue, Cabinet members, in February 2024, approved an unprecedented £97m for road and pavement improvement works over the next five years. This funding, sourced from the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions (mentioned on page 27) paid by developers in the borough, will be evenly distributed at £19.4m per year from 2024 to 2029, increasing our annual spend by £10.4m during these years.

Following this decision, the **Highways Investment Strategy** was also approved at the 12th of March 2024 Cabinet, detailing our plan the next 10 years.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Acknowledging the financial strains the council has endured, Barnet Council Leader, Cllr Barry Rawlings, said: “I am very pleased to be able to say that our budget is balanced, this is despite many councils up and down the country struggling to do so this year.

“We have worked incredibly hard to find the savings needed to remain a financially stable council even though our funding has been cut by £100 million in real terms since 2010 and we face huge external financial pressures.

“We have earmarked much-needed funds to repair and maintain our roads and pavements, and to support our front-facing environmental services that residents expect.”

This investment highlights the council’s commitment to tackling the road challenges we have faced, prioritising safety for pedestrians and motorists, and enhancing accessibility for residents.

By making it easier for residents to travel to work, school, and essential services, enhances the quality of life for our community and contributes to social value.



Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge imposed by Local Planning Authorities and the Mayor of London on new developments. Its purpose is to fund essential community infrastructure projects and mitigate the impact of development across the Borough.

CIL has been set to ensure that infrastructure is provided to support the growth anticipated within the borough that is outlined in the Barnet Local Plan. The adoption of the first CIL charging schedule by Barnet Council was on 1 May 2013.

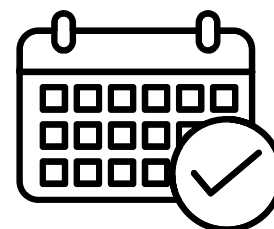
Barnet Council uses CIL to address the gap in funding for local infrastructure.

For instance, CIL was used to fund the Copthall Leisure Centre in Hendon, which has greatly benefitted the community immensely since its completion in September 2019. The facilities include a wellness suite comprising a 100-station gym, creche, dance studio and three swimming pools.

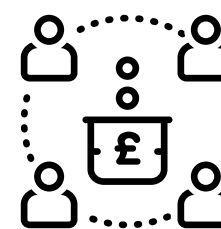
Since, its completion, Copthall Leisure Centre has contributed to a healthier community as it provided a boost to the wellbeing of the community through physical, mental, and social activity.



In 2023/2024:



CIL Spent:
Confirmed at the end of the year.



CIL funds collected:
£19.8 million



Funds collected from section 106s agreements:
£3.4 million

Projects funded by CIL

Home equipment, adaptations and technology

CIL allocates approximately £1 million annually to fund equipment, adaptations, and technology installations in Barnet homes. These aim to support independent living and everyday tasks, providing essential aids like bed levers, grab rails, and talking clocks.

Catering to various needs, including mobility, toileting, and sensory impairments, these ensure residents can live independently, safely and comfortably in their homes. Additionally, Barnet Homes Assist offers an emergency alarm system for immediate help during home emergencies. If you need this equipment and gadgets, click here to find out how to get them.



[CLICK HERE!](#)

CCTV Control Room

CIL provided £2.3 million in funding, allowing the council to address various CCTV-related issues, including 24/7 monitoring, control room autonomy, and insufficient camera coverage across the borough, with 127 cameras providing unreliable images.

With the need to replace existing infrastructure, there was an opportunity for total digital transformation. This new technology has enabled the council to have 24/7 monitoring control in one location, upgrade 127 existing PPS camera sites with new hardware and software, and install 66 additional camera sites, improving the total number of images from 460 to 567.

Additionally, it allowed the council to tackle anti-social behaviour, crime, and environmental crime while increasing wellbeing and the perception of safety. Moreover, it enhanced partnership working with the Met Police.

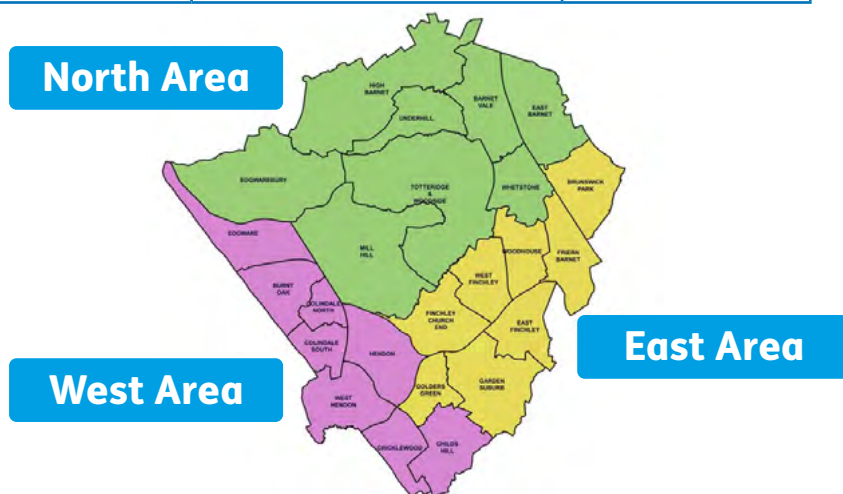


Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL):

The NCIL is an annual grant allocation from the Community Infrastructure Levy collected by the local authority, available for councillors to bid on to improve their wards.

The allocation, voted by Area Committees (East, North and West), totals £1.8 million across the three committees per financial year, with each area's share determined by its population:

Area	Population	Budget by Area Committee (£)
East	131,300	607,090
North	115,000	531,724
West	143,000	661,187
TOTAL	389,300	1,800,000



The purpose of NCIL is to address the stress development has placed on an area. For example, if there is a park near a new block of flats and the children that have moved to the area do not have a play area to use, then NCIL can be used to construct a play area.

Area Committees have four priorities:

1. Community engagement

- Projects must be approved by the section of residents who would be affected by the project.

2. Community safety

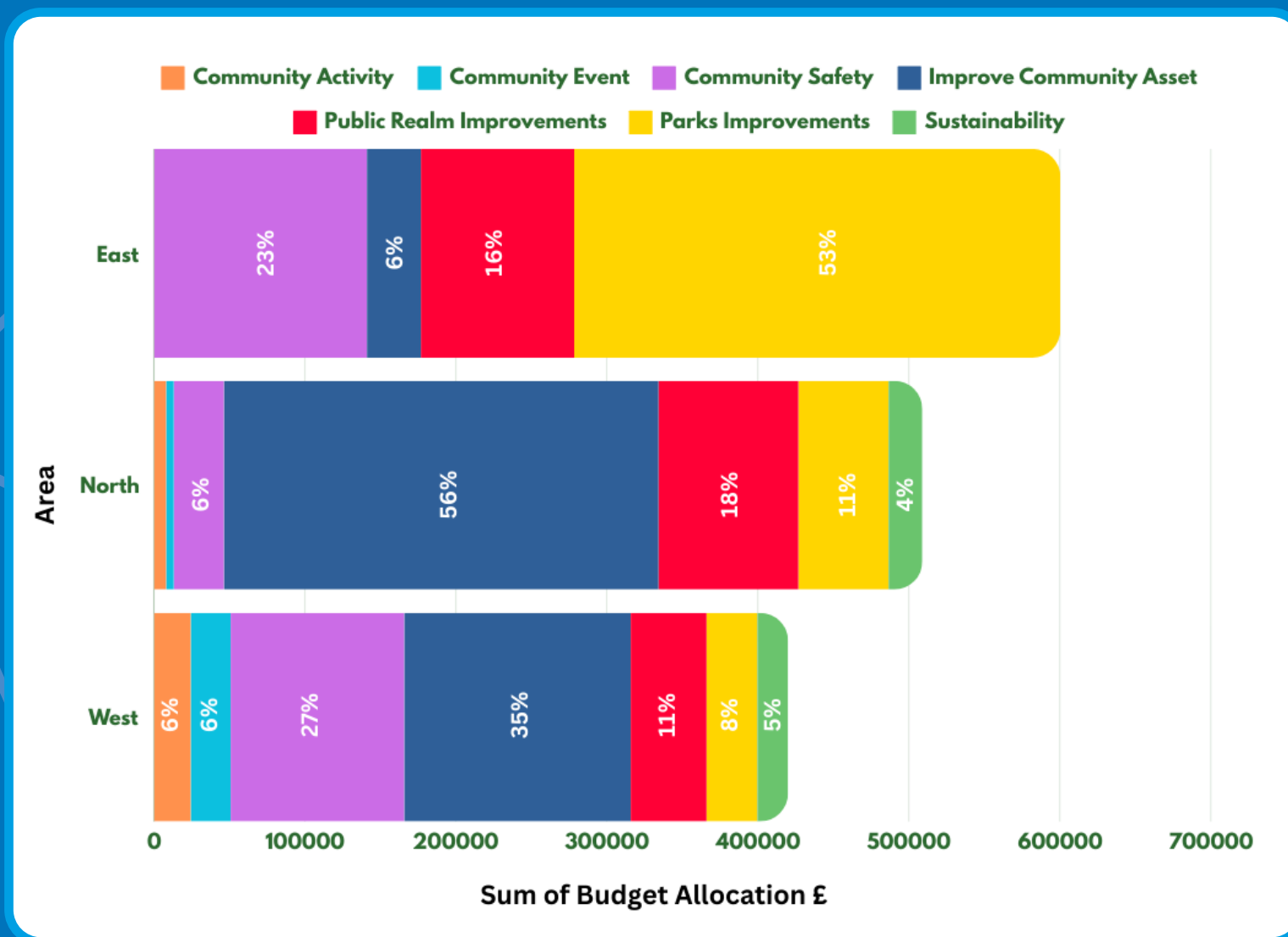
3. Sustainability

- Green economy
- Help ecology

4. Public health

- Dementia-friendly places
- Mental health support
- Healthier high streets

Below are the type of projects that were funded by NCIL between April 2023 to March 2024.



See some of the projects NCIL has been spent on during this financial year:

Sturges Park renovation

The West Area Committee approved an application to enhance the play area in Sturges Park, which is close to the new development in Brent Cross. The park needed renovation to better serve local families.

Before the renovations, much of the park equipment was old and nearing the end of its usability. After consulting with the community, the Greenspaces team designed and built a new playground tailored to the needs of its users. This included ensuring accessibility and safety for all.



Living Ways Ministry 60+ club

Living Ways Ministry 60+ Club organised social fitness clubs for residents aged 60+ in deprived areas of West Hendon, Colindale South, and Colindale North, funded by the West Area committee with £9360. The decision to fund them was influenced by the significantly worse health outcomes for this age group in these wards compared to neighbouring, less deprived areas.

Feedback from the sessions was overwhelmingly positive, with 19 out of 30 regular attendees providing responses. We received reports of improved muscular stretch, walking movements, relaxation, flexibility, agility, balance, and posture. Some simply stated the sessions “did me good,” while others found visual instruction helpful as they could not hear. The success of these sessions has enabled Living Ways Ministries to apply for more funding to keep these social exercise groups ongoing.

Playdepot refurbishment

The East Area Committee voted to support Artsdepot in North Finchley with their renovation of the soft play area at Playdepot. Playdepot is distinct in offering a free indoor play space, which is particularly valuable as many families are relocating to the area. Colleagues at Artsdepot note that groups frequently gather there, socialize, and provide mutual support, making it an essential community hub.



If community groups would like to apply, they should get in touch with their local ward councillor in the first instance, as all applications must have a councillor supporting the application.

1. If you don't know what ward you live in: **Find your ward**

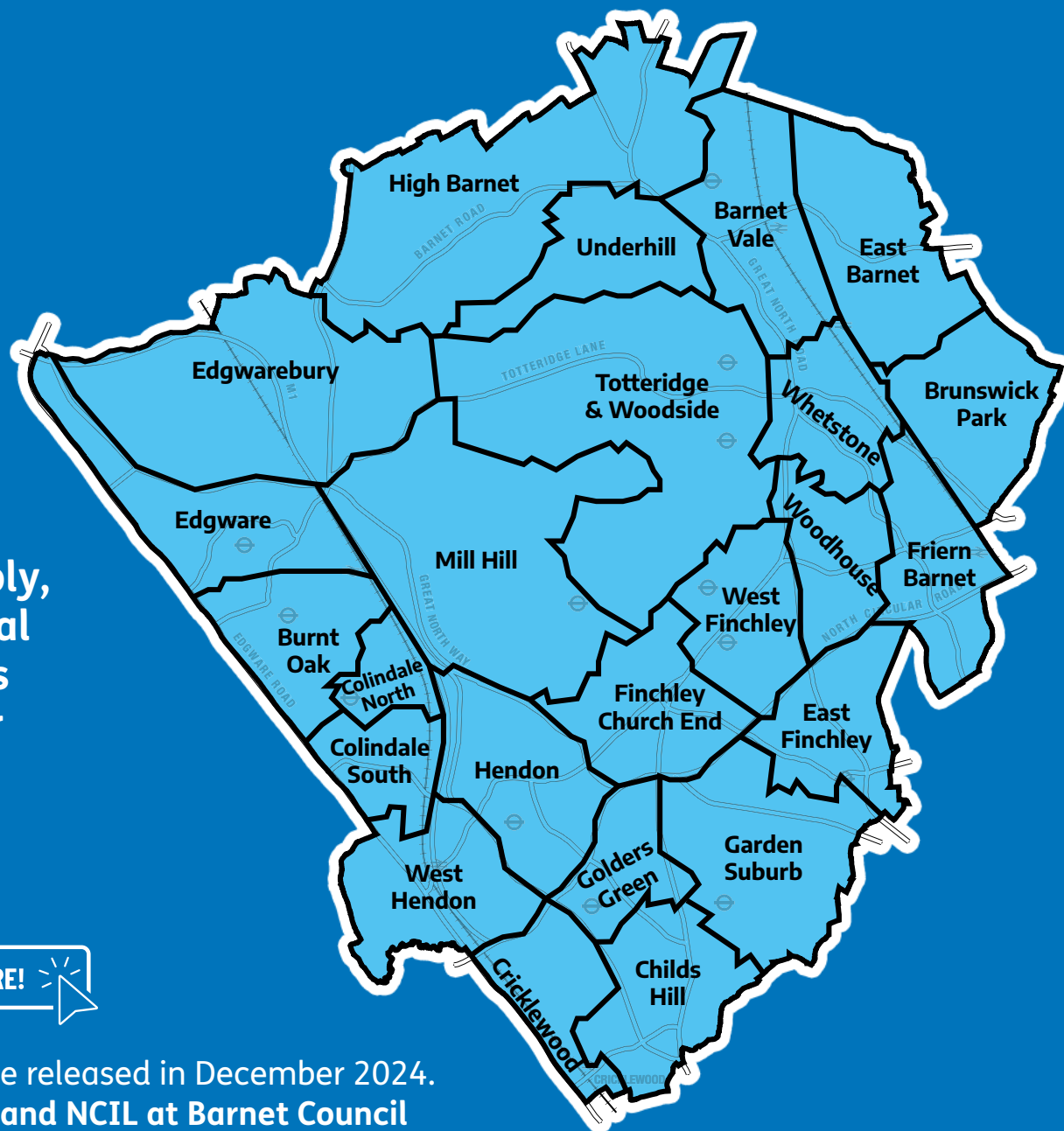
[CLICK HERE!](#)

2. If you don't know your ward Councillor: **Find your ward Councillor**

[CLICK HERE!](#)

An extensive report focusing on CIL and NCIL will be released in December 2024. To learn more about CIL and NCIL, please visit: **CIL and NCIL at Barnet Council**

[CLICK HERE!](#)



Caring for the Planet

- Sustainability
- BarNET Zero Challenge
- Greenspaces



Sustainability

In May 2022, Barnet Council declared a climate and biodiversity emergency, recognising that urgent action was needed to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss. Alongside this, ambitious net zero carbon targets were set for Barnet to be net zero carbon by 2042, and for the council by 2030.

Please see our co-produced **net zero carbon** approach, developed in collaboration with residents and stakeholders. It outlines the commitments and actions needed to achieve net zero emissions across nine key themes.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

These initiatives also promote environmental responsibility, improves public health, creates green spaces, and strengthens community engagement, thus contributing to social value.

COULD YOU HELP TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS IN BARNET?



Key achievements in 2023/24:

- Our Carbon Baseline was recalculated at the end of 2023, providing a benchmark for carbon emissions and guiding evidence-based action plans toward net zero.
- Barnet received Sustainable Warmth Competition funding through a successful West London consortium bid. The project, being delivered by Barnet Homes and **WarmWorks**, started in 2022 and concluded in December 2023 and improved the energy efficiency for 68 mixed-tenure properties. [CLICK HERE!](#)
- Barnet Homes, who oversee the day-to-day management of our housing stock, were awarded £2.9m through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to enable the retrofitting of up to 239 council homes by March 2025.
- Barnet Council approved the Tree Planting policy, aiming to plant 5,000 trees by 2028. So far, 1205 trees have been planted and 82 of those were sponsored by residents.
 - o If you want to sponsor a tree outside of your house, or a celebration tree, [click here to learn more.](#) [CLICK HERE!](#)
- In May 2023, the Electric Vehicle team completed a project with Trojan Energy to deliver 463 Surface Mounted Charge Points across 33 streets, adding to Barnet's growing network of EV chargers to support the transition to low-emission vehicles and decarbonisation of the transport network.
- A total of 915 Electric Vehicle charge points were installed in the borough this financial year.



Challenges:

Cost: Delivering the Sustainability Programme comes with high costs. While we've secured Government grants and loans for some projects, there is still a gap between available funds and total costs. Uncertainty in funding success, combined with the council's financial position, affects the programme's delivery.

Opportunities for improvement:

We require more detailed council data for accurate carbon reporting, including specifics on emissions reduction projects to track their impact effectively.

More granular council data is needed in order to produce a more accurate baseline, and enable specific intervention tracking (i.e. carbon emissions reduction from specific projects).

More partnership work with Citizens Assembly Action Groups.

Exploring innovative delivery models like Net Zero Neighbourhoods and Community Energy Trust to attract new funding and investment.

Sustainability goals for next financial year:

- Implement Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund scheme to retrofit up to 230 council homes by March 2025.

- Expand community engagement, building on Citizens Assemblies with ongoing action groups.
- Roll out 500-1000 lamp column charge points for electric vehicles, supported by £793,000 grant funding (covering up to 60% of the costs).
- We will be opening a Green Skills Centre in the borough this summer, proving vital training for our residents as we transition towards green jobs and a more sustainable borough.
- We're preparing to open a Library of Things to reduce waste and fly-tipping of little used everyday household items, whilst supporting communities through the Cost-of-Living crisis by enabling them to borrow items at a more affordable cost.



BarNET Zero Challenge

Having both committed to becoming Net Zero, Barnet Council and Middlesex University teamed up to launch the BarNET ZERO Challenge in January 2024.

The challenge aimed to develop innovative ideas to solve some of the borough's sustainability challenged areas identified by the citizens assembly.

Ideas were centred around five key themes:

1. Waste and Sustainable Consumption
2. Learning, Communication & Partnerships
3. Nature and Biodiversity
4. Travel
5. Housing, Buildings & Renewable Energy

Winning ideas received up to £5,000 and were presented the opportunity of joining **NatWest's Accelerator Programme**.

CLICK HERE!



THE WINNER OF THE BARNET ZERO CHALLENGE

Fiona Quinton winner of the BarNET ZERO Challenge 2024



Results:

Workshops, led by Middlesex University Academics, community organisation leads, Microsoft and NatWest, **started in January** to refine the participant's ideas for their final **submission in March**.

21 final submissions were received, and the top 3 were **announced on April 16th**, with the winner voted for and announced on **June 10th**.

2023

DEC

JAN

2024

JUN

2024

Over 100 applicants registered, with 60 advancing to the **December launch event**.



Green spaces

Investing in green spaces is essential for the council as it aligns with our commitment to “look after our precious parks and green spaces in ways to attract and support a wide range of wildlife, and to make them happy places to have fun, relax and improve our health and wellbeing”.

Green spaces offer numerous benefits, including improving air quality, enhancing biodiversity, and providing recreational opportunities for residents, playing a crucial role in promoting physical and mental well-being.

These spaces also contribute to the overall attractiveness of the borough, attracting visitors and potential investors.

Key achievements in 2023/24:

Victoria Park Sensory Garden →

In partnership with the Barnet Borough Sight Impaired (BBSI), a new Sensory Garden has been built in Victoria Park, Finchley, funded by a legacy donation from The BBSI, Area Committee, and Section 106 funding. This garden is designed to be calming and enjoyable, especially for those with visual impairments, offering sensory stimulation and a peaceful place to relax.



Fair Play Barnet ↑

Opened in February 2024, Fair Play Barnet is the UK’s first Maximum Inclusive Playground, situated in Victoria Recreation Ground (East Barnet). It features a wide range of equipment catering to people of all ages and abilities. It was developed and funded in partnership with people who are passionate about promoting accessibility and inclusivity across the country.



Bittacy Hill Park Playground

The council's Greenspaces Team has recently opened a new playground at Bittacy Hill Park (Mill Hill), funded through Section 106 funding from the nearby Mill Brook estate. This playground will give local families a fun and safe place to play, encouraging them to stay active and connect with their community.



Effective and Engaged Council

- Community Participation
- Barnet Together
- Food Hub
- Live Unlimited



Community Participation

Barnet thrives on its diverse population and active community groups, a key strength of our borough. Despite global challenges, community unity has proven to be crucial, benefiting people, schools, businesses, and local services. We aim to empower more residents to become active citizens and ensure their voices inform how we invest into the borough.

The **Community Participation Strategy (CPS)**, approved in October 2022, was a significant step for our administration, paving the way for Our Plan for Barnet.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

It introduced new ways for the council to involve communities and listen to voices less heard. The strategy is built around five core principles, which you will find outlined at the bottom of this section.

What has community participation looked like in the first year of the strategy?

[CLICK HERE!](#)

The Barnet Citizens Assembly on Climate Change and Biodiversity was the borough's inaugural citizens assembly, led by the council's Sustainability team in partnership with TPX Impact and supported by Strategy and Engagement officers. Held from February to May 2023, it involved 40 residents aged 18 and over, and 20 residents aged 12-17. Participants engaged in constructive discussions and shared ideas based on the council's draft sustainability action plan, generating 20 recommendations across various themes.

The Barnet Culture Strategy 2024-2029

fulfils an administration manifesto pledge to enhance the borough's appeal as a cultural destination and increase opportunities for arts, culture and recreation.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

The strategy presented the perfect opportunity to model coproduction, understanding that culture belongs to people and that it would be presumptuous to dictate cultural preference without involving people in the process. The strategy embraces participatory governance, involving diverse community voices and previously overlooked arts sectors. Led by Middlesex University's Associate Professor in Visual Culture, Dr Alexandra Kokoli, an inclusive steering group ensures expertise and inclusivity. The council also committed to bidding for London Borough of Culture (LBOC) in 2027.

A bid writing team was commissioned to develop the LBOC bid and lead on community engagement. This resulted in over 1500 responses and provided valuable insights to inform both the culture strategy and the bid, shaping priorities for developing culture in the borough.

The Leader Listens programme

initiated by the Leader of Barnet Council, Cllr Barry Rawlings, involves in-person meetings with communities to directly address residents' views and concerns.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

It targets groups historically overlooked by the council, aiming to ensure their voices are heard. Meetings are organised in partnership with community organisations and held in various locations, reflecting the CPS principle of 'we go where people are.'

Sessions have included asylum seekers, individuals with learning disabilities, Burnt Oak Women's Group, adults with mental health issues, the deaf and hard of hearing, and domestic abuse survivors. Each session promotes open dialogue and engagement, encouraging community involvement and understanding.



[CLICK HERE!](#)

For more community participation outcomes, please see our **Year 1 Progress Report**.

Principle	Successes	Opportunities for improvement
We go where people are	Our Leaders Listens programme connects with communities in their own spaces, while planning meetings for the Culture Strategy and the Grahame Park neighbourhood project are conducted on-site at community venues.	We will consider holding more council events in community spaces.
We learn through doing	As we have delivered projects, we have evaluated outcomes, shared learning and made improvements where necessary.	We will further develop our systems and processes for evaluation and storytelling.
We listen	We have held more direct engagement sessions to help shape our strategies while increasing the number of partnership boards and other participatory forums.	We will further demonstrate that we have not just listened but have acted on feedback and implemented changes. We will refine how we use insights to shape our policies and services. Additionally, we will create more channels for residents to share ideas and concerns.
We are transparent, accessible and open	Increased resident involvement and community events have helped make the council feel more present and accessible. We have developed a transparent and fair grant funding processes and are working to implement these consistently across our community investment portfolio.	As budgets tighten, there will be a need for more open conversations with the community about how we allocate funds. Our strong partnerships with the community will be crucial for engaging in these discussions openly and transparently.
We value Community Power	We have seen an increase in co-production across the council and with our VCFSE partners and have empowered residents to be active participants.	We will explore more opportunities for co-production with the community, particularly when we pilot projects.

Building capacity within our VCFSEs

Strengthening the capabilities of Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations in Barnet is crucial for our community's wellbeing. The council recognises the incredible work they do and aims to provide the necessary support to maximise their impact.

Through offering resources and guidance, we empower our community partners to better serve our diverse population, enabling them to deliver essential services, support vulnerable groups, and drive positive change in Barnet.



Barnet Together

Barnet Together (BT) is a partnership between the Young Barnet Foundation, Volunteering Barnet, Inclusion Barnet and Barnet Council that builds capacity in the borough.

It's a free support service for Barnet's Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. It helps local organisations with funding, training, resources, and advice, while also providing a platform for better sector representation and connection. BT supports over 500+ VCFSEs.

Some of the notable achievements in 2023/24:

- The Barnet Together Alliance Conference 2023 - Building Connections, Strengthening Communities - focused on addressing inequalities, promoting inclusion, and creating a thriving borough by working more closely and effectively together. The event attracted over 200 representatives from VCSFE groups and 6 funders, featuring 18 partner stalls.
- In collaboration with Mind in Enfield & Barnet and Barnet Council, we co-created the borough's mental health charter, involving input from over 150 adults, 300 young people, and 40+ organisations to ensure it was reflective of the borough's diverse communities.
- The Christmas Campaign, led by a dedicated community, distributed 2,500+ presents to children and young people in need. Supported by 160+ volunteers, who collectively contributed over 400 hours, the gifts reached those in need through a network of 26 community organisations and supporting services in Barnet.
- Supported a local mosque unfamiliar with grant applications due to their perceived complexity. Helped them prepare an application for new laptops needed to accommodate an increased number of volunteers. The mosque's application was successful.
- Provided volunteering support for various events in the borough, including Pride in the Park.
- 668 people found new volunteering roles and a total of 896 new volunteers were registered. This takes Volunteering Barnet to 7000 volunteers.



Community Innovation Fund

Launched in Spring 2021, the Barnet Community Innovation Fund (CIF) is the flagship community investment fund that aims to improve health and wellbeing in the borough. CIF is a joint initiative with local NHS acute and community trusts, North Central London CCG, Barnet Council, and the volunteer and community sectors, represented by Barnet Together.

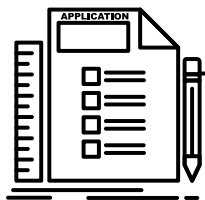
It is funded by Barnet Integrated Care Partnership and Barnet Council to support innovation, creativity, and advance health equality.

Achievements to date:

We have received 196 applications and awarded

**£830k to 50
community projects**

benefitting approximately 15,000 residents.



The Community Innovation Fund has fostered new relationships, connected services, empowered our communities, delivering genuine resident-centred care, and it will continue to fund preventative initiatives.

The fund is considered as an investment rather than a grant, enabling community organisations to either enhance existing activities, develop new programmes, or seek funding from other sources.

A vital part of our voluntary care sector and co-production strategy is to support everyone involved with the CIF, regardless of whether their application was successful or not, by providing strategic and delivery support.

This ensures we continue to engage and listen to our communities, embedding a true co-production approach. Additionally, we connect our work throughout the partnership to maximise the reach of the service.



Activities were evenly spread across the borough with the

**highest level of activity in
Colindale and Burnt Oak**

which were identified as the highest need areas.

Case study

Bread n Butter



In Burnt Oak, Colindale, and East Finchley, a series of communal cookery classes, funded by CIF, became an exemplary example of great community engagement. Over 28 well-attended sessions, a diverse mix of participants, including the elderly, parents and children, individuals in addiction recovery, low-income residents, widowed men, and asylum seekers from Chinese (Hong Kong), Kurdish, Iranian, and Eritrean backgrounds, came together to learn and connect.

These classes offered more than just culinary instruction; they provided a space for people to learn new skills, share meals, and establish bonds. Participants, many of whom had never had the opportunity to cook fresh food before, relished the chance to prepare meals and converse with others while dishes simmered on the stove. Led by instructors who also provided breath exercises, the sessions became a holistic experience.

The impact was significant. Some of the men who attended had never cooked. These sessions enabled them to learn new skills and find confidence, allowing them to replicate recipes at home. Additionally, these classes became a social occasion for many of the participants, especially those experiencing financial difficulty and/or difficulties with their mental health.

For more information on grants and funding available to the community, please click here.



Barnet Food Hub

The Barnet Food Hub, founded in November 2020 in response to the challenges posed by Covid-19, aims to tackle food insecurity in the borough by effectively coordinating the distribution of food to those in need.

Barnet Together manages its operations with financial support from Barnet Council. It maintains and establishes new partnerships with surplus food suppliers, oversees warehouse operations, and distributes food to food banks across the borough.

Key achievements in 2023/24:

- The Food Hub handled **256,924 kg** of food, translating to 611,725 meals. This amount could sustain **214** households in Barnet with breakfast, lunch, and dinner every single day of the year.
- The hub supported **15 food banks weekly**, as well other food aid organisations across the borough.
- **13,500** individuals per month were supported by food banks supported by Barnet Food Hub
- In partnership with Saracens, a food collection was held at their 10th-anniversary event at Stone X stadium, resulting in an additional 500 kg of food collected for local food banks.

- Increased surplus food provision by strengthening existing and developing new partnerships with providers, including the Felix project, Volunteers on Wheels, Gratitude, We are Grow, HAB, City Harvest, Morrison, Co-op and local allotments.
- Generated a return on investment of **£2.44** for every **£1** invested.



Additionally, the GLA has awarded two grants to fund a series of activities. The first grant provided funding towards a volunteer training programme for the Barnet Food Hub and network.

Approximately 130 staff and volunteers attended five certified courses: Food Hygiene, Mental Health Awareness, Manual Handling, First Aid, and Conflict Resolution.

Furthermore, funding was allocated to purchase 59 thermal boxes for the food hub network, ensuring that food hygiene standards are maintained during transportation.

The second grant, Food Roots Two, is being used to develop and test future food bank modelling, with a focus on addressing the root causes of food insecurity experienced by Barnet communities.

Barnet Food Partnership:

The Food Hub plays a vital role in the newly established Barnet Food Partnership. The Barnet Food Partnership was created in 2023 and brings together representatives of different formal and informal groups involved in the food system in the London Borough of Barnet.

The vision of the Barnet Food Partnership is to have a sustainable, equitable and resilient food system where all residents have access to affordable food that is: good for their health and well-being, good for the environment, good for the local economy, and that can bring communities together.

The Barnet Food Partnership has over 50 members from 30 organisations in Barnet and is aiming to make Barnet a Sustainable Food Place in 2024.



Live Unlimited

Live Unlimited was created by Barnet Council in 2018 and operates independently as a standalone charity dedicated to supporting Barnet's looked-after children and young care leavers.



Supported closely by the council, Live Unlimited aims to tackle loneliness, mental health issues, social and workplace inequalities, and empower individuals to reach their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. Currently, the council provides office space and IT equipment to Live Unlimited as well as in-kind support through funding half of the Operations Director's salary.

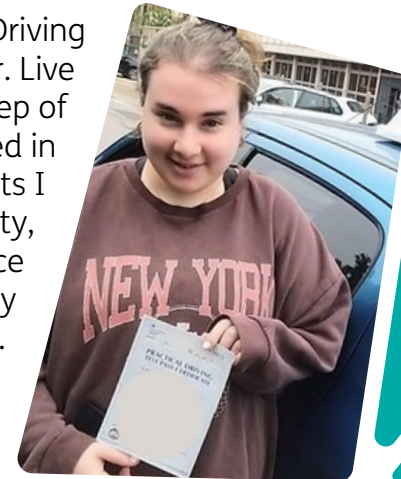
Key achievements in 2023/24:

Driving Ahead

Live Unlimited's flagship programme, 'Driving Ahead', offered 46 hours of free driving lessons, including theory and practical test fees, to care experienced young people aged 17-25. 24 individuals participated, with 15 taking their driving test, resulting in 8 passing and 7 failing. Holly and Ismail shared their success stories, with Ismail achieving his dream of becoming a mechanic after passing his driving test.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Holly: "My experience with Driving Ahead has been like no other. Live Unlimited supported me every step of the way. They regularly checked in on me and facilitated any requests I needed. Because of this opportunity, I am now able to use my licence to enable me to carry out my university and work endeavours. Thank you for all your hard work in helping me to learn to drive and giving me this opportunity."



Ismail: "I'm glad that despite the issues I had I was able to pass my test. I am so happy and excited to buy a car in the future and now feel very comfortable to progress with my studies. I would like to say thank you so much to Live Unlimited, I really appreciate this opportunity."

Outdoor Club

The Outdoor Club, in partnership with outdoor learning charity GROW, provided 425 hours of forest school activities across three six-week terms for children aged 6-18 in care at Totteridge Academy. Participants enjoyed learning new skills, taking risks, and building friendships. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one child expressing it was “the best day ever.”

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Outbound trips

Live Unlimited sponsored two trips to an outward-bound centre in Buckinghamshire for care leavers, providing many with their first experience outside London. Activities included high ropes, climbing, and archery. Most participants rated the experience 10/10, reporting increased confidence and an uplift to their mood.

Imagination Unlimited Fund

This enrichment fund expanded to accept group applications, funding items like bikes, musical equipment, and group outings such as theatre trips and Thorpe Park’s Fright Night. Additionally, it supported 50 children in care and their carers to attend Frozen the Musical.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Christmas vouchers

As in previous years, Live Unlimited provided £25 gift vouchers for care leavers to treat themselves over the festive period with 190 care leavers redeeming their vouchers.

Please click here to learn more about how they developed a sustainable fundraising strategy and collaborated with care-experience youth to refresh their branding and build a new website.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

Take a look at our 2022-2025 Strategy.

[CLICK HERE!](#)



Closing comments

We have seen how our collaborative efforts have made a difference in Barnet, from supporting people into employment to building homes and improving roads.

We will take what we have learnt and use it to shape our future investments. We will listen to your feedback, learn from our experiences, and find new ways to make a positive impact on our community. Together, we can build a brighter future for everyone in Barnet.

We will continue to explore new opportunities for social investment and find innovative ways to address the needs of our community while being a financially resilient council. Whether it is improving wellbeing, helping people facing challenges, or protecting our environment, we are committed to making Barnet a better place to live.

Additionally, we are improving our monitoring frameworks across many initiatives to improve the accuracy of the data that we share and to enhance our social value calculations.

We will release this report annually to ensure that we are keeping you informed about our investments. We want to share our progress, celebrate our successes, and be transparent about our challenges.

Your support and involvement are essential to our success, and we are grateful for your ongoing commitment.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Social Value calculations for the Employment and Skills outcomes.

Social Value Measurement of outcomes				
Metric	Outcomes (O)	FTE	Proxy Value (PV)	Social Value Generated (OxPV)
Full-time	129	1	£35,716	£4,607,364
Part-time	643	0.42	£15,000	£9,645,000
NEET	46	0.42	£6,460	£297,160
Care Leaver	45	0.42	£6,460	£290,700
Disabled	13	0.42	£6,974	£90,662
Unemployed	643	0.42	£1,217	£782,531
Apprenticeship	73	N/A	£26,186	£1,911,578
Digital Skills Training	788	N/A	£101	£79,588
Digital Equipment	544	N/A	£101	£48,581
HSF	£496,079	N/A	£1	£496,079
Total				£18,249,6743

All proxy values are localised to reflect the London Borough of Barnet’s economy. Each proxy value has been computed by combining the current economic benefit to the individual and the annualised future lifetime value to society for each outcome.

Applicable proxy values have been adjusted based on the number of hours per week and the FTE column outlines whether a metric is full-time equivalent or not.

All the jobs from BOOST, BELS and Shaw Trust WHP are 16 hours (0.42 FTE) or more, but are not broken further down to exact hours in the monitoring spreadsheet, therefore, to ensure that the results are not inflated, each job start from the above-mentioned services are being counted at the minimum number of hours.

Some of the programme’s achievements are not quantifiable using the National TOMs framework, e.g. number of individuals starting education or training. Therefore, the total generated social value is not the full depiction of our achievements.

Appendix 2

Social return on investment calculations for the Employment and Skills service.

Programme Expense		Revenue	
BOOST	£674,742	Section 106	£877,105
BELS	£262,062	External funding	£163,785
Section 106	£160,206		
Total	£1,097,010	Total	£1,040,890
Total Social Value Generated + Revenue / Investment = Social Return on Investment (SROI)			
£19,290,633 / £1,097,010			
SROI in £ = £17.58			

Appendix 3

- £30,408 is the median pay for residents of Barnet as per HM Revenue and Customs, Office for National Statistics April 2023 dataset, figure 9. To see more, [click here](#).
- In the report, median pay for part-time job starts is calculated on a pro rata basis (0.42 FTE), assuming 16 hours per week.
- £27,390 is the average apprentice pay in Barnet according to Indeed, based on the job adverts from Barnet-based businesses on the site. To see more, [click here](#).
- Therefore;
- 129 full-time equivalent X £30,408 (median pay) = £3,922,632
- 643 part-time X £12,771.36 (median pay at 0.42 FTE) = £8,211,984.48
- 73 apprenticeships X £26,928 (average salary) = £1,965,744
- **Total = £14,100,360.48**
- **Estimated wages to Barnet residents**

References

1. **Poverty & Inequality Data Barnet | Trust for London (20th February 2024).**
<https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/barnet-poverty-and-inequality-indicators/?tab=living-standards>
2. **Floyd, D. (2023) 'Record number of food parcels handed out in Barnet this summer,' Barnet Post, 9 November.**
<https://barnetpost.co.uk/2023/11/09/record-number-of-food-parcels-handed-out-in-barnet-this-summer/>
3. **Barnet's employment, unemployment and economic inactivity - ONS (2024).**
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/labourmarketlocal/E09000003/#unemployment>
4. **Local Government Association (2023) Total households on the housing waiting list at 31st March 2023 in Barnet | LG Inform.**
https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=105&mod-area=E09000003&mod-group=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup&mod-period=9
5. **Block, I. (2024) 'London house prices: how much has the value of homes in your borough changed?,' Evening Standard, 14 February.**
<https://www.standard.co.uk/homesandproperty/property-news/london-house-property-prices-increase-december-2023-ons-b1139162.html>
6. **Barnet Council (2024) Highway Investment Strategy: Carriageways and Footways,**
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/>. <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s82718/Appendix%20C%20-%20Barnet%20-%20Highway%20Investment%20Strategy%20-%20Final.pdf>
7. **ENV18 - Local authority collected waste: annual results tables 2021/22 (2023).**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables-202122>
8. **Barnet Council (2022) Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026, Barnet Council.**
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-02/Barnet%20Corporate%20Plan%202023-26.pdf>
9. **Barnet Council (2021) 'Barnet Draft Local Plan,' Barnet Draft Local Plan, p. 27.**
https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_strategy_final1.pdf

Barnet Council Social Investment Impact Report

Financial Year: 2023-2024



August 2024 / First Edition