

Health of the borough 2024-25



Contents

Foreword	3
Summary of the Health of the Borough 2024-25	4
Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard.....	8
Your Voice, Your Town - putting communities in the driving seat for change.....	10
Ealing's Community Champions.....	12
The Ealing Community Action Research Initiative	14
Learn Ealing	16
Work Ealing.....	18
Cost of living support	21
Tackling violence against women and girls	24
The development of a regional park	26
Green Schools - driving sustainability and innovation	28
Therapeutic Thinking in schools.....	30
Taking a whole school approach to improving mental health.....	32
Healthy Zones - supporting healthier lifestyles in schools	34
Health support for people who are sleeping rough in Southall	36
Supporting people who are experiencing homelessness.....	38
Supporting Ukrainian refugees	40
Drug and alcohol support	42
Substance misuse and mental health support	44
World AIDS Day 2024 – ending HIV stigma	46
Celebrating success on No Smoking Day	49
Oral health outreach work in 2024.....	51
Let's Go Southall – a social movement.....	53

Foreword

Welcome to Ealing Council's third annual Health of the Borough publication. If you have read any of our previous editions, you might have noticed a key difference – it is no longer a report, or at least not in the traditional sense. Instead we have opted for a digital magazine format and hope that you find this edition accessible and easier to navigate, as well as helpful and informative.

Readers can expect a snapshot of the brilliant work happening across the borough to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and reduce the inequalities experienced by residents. Our health and wellbeing are influenced by a variety of factors that affect our everyday lives. This edition aims to give readers a better understanding of work the council leads on, commissions, or funds – all of which impact these areas. Our goal is to not only improve people's health but also prevent illness before it starts.

Community connection is the foundation of health, happiness, and prosperity – and the best solutions often lie within our communities. That's why, through our Connected Communities vision, we are making connection our core mission. This is a transformative change across all our services, with the aim of creating sustained and tangible impact beyond the walls of our council buildings.

Addressing the complex challenges that too many people in our borough face, such as poverty and homelessness, requires us to not only work better with our partners and communities, but also to be open and transparent about our own limitations as an organisation and the fact that we do not have

all the answers. We recognise that people know what's best for themselves, their families, and their communities.

You may be aware that our borough has the third biggest population in London, and it is continuing to grow. We are also proud to be one of the most diverse boroughs in London, with a rich mix of communities, cultures, ethnicities, and faiths shaping life across our 7 towns – Acton, Ealing, Greenford, Hanwell, Northolt, Perivale, and Southall.

Therefore, it is essential that our work reflects the borough's diversity, stays accessible and inclusive, and remains closely in tune with local needs. We are creating more meaningful opportunities for residents to get involved in local decision-making, which allow us to listen and learn how we can better serve our residents, even if that means stepping back sometimes.

We extend our thanks to everyone who contributed to this publication, and we invite our partners and residents to continue working with us so that we can move forward towards a better, healthier future, together. Thank you for taking the time to read this year's Health of the Borough.



Councillor Peter Mason
(Leader of the council)



Councillor Polly Knewstubb
**(Cabinet Member for Healthy
Equal Lives)**



Summary of the Health of the Borough 2024-25

Ealing Council is working hard to make the borough a happier and healthier place to live, but this isn't without its challenges. Many of our residents have conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure, and there are a higher number of people being admitted to hospital for alcohol-related issues than in some other areas.

There are, unfortunately, many families and individuals experiencing homelessness and living in temporary accommodation, and there are wide differences in health and life expectancy between those living in the most and least deprived parts of the borough.

This publication highlights the Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard, a new interactive online tool that gives you access to timely data and evidence, such as the percentage of adults in the borough who have diabetes. It is hoped that the tool will be used to campaign for change within communities and improve health and wellbeing. It has been developed in response to requests from community organisations, which were raised during the Health and Wellbeing Strategy consultation.

Although the Health of the Borough highlights the work which has been led, commissioned, or funded by Ealing Council, none of this would have been possible without all the dedicated people who are living and working in the borough.

