

# **150 ways Labour will make life better for the 312,000 people who call Brent home.**

In a few short weeks, people in Brent will have the opportunity to decide who will run their council for the next four years- a decision that will have a huge impact on the future of everything from jobs to housing to schools in our borough.

This, the second part of our manifesto for the 2014 local elections, spells out in a bit more detail exactly what Labour will do for our area if we come out on top.

## **Better backing to get through tough times:**

1. We'll work to make sure everyone who works with Brent Council pays their employees no less than the London Living Wage.
2. We'll set up a special task force to encourage as many local businesses, schools and community institutions as possible to become LLW employers- making sure at least 100 are accredited as such by the Living Wage foundation by 2018.
3. We'll fight fuel poverty by helping at least 1,000 Brent residents to club together with their neighbours to get cheaper gas and electricity through collective purchasing.
4. We'll install energy-saving improvements, including loft or cavity wall insulations and boiler repairs or replacements, in more Brent homes.
5. We'll ban exploitative payday lending companies from advertising on council-owned billboards.
6. We'll build up local credit unions, encouraging local people to save at one, to make sure everyone in Brent can get a loan at a good rate if they need one.
7. We'll investigate establishing a community bank for Brent. This institution would lend the capital raised through deposits from local people and businesses back to borrowers in our borough, keeping money local to support the whole community.
8. We'll work with the Citizens Advice Bureau and other community groups to offer Brent residents help to develop budgeting skills and debt advice at the first sign that they're falling behind on their bills.
9. We'll treat residents' arrears across different council services as one debt when developing payment plans with them.
10. We'll make sure pensioners and disabled people don't have to pay much Council Tax, and reduce the amount paid by other disadvantaged groups.
11. We'll limit any increases in the cost of residential parking permits to the rate of inflation.

12. We'll try out significantly reducing the time during which the council gives out parking tickets and tows cars on days on which concerts and football matches are held at Wembley.
13. We'll continue to support food banks as a necessary last resort for people in tough times.
14. We'll be guided by the findings and recommendations of the Social Mobility Commission- a year long investigation commissioned by the council and carried out by independent experts into the barriers preventing many people in Brent from getting on in life, and the ever widening gap between haves and have-nots in our borough.
15. We'll lobby the government to withdraw the single person discount for high-earners.
16. We'll campaign for the repeal of the Coalition Government's cruel and unfair Bedroom Tax.



**Brent Labour**  
**Together we're better**

## **Better job opportunities for local people:**

17. We'll establish stronger partnerships with local employers, community and voluntary sector organisations and the College of North West London to help 1,000 Brent residents, including young people, the long-term unemployed and working-age people with disabilities, into work by 2018.
18. We'll join up the council's housing, welfare and employment support services to provide a single point of contact for local people affected by the Coalition Government's callous social security reforms and cut through red tape to address the underlying issues stopping residents from getting into work.
19. We'll reduce the unemployment rate in our borough to below the London average by 2018.
20. We'll create 100 new apprenticeships in the council workforce by 2017.
21. We'll offer more support to local people who have been helped into a job by the council or voluntary sector partners to help them settle into their work environment during the crucial first six months of work.
22. We'll build on the accomplishments of the council's new Employment and Enterprise team by supporting more local small and medium enterprises to participate in our apprenticeship programme.
23. We'll refocus Brent Adult Community Education Service to provide high quality skills and vocational training to local people, and prioritise helping residents to improve their IT skills and employment prospects in an increasingly digital economy.
24. We'll support local providers of English for speakers of other languages courses to make sure these teach the language skills needed to search for employment opportunities and build careers.
25. We'll appoint a councillor as a Business Ambassador responsible for increasing the visibility of the training and recruitment services offered by the Employment and Enterprise team and making sure the views of local businesses are heard and understood by the council.
26. We'll work closely with the new Park Royal Business Partnership to make sure as many local people as possible are able to find jobs at, and benefit from the fact that our borough is home to, Europe's largest industrial estate.
27. We'll develop a new Wembley Vision to build on the successes which have resulted from 2002's Vision for a New Wembley and drive forward the transformation of Wembley into an international destination for leisure and retail, London's economic engine room and the beating heart of Brent.

28. We'll continue to work with corporate and community partners to transform South Kilburn, constructing a new local primary school, urban park and health centre in the area.
29. We'll invest in growth zones including Alperton, Queensbury and Church End to grow our borough's economy in a way that serves its people.
30. We'll lobby the Government and Mayor of London to maximise employment and training opportunities for local people resulting from major infrastructure projects affecting Brent like HS2 and Old Oak Common Crossrail Interchange, and to minimise the disruptive impact of construction works on our communities.
31. We'll safeguard the future of our borough's high streets by managing the conversion of vacant shops into office or high-quality residential premises.
32. We'll make sure that new developments in Brent provide access to small, time limited, low cost workspace for local entrepreneurs and digital or creative businesses.
33. We'll create more 'Meanwhile Spaces' - places where groups of residents and creative individuals can come together to run cultural and community projects and local entrepreneurs can try out new business ideas - in sites which would otherwise sit empty.
34. We'll work with partners in the community to ensure that culture and the arts play a key role in regenerating our borough through initiatives such as the Willesden Green centre.
35. We'll make sure companies that want council contracts do their bit for Brent by investing in jobs for local people, training programmes for unemployment residents, local charities or community projects.
36. We'll uphold the council's commitment to not employ exploitative zero-hours contracts, and work with its contractors to reduce their reliance on these insecure contracts.
37. We'll enter into new agreements only with contractors who can assure us they will not blacklist workers and, if they have done so in the past, have taken adequate measures to redress the damage caused by this destructive practice; and who can demonstrate that they value human rights and practise employment policies consistent with International Labour Organisation standards in all countries in which they operate.
38. We'll run a Timewise council- introducing flexible and part-time working arrangements to minimise the cost of childcare for parents working for the council and free up employees to participate in community activities, and working with commercial partners to promote these practices throughout our borough.

39. We see every day that the Government's Work Programme isn't working and we believe that services to support people back into work could be more effectively and efficiently coordinated at the local level. We'll lobby for more power over employment services and skills training to be handed to Brent, so that we can draw on the expertise of local organisations rather than seeing millions of pounds of public money going to big business.

## **Better starts in life for our kids:**

40. We'll make sure that, by 2017, every single school in Brent is rated good or outstanding.
41. We'll spend £100 million to create 3,500 new school places for our borough's children.
42. We believe that the best way to make sure our kids manage money well in later life is to teach them the value of saving while they're still at school. We'll open a savings account at a credit union with a starter deposit of £10 for all Year 7 children living in Brent.
43. We'll work with school governing bodies to make sure all pupils in Brent schools continue to be taught by qualified teachers exclusively.
44. We'll oppose the creation of new free schools providing mainstream secondary education in Brent as the borough has enough school places to meet demand.
45. Unfortunately, as a result of Michael Gove's ideologically driven and damaging education reforms we are unable to prevent free schools from setting up in our borough. We'll work with all schools that teach Brent children, but only offer council support to prospective Free Schools that adopt governance structures consistent with the Co-operative School model, which is designed to make sure school managers are accountable to staff, parents and the local community.
46. We'll focus on improving educational attainment amongst underperforming groups including Black Caribbean and Eastern European boys.
47. We'll seek to establish a University Technology College in our borough with suitable backing from an academic institution.
48. We'll carry on fighting to keep our local children's centres open, and give community groups and young people more say over how they're run.
49. We'll connect parents who have to work nights or unusual hours with qualified and affordable childminders.
50. We'll support foster parents in lower income groups by reducing the amount they have to pay in Council Tax.
51. We'll continue to develop our Early Help programme to more effectively provide support to the most disadvantaged children in our community and reduce the number of young people coming into care.
52. We'll work with community and voluntary sector organisations to reform the council's youth services so that they better support local people to achieve academically and learn the skills they'll need to find a job and succeed.

53. We'll work with voluntary sector partners to proactively identify and bid for external funding to enhance both our youth services and children's centres.
54. We'll launch a borough-wide mentoring service for our most vulnerable young people.
55. We'll provide one-to-one support to more mothers and pregnant women under the age of 19 through our new Family Nurse Partnership scheme.
56. We'll work with local schools to create more Breakfast Clubs and make sure pupils in Brent get the right fuel they need to learn.
57. We'll prohibit new takeaways from opening within 400 metres, and shisha cafes within 0.5 miles, of all secondary schools and further education colleges.
58. We'll support families with kids at the same school to exchange homemade meals through cooking co-operatives- saving money and promoting healthy eating.
59. We'll conduct a review of physical education in Brent schools to reduce childhood obesity.
60. We'll work with schools and local dentists to improve the oral health of Brent children.
61. We'll make sure that excellent sex education is provided in schools throughout our borough.
62. We'll explore the benefits of placing a greater emphasis on life skills, entering employment and peer-to-peer mentoring within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum in Brent schools.
63. We'll make it easier for Brent residents to close their streets to traffic on particular days to create 'play streets', especially during school holidays.
64. We'll unashamedly support the teaching unions in their campaign to secure decent pay for all teachers, support the principle that educators should be able to start a new job at a pay level that reflects their experience and defend the right of teachers to a decent pension in retirement.

## **Better homes:**

65. We'll kick off an ambitious council house building programme (see 66.) and work with housing associations to build 3,000 new affordable homes throughout Brent by 2018.
66. We'll build 1,000 new council homes in our borough between 2014 and 2021.
67. We'll spend £110 million to radically improve the quality of existing council houses by 2018.
68. We'll bring 300 empty homes back into use by 2018.
69. We'll weed out unscrupulous rogue landlords and stomp out beds-in-sheds by requiring everyone looking to rent out a private property in Brent to license it with the council and go through basic safety checks.
70. We'll set up a not-for-profit lettings agency to bring down the cost of renting and help people get longer term lets.
71. We'll explore the possibility of purchasing properties directly in order to let them to local people.
72. We'll reduce the number of Brent residents living in temporary accommodation by 360 by the end of 2014.
73. We'll continue to support local people who want to downsize into more manageable properties, freeing up properties for families who need more space.
74. We'll make sure that residents who already live in an area where a development is being built and who need a which home will better suits their needs are first in the queue for new properties to be let at social rent levels.
75. We believe that too much taxpayers' money, which could be spent building homes for the many, goes towards subsidising a comparatively small number of landlords, and that local people have the right to know who is truly benefiting from our benefits system. We'll publish an annual register of all companies and individuals in Brent getting over £250,000 in housing benefit payments.
76. The measures listed above will improve life for private tenants in our borough and create many new homes for Brent families, but national legislation is required to stabilise the rental market and address Brent's housing needs crisis. We'll campaign alongside organisations including Advice for Renters for parliamentary action to bring down rents, and lobby the government to lift its cap on how much the council can borrow to build new homes.



77. The Tory Mayor of London wants to increase social housing rents throughout our city. We'll continue to lead the fight against City Hall to keep rents genuinely affordable for housing association tenants.

## **Better care for vulnerable residents:**

78. We'll join up Brent's health and social care services to meet each patient's unique needs.
79. We'll invest wherever possible in preventative care, because we believe that it's both more effective and cost-efficient to address issues early on, before they become complex and engrained.
80. We'll help older and disabled people to live at home for longer by giving them more say over their own care, installing grab rails and stair-lifts in more homes and providing more Extra Care (or very sheltered) housing.
81. We'll continue to fund and work with the Brent Pensioners' Forum and other community organisations giving a voice to older people to tackle issues including fuel poverty and social isolation.
82. We'll reduce social isolation and loneliness in our borough by launching new befriending schemes to help elderly and vulnerable residents stay connected to the people around them.
83. We'll continue to fund the Freedom Pass to make sure older people can get out and about.
84. We'll provide new and improved facilities at local day centres in conjunction with community and voluntary sector partners.
85. We'll support older people to share their knowledge, skills and interests through community programmes such as the University of the Third Age.
86. We'll work with NHS Brent Clinical Commissioning Group to provide joined-up mental health care plans for vulnerable residents.
87. In line with our 'Time to Change' council pledge, we'll continue to strive to end mental health discrimination in Brent and beyond.
88. We'll work with local support groups and community organisations to find and offer help to more unpaid carers in our borough. We'll also work with schools, youth centres and B My Voice to identify and offer special support to teenage carers, who are less likely to know what help is available and how to access it.
89. Caring is a tough job and carers need support, including the chance to have a break, catch up with friends and do things that interest them. We'll continue to promote and improve our new Carer's Hub - where carers can access emotional support, training, financial advice and information on short break and leisure programmes - based on what carers tell us they need to make their lives just that little easier.

90. We'll make sure that all home care workers on council contracts are paid the LLW at minimum.
91. We'll work with social care providers to improve the working conditions of residential care staff, with the ultimate aim of making sure all people working in care in Brent are paid the LLW.
92. We'll work to support working aged disabled people into work, and offer dedicated support to young people with disabilities aged 14 to 25 years-old to effectively plan for their futures.
93. We'll assess reports of abuse of Brent residents in care within 24 hours of the alert first being raised.
94. We'll encourage and assist service users to interact and provide reciprocal advice and support to one another through online forums and social media platforms.
95. We'll campaign to overturn the Coalition Government's reckless and politically motivated decision to close the busy and well-used Accident and Emergency department at Central Middlesex Hospital, which will put chronically sick, mentally ill and elderly Brent residents at risk.



**Brent Labour**  
**Together we're better**

## **Better, greener, cleaner and healthier spaces:**

96. We'll crack down on fly-tipping through strictly enforcing penalties, raising awareness of our Cleaner Streets app and fly-tipping hotline, rolling out CCTV cars to catch offenders in the act and improving our responsiveness to complaints.
97. We'll take a zero tolerance approach to litter on our streets.
98. We'll continue to collect old kitchen appliances, furniture and other bulky items for free.
99. We'll significantly reduce the amount of our borough's waste that we send to landfills whilst continuing to recycle at least 45%.
100. We'll protect our green spaces from development.
101. We'll continue the fight to ban fracking in Brent.
102. We'll install land drainage systems in our parks and open spaces to reduce the risk of flooding.
103. We'll plant 1,200 trees throughout our borough by 2018.
104. Within four years, we'll reduce carbon emissions in Brent by 15%.
105. We'll monitor air quality throughout our borough, and lobby the Mayor of London and the Environment Agency to crack down on air pollution around the Neasden Goods Yard and to tighten up emissions standards for taxis, heavy good vehicles and buses.
106. To prevent accidents on the road and decrease carbon emissions, we'll increase the number of 20 mile-per-hour speed limit areas in our borough.
107. We'll maintain school crossing patrols in areas where serious risk is identified.
108. To reduce reliance on cars and promote environmentally friendly, healthy and safe ways for pupils to travel to and from school, we'll roll out a School Travel Plan for every nursery, primary and secondary school in Brent.
109. We'll promote our parking permit surrender scheme, through which Brent residents who choose to cancel their parking permit and agree not to purchase another for at least two years can claim £200 towards the cost of a bicycle or in Oyster card credit.
110. We'll continue to work with TFL to improve bus routes in our borough- pressing for the extension of the number 18 route from Sudbury to Northwick Park Hospital.
111. We'll spend £1 million over four years to improve cycling routes and provide more training courses for adults and children, and make sure all new developments in Brent are cycle-friendly.

112. We'll open six more outdoor gyms.
113. We'll promote the new swimming pool at Bridge Park as well as the new gym facilities at Vale Farm.
114. We'll train up local people to help others in their communities and areas to get active and live healthier lives.
115. We'll stop unsightly clusters of exploitative betting shops, payday loan lenders, pawnbrokers and takeaways from forming on our high streets and in our town centres.
116. We'll restrict the right of betting shops, pawnbrokers and payday loan lenders to open in buildings which previously housed banks, building societies, small offices, estate agents, recruitment agencies, job centres, Citizens Advice Bureaus, print and copy shops, key cutting and shoe repairers, commercial photographers, restaurants, cafes, pubs, bars and takeaways.
117. We'll make it harder for premises to obtain alcohol licences in known problem areas.
118. We'll protect community pubs, whilst cracking down on licensees who flout the law.
119. We'll campaign for the introduction of minimum pricing for alcohol.
120. We'll work with Brent Youth Parliament to raise awareness of the health hazards of smoking shisha.
121. We'll work with community and faith groups to publicise the dangers of chewing tobacco-laced paan and crack down on paan spitting.

## **Better, safer streets:**

122. We'll work with the police, neighbourhood watch groups and local people to make sure violent crime, robbery and residential burglary continue to fall in our borough, and tackle the disproportionate fear of crime which can trap vulnerable residents in their own homes.
123. We'll distribute SmartWater forensic marking kits to more Brent residents living in burglary hotspots.
124. Although crime in Brent is falling, incidents of domestic and sexual violence are on the rise. We'll press for the prosecution of perpetrators of these crimes, and work with charities and community groups to improve support services for people forced to flee their home or partner.
125. We'll run an extensive campaign to raise awareness of the illegality and detrimental health effects of female genital mutilation throughout our borough.
126. We'll invest in mentoring programmes and community programmes to prevent young people from joining gangs and create routes out of gang culture for teenagers.
127. We'll support more local businesses and organisations to make their premises CitySafe Havens- places, such as the Brent Civic Centre, where local people can seek refuge if they are in danger or feel threatened.
128. We'll make sure that our streets and estates are well-lit at night.
129. We'll continue to crack down on intimidating behaviour, noise nuisance and vandalism through our dedicated anti-social behaviour team, which includes Brent Police officers.
130. We'll treat the victims of substance misuse.
131. We'll implement an evidence-based and data-driven approach to identifying crime hotspots.
132. Through the newly formed Brent Safer Neighbourhood Board, we'll make sure our borough's police respond to residents' priorities and concerns and carefully monitor reports from the Brent Independent Stop and Search Monitoring Group.

## **Better connected communities:**

133. We'll offer everyone in our borough 30 minutes of free Wi-fi daily.
134. We'll create a single card for borrowing library books, using leisure centres and sports facilities and accessing discounts at a range of local businesses.
135. We'll continue to offer support to and develop closer working relationships with the Brent Council of Voluntary Services and other community organisations throughout Brent- transforming council services so that they harness the bonds between local people and unleash the power of our community.
136. We'll set up a Volunteering Hub to help Brent residents find a scheme to match their skill sets and ambitions, to identify new ways in which volunteers could help to make our borough a better place to live and work and develop suitable programmes, and to spread the word about volunteering opportunities to local schools, businesses and community groups.
137. We'll investigate launching a recognition and reward scheme to thank people who volunteer regularly in Brent.
138. By continuing to invest in digital advances and new books, we'll make sure our borough's state of the art libraries remain fit for future generations.
139. We'll offer training and support to community groups who want to set up and run new libraries.
140. Too many Brent residents don't know about the work their council does, and in order for us to give people more say over how their council services are run they must know what services the council provides. We'll change the way the council engages with local people, shaping our communications around their daily lives and routines.
141. We'll increase the number of ward-level action weeks- bringing together different teams to provide face-to-face advice and access to council services on residents' doorsteps.
142. We'll run a listening council, employing digital innovations such as our online budget simulator to involve more local people in consultations and holding more events to encourage residents to help make decisions affecting the future of their neighbourhoods at the Civic Centre and across Brent.
143. We'll continue to live-stream council meetings via the twitter-integrated Brent Live service.
144. We'll promote the Civic Centre's multi-purpose community spaces.
145. We'll create a cross-service online portal to enable residents to access, learn about, pay for and feed back on all council services through a single log-in.

146. We'll rise to the challenge to democracy posed by Individual Electoral Registration by giving local people the opportunity to register to vote during all interactions with the council, and by running an extensive voter registration campaign throughout our borough.
147. The Coalition Government's swingeing cuts have impacted disproportionately on women in communities throughout the UK including Brent. We'll appoint a member of the Executive with special responsibility for implementing a cross-departmental strategy to improve local women's lives and championing women's voices.
148. We'll make maximum use of the Sustainable Communities Act to drive forward government action or the devolution of powers from Whitehall in situations where we have identified a new way to improve Brent residents' lives but existing council powers prove unequal to the task.
149. We are on the side of local people and are proud to have fought to protect services at Central Middlesex Hospital, to stop police office and fire station closures in our borough and to keep rents genuinely affordable for our housing association tenants. We'll continue to stand up for local people against policies enacted by the government and the Mayor of London which are bad for Brent- including in the courts if necessary.
150. Sometimes, in difficult times, there is a risk that we seek to blame others for our problems and so turn against one another. We'll continue to work to promote solidarity and inclusion throughout our borough and to oppose those who seek to spread blame and discord.