The council works together with many other organisations, including NHS organisations and the voluntary, community, and faith sectors, as part of the Ealing Borough Based Partnership to meet the commitments set out

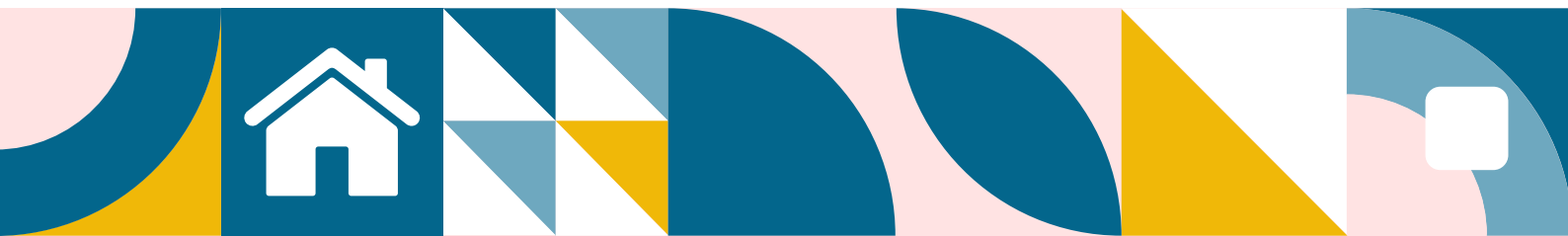
by the [Ealing Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28](#). All partners aim to ensure that they are doing the following:

Commitments of the Ealing Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28

1. Putting communities at the heart of everything
2. Systems and structures that leave no one behind
3. Connecting the building blocks of health and wellbeing

The building blocks of health

Throughout this document, you will read the phrase 'building blocks of health'. These are the factors which you may not immediately associate with health but are essential for maintaining good health and wellbeing, such as education, work, housing, and community connections. This is illustrated in the image below created by **Ealing's Health Determinants Research Collaboration**, a new partnership initiative which aims to develop the council into a centre of research excellence. As with the game Jenga, the more building blocks that are missing for a person, the more likely it is that their health and wellbeing will be negatively impacted.



The building blocks of health

Different factors combine to influence health

We can think of these as building blocks



Everyone has different sets of building blocks supporting them

Councils and partners can influence building blocks and fill gaps...



Source: Ealing HDRC

Putting communities at the heart of everything

The council knows that people want more control over their health and their lives, as well as better social connections and access to community resources. The combination of these contribute to greater health equity, which is when everyone has a fair opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

That is why the council is putting communities at the heart of everything it does. This is demonstrated by its new approach to engaging with communities, which is being driven by the [Your Voice, Your Town](#) initiative. As part of the project, more than 1,600 votes have been received from residents, identifying their priorities for their town. By putting residents in the lead, the council wants people to feel empowered and have a sense of ownership over what happens in their communities.

In this year's Health of the Borough, the fantastic work of [Ealing's Community Champions](#), a network of 89 hard-working residents hailing from different backgrounds

and with different experiences, is highlighted. They share a passion, which is to support their communities so that they can enjoy better health and wellbeing.

The council believes in the power of social movements to create change, so it invests in community-led initiatives such as [Let's Go Southall \(LGS\)](#), which co-ordinates a huge range of indoor and outdoor activities for residents. LGS aims to address low levels of physical activity by encouraging residents to get moving, and the initiative Let's Ride Southall has made huge strides in changing the culture around cycling.

Systems and structures that leave no one behind

The council recognises that, for some groups of people, there are more barriers to accessing support. The health needs of people experiencing homelessness tend to be much greater than those in secure and permanent accommodation, with 78% of people who experience homelessness reporting a physical health condition compared to 37% of the general population. [Hope for Southall Street](#)



[Homeless](#) has been providing support to people who sleep rough for many years, but recently it has expanded its offer to people attending the weekly drop-in session to include clinical services such as optometry, dentistry, and podiatry. Other recent initiatives to support those experiencing homelessness include a [street legal worker](#) who, so far, has provided immigration support to 90 people, including those who have 'no recourse to public funds', which means they cannot claim most benefits (including housing support and Universal Credit).

Since 2022, 1,417 Ukrainians have been relocated to the borough through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, making it the second-largest Ukrainian refugee community in London. Through partnerships with local organisations, including Ealing Council, the [Ealing Ukrainian Infrastructure Support Network](#) supports refugees by providing emotional wellbeing sessions, psychological support, coaching, and art and cultural events for self-expression and healing.

People who face significant disadvantage, such as those experiencing homelessness, are more likely to misuse substances and have mental health challenges. We know that alcohol in particular increases the risk of more than 60 medical conditions, but around 4 out of every 5 dependent drinkers in the borough are not receiving treatment. Therefore, the [Primary Care Assessment Team](#) was created to improve access to treatment by providing drug and alcohol support within GP practices, as well as from 3 treatment hubs, and has been incredibly successful. In addition, since many adults with substance misuse also have mental ill health, a [Dual Diagnosis Team](#) was developed, improving support for more than 150 individuals, and their family and carers, in the borough.

With more than one-fifth of adults smoking (according to the Office for National Statistics' 2023 survey), the borough has the highest

rate of smokers in the country. The [Ealing Smokefree Service](#) has helped more than 200 residents set 'quit' dates, with more than 100 people quitting within 4 weeks of joining the service since it began in 2024. There are around 1,000 individuals in the borough receiving care for **HIV**. There are a variety of services which offer free and confidential sexually transmitted infection (STI) and HIV testing and prevention, as well as support services for those diagnosed with HIV. Around 200 people visited the Spectra HIV Testing and Awareness bus outside Ealing Town Hall on World AIDS Day in 2024, demonstrating the need for this service and addressing the ongoing stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.

Connecting the building blocks of health and wellbeing

Unfortunately, almost a third of residents are living in poverty, meaning they have inadequate resources to meet basic needs. There is a strong relationship between how much money you have and your health outcomes. Constantly worrying about money and dealing with debt leads to chronic stress and poor mental and physical health, which can affect your ability to work, earn, and save money. Financial security is important for accessing many of the other building blocks of health mentioned earlier, such as good quality housing, the ability to heat your home, healthy food, and social participation.

The council continues to look for ways to support residents amid the cost of living crisis. In 2023-24, it distributed £5.3million directly to residents struggling with rising living costs, such as via shopping vouchers to low-income families and care leavers, as well as funding for local voluntary organisations to better support communities.

With 18% of adults in the borough holding no qualifications and 17% of healthy adults not currently in employment, the council has been supporting residents through [Learn Ealing](#), which offers free courses for residents



to develop their skills for employment, and the [Work Ealing](#), which offers programmes to reduce barriers to employment.

The environment in which you are born, grow, live, work, and age, including whether you have easy access to safe and clean green spaces, directly impacts your mental and physical health and wellbeing. In London, public parks are particularly important because 21% of homes in the capital have no shared or private green space. One exciting development is the [council's plan to create a new regional park](#), which would span 575 hectares and connect towns and neighbourhoods with trails, nature reserves, and activity hubs.

Sadly, [violence against women and girls](#) remains a problem within the borough. The council has worked alongside its partners to take action, including by running events during the 16 Days of Activism, an annual international campaign to raise awareness of the impact of gender-based violence. The council also has a dedicated website, where victims can access support following incidents of gender-based violence.

Children and young people

Children and young people aged under 19 years old make up around a quarter of the borough's population. Investing in children is investing in the future of the borough, and working with schools is one way the council does this.

Mental health remains an important concern in England, with 1-in-5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years old experiencing a mental health problem in 2023. Surveys have shown that a quarter of secondary school children in the borough experience anxiety, and almost a third feel stressed. The [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) programme is supporting schools to assess practices across the entire school and make changes that improve pupils' mental health and wellbeing. In addition, the

[Therapeutic Thinking](#) programme continues to run in the borough's schools. This training programme for school and service leaders aims to reduce suspension rates in schools, particularly for ethnic groups with high suspension and exclusion rates, by looking at children's behaviour as a reaction to their thoughts and feelings and where these come from.

North West London has some of the highest rates of poor oral health among children in the country. In 2024, 11 [oral health](#) outreach events were run for children, 9 of which took place in primary schools and 2 in other community venues. As part of the outreach events, almost 800 children received dental checks.

The council is also working in partnership with [Healthy Zones](#) to run the Healthy Zones programme, supporting schools to make healthier food choices more accessible.

In addition, the council is working with schools in the borough to support them to become more sustainable. It held a [Big Green Ideas](#) competition, which was an exciting opportunity for schools to submit a video outlining their proposal to improve environmental sustainability. The first year's winners, at Featherstone High School, are building a carbon-capture pond.

These are only some examples of the work taking place across the borough to support health and wellbeing. You can find out more about all these programmes and initiatives by clicking on the links. Hopefully you enjoy reading this year's Health of the Borough articles.



Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard



Access to healthcare



Population health



Building blocks of health

Did you know?

- people's lives are being cut short because not everyone has the same chance to live a healthy life
- to create a borough where everybody can thrive, we need all the right 'building blocks of health' in place, such as stable jobs, good pay, high quality housing and good education
- but, right now, in too many of our communities, some of these blocks are missing
- having easy access to good, reliable data on health inequalities, which are unfair, avoidable differences in health experienced by individuals and communities, helps us work together to fix those gaps

Background

Engagement with residents for our [2023-2028 Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), [Together in Ealing](#), identified a need to make data and information on health inequalities more transparent. This tied in with recommendations from the [Race Equality Commission](#) to improve the availability of health data by ethnicity.

In response, the Ealing Borough Based

Partnership developed the Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard. The partnership includes the NHS, Ealing Council, the voluntary and community sector and residents. The hope is that tools like this will provide residents with the information they need to help make changes in their communities.

Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard

[This simple and interactive online tool](#) gives you access to timely, specific information. It shows a wide range of health inequalities data, which can be used as evidence to campaign for change and improve health and wellbeing.

The dashboard includes data on different health conditions, access to services in the borough and the 'building blocks of health', or the range of social, economic and environmental factors that affect our health and wellbeing throughout our lives.

By using the Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard, you can see the percentage of residents who have depression, diabetes or hypertension, among many other indicators. Data on the 'building blocks of health' include figures on unemployment, household income and crime. Meanwhile, data related to service access include hospital admissions and waiting times. You can also filter by age, sex, ethnicity and geographical location for more specific results.

Next steps

The data will be updated regularly, and the tool will be improved as new data becomes available.

Feedback from users will be used to further develop the tool over the coming years.



Call to action

To learn more and to try out this innovative new tool, go to the [Ealing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment webpage](#) or directly to the [dashboard](#) itself.

If you would like to help to improve the Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard, you can [submit your feedback online](#).



Your Voice, Your Town - putting communities in the driving seat for change



Did you know?

- over the past 1.5 years, the Your Voice, Your Town project has listened to what matters most to communities, allowing residents across the borough to directly shape the future of their towns

A new way of engaging with residents

The Your Voice, Your Town project began with an ambitious goal: to develop a new way of engaging with residents across the borough's 7 towns to find out what matters to them. Over 18 months, officers spoke to residents in places within the community where they were already meeting, capturing invaluable insights and working to understand their needs, desires and aspirations.

As part of the project, officers spoke to as many different people as possible, including young people, non-native English speakers, parents, and carers. Rather than expecting residents to come to the council, council officers went to residents, meeting them in their own spaces and on their own terms.



Residents were asked a series of questions:

- how active are you in your community?
- what barriers prevent you from getting involved?
- how would you like to participate in the future?
- what matters most to you in your town and neighbourhood?

The responses revealed residents' hopes, concerns, and ideas, identifying themes and priorities that the council could work towards in partnership with communities.

Voting for priorities

After gathering residents' feedback, a number of priority issues were emerging for each of the borough's 7 towns, which residents were then invited to vote on, to decide which were most important to them.

The council promoted the voting process through a series of pop-up events. Officers went to busy town areas and community events, encouraging people to vote on-the-



spot using their phones or directing them to [Ealing Council's Do Something Good](#) website for online voting. This website also hosts a community support directory that provides information, advice and guidance on sources of help from around 140 organisations and community groups. It provides information on funding and grants, volunteering opportunities and toolkits for organising community activity as well.

The response was overwhelming. The team hosted 49 pop-ups and, by the time voting closed on 5 January 2025, it had received more than 1600 votes.

Engagement into action

The next step of Your Voice, Your Town is to host workshops for residents in the borough's 7 towns. The idea is to develop community project ideas related to the priorities or themes they voted for.

There will be a total funding pot for these projects of £480,000, to turn ideas into reality across the 7 towns. Each town will be given a slice of funding (from £20,000 to £120,000, depending on the size of the town's population).

As the projects are developed, there will be ongoing engagement to keep residents informed and involved through regular feedback sessions, surveys and town hall meetings. The council will also monitor the

impact of the project and use data and the ongoing feedback from residents to adapt and improve the project.

A model for the future

Your Voice, Your Town is more than just a project; it's a shift in how the council engages with, and brings together, communities. The aim is to empower residents to take the lead on local decision-making, fostering a sense of ownership and enabling lasting change. The lessons learned and the relationships built through this process will serve as a foundation for future community engagement efforts, both in the borough and beyond.

Call to action: join a 'town team'

If you want to contribute to developing solutions for improving your local area, then we would love for you to join one of the new town teams for each town. These are a partnership of residents, councillors and council officers, voluntary and faith organisations, community groups, public sector organisations, businesses and anyone else with an interest in improving the local area. If you are over 18 years old and want to help guide the activities and decisions on how local resources and budgets support your town's chosen priorities, then register your interest by filling in the [online form](#).



Ealing's Community Champions



Did you know?

- Ealing Council's community champions are a diverse network of volunteers using their experiences and influence to campaign for better health and wellbeing
- at present, Ealing Council is working with 100 community champions, and the aim is for that number to grow
- anyone who lives or works in one of the borough's 7 towns can become a community champion – you just need to email communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk or visit the council website to find out more

Introducing the Community Champions

It started in 2021 following feedback from residents during the COVID pandemic and then the publication of 'Together in Ealing', the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028. Since then, the programme has evolved to focus on supporting and empowering communities to make meaningful change, connecting, and sharing learning together.

One of the main aims of the programme is to improve what have been termed 'the building blocks of health' - the everyday life conditions needed for good health and wellbeing.

As the third most diverse borough in England¹, we aim to continue building connections with, and between, all the communities we have.

The existing 95 community champions all live or work in the borough. They come from different backgrounds with different experiences but share a desire to make an impact in their communities.

The programme aims to:

1. improve community and social connection
2. build on existing community resources and ideas
3. encourage community action and participation



The programme builds on volunteers' strengths – some champions are connectors and networkers, some have leading roles in local voluntary organisations, some are strategic influencers, and some have ideas for community projects they want to develop.

What the programme offers

Residents face a number of health inequalities across the borough, which are only made worse by poor 'building blocks of health'. For example, access to health, education, work and social connection. These things, along

¹JNSA 2021 Population Characteristics - May 2022



with how safe residents feel, all play a part in how well and long they live.

The Community Champions programme offers volunteers a platform to connect via in-person forums and training sessions, and by using a WhatsApp group and regular newsletters. They also take part in council work and community projects, help others find support and useful services, and also learn new skills themselves.

One of the many benefits to the programme has been the sharing of new, or unheard, perspectives on issues affecting residents - which can then help to shape council services. And, in return, the champions say that being part of this network enables them to better understand the system and how to navigate it, so they can further support their communities.

The topics of the forums, and the training provided, vary depending on the desires and needs of the community champions.

Some of the topics covered in 2024 included: a consultation on the local homelessness and housing strategies; information sessions on breast and bowel cancer screening; breaking down the social barriers for people with disabilities and additional needs; the west London skills and work finder; a menopause information session; community safety; and mental health first aid training.

Here is what one of the community champions said about her experience of the programme:

“The programme has given me a strong sense of purpose and fulfilment. From the moment I joined, I was warmly welcomed by everyone, from the community champions programme team to the entire group. The whole group has this supportive, family-like vibe that makes you feel right at home. The forums are fantastic; each time, we dive into interesting topics and hear from great guest speakers on topics like the menopause, ADHD awareness, and breast and bowel cancer screening. It has really opened my eyes to what’s available, and since

our organisation is committed to outreach and advocacy for the Somali community in Ealing, it’s crucial for us to know what’s on offer in the borough so we can pass that information on to those we serve and support. I believe that without this programme, we would have missed out on discovering these vital resources, that have deeply enriched our work and community engagement. What’s really special is how this programme has helped me see the value of giving back. It’s not just about helping others; it has also enriched my own life in ways I didn’t expect, both personally and professionally.”



Call to action: get involved

This year, the council is looking to grow its network of community champions.

As someone living or working in the borough, could you benefit from the Community Champions? Are you already supporting your community and want to help make sure that their voices are heard?

To learn more about the programme or join, email communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk or visit the [council's website](#).



The Ealing Community Action Research Initiative



Did you know?

- Ealing Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HRDC) is a collaboration between the council, community, and academic partners
- Ealing HDRC is training residents to become community researchers – currently 23 residents are being trained as part of Ealing's Community Action Research Initiative
- the aim is for the community researchers' findings to inform and guide the council's priorities and to improve services for residents

Ealing's Community Action Research Initiative

The HDRC was set up in the borough in January 2024. It is 1 of 4 boroughs in London

and just 1 of 30 in the UK to be awarded £5million of funding over 5 years.

HDRCs are intended to be centres of 'research excellence', based in and led by local authorities like Ealing Council. Their focus is on building research networks between local authorities, communities, and the academic sector. The HDRCs are funded by the [National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\)](#), which is known for world-leading research that helps to improve people's health and wellbeing.

As part of the HDRC work, Ealing's Community Action Research Initiative was developed, which aims to connect residents who have lived experience of health inequalities (unfair and avoidable differences in health) to learn new skills and become part of a group of



researchers in the borough. This aligns with the council's Connected Communities vision of bringing our communities together and empowering them to lead change.

In autumn 2024, the HDRC recruited 23 residents from diverse backgrounds who will serve as the first group of community researchers. This group is being trained by academics from the University of Sussex. The community researchers will then use that training to help connect with others in their communities to gather stories about how aspects of their lives have impacted their health and wellbeing.

The programme benefits residents by:

- addressing specific challenges they face relating to the 'building blocks of health', which are aspects of our lives that impact our health and how long we live, for example, our jobs, homes, education, community connections and safe green spaces
- shifting power and control back to them so they can collect local evidence and take action
- supporting them to influence and lead change that will improve health and wellbeing
- building research skills and promoting future opportunities in working in research

Meet one of our community researchers

Ann Jacklin is a local resident who took part in the programme.

She said: "I was appointed to the role of community researcher towards the end of 2024 and received 5 days of training in January and have been collecting my first stories during February.

"The training was educational, engaging, practical and great fun. I was impressed by the skills and expertise of these colleagues and feel well prepared for the story collection we have been piloting.

"We have collected diverse and interesting stories. I am looking forward to working with fellow community researchers to develop our analytical skills using these real stories.

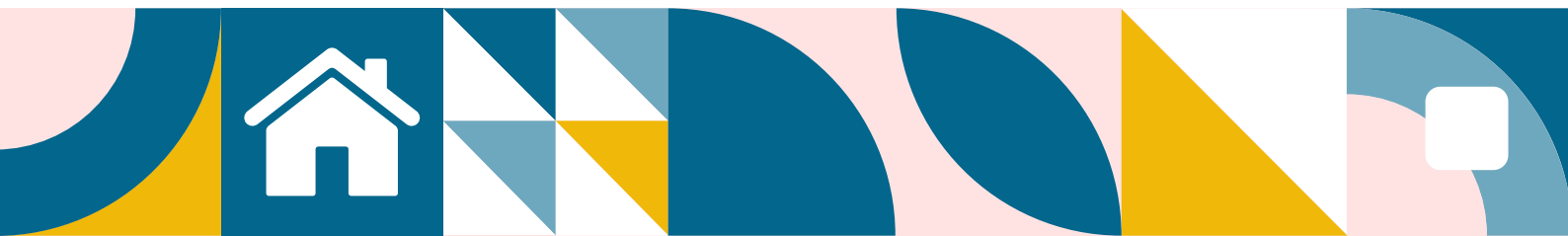
"It is a privilege to be working on what promises to be an extremely worthwhile and impactful project."

Next steps for the work

Community researchers will work together in action research groups alongside council staff, members of the voluntary sector and other partners. The research groups will identify areas for improvement, based on insights from the stories collected by the researchers. The groups will also help council staff to build skills in research that prioritises resident participation, learning and taking action together. The aim is to develop new ways of working that can lead to lasting, positive changes that improve everyone's health and wellbeing.



To learn more about the programme or get involved, you can email HDRC@ealing.gov.uk or visit the council's website.



Learn Ealing

Did you know?

- 18% of adults in the borough have no educational/vocational qualifications
- Learn Ealing offers a variety of free courses for residents to help them develop key skills and find employment
- in 2024, 1,136 people completed 4,074 qualifications with Learn Ealing, including courses in childcare, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), languages, creative arts, beauty therapy, money management, maths, and English

What does Learn Ealing offer?

The adult learning and skills service, also known as Learn Ealing, offers courses to promote health and wellbeing, such as yoga, and courses to help residents improve skills needed for employment, such as English language classes. Tutors support learners to gain essential knowledge, skills, and social networks, which help them into good quality jobs, improving their lives.



Success stories

One of our learners, Muhammad Noor, improved his English skills, helping him to communicate better at work and receive a promotion.

Muhammad said: “The course helped me in my day-to-day activities, both in my personal and professional life. I am now able to communicate with customers, staff, and contractors who come into the council offices. I am very thankful to Learn Ealing and my tutor, who have both been exceptional.”

Additional feedback from learners:

- a learner who completed an ESOL course said: “This experience has been incredibly rewarding. Helping my classmates has not only improved my own skills but also built a strong sense of community in our class. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow together.”
- a digital skills attendee stated: “Learning these new skills has been incredibly empowering. I feel more confident in my abilities and excited about my future career prospects. This journey has shown me that with hard work, I can achieve my goals.”
- an individual who participated in the Start Up School for Seniors business course said: “The course helped me understand the key elements of starting a business: from planning to marketing, and the financial and legal considerations. I was blown away by the quality of this course and how practical it was.”
- a learner on the Italian language course stated: “I can understand and take part in simple conversations in everyday contexts: greetings, talking about myself and my interests, asking questions, ordering in restaurants, and making hotel bookings.”

Community learning and partnerships

The service provides community-based learning opportunities and works in partnership with community groups. There



has been positive feedback from partners who valued the bespoke training given to their learners.

One of these partners, Nisha Aggarwal, who works at Lady Margaret Primary School, said: “Thank you Learn Ealing for the 16 laptops you provided. They helped our learners become independent and access Google Classroom, encouraging more parents to enrol in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. We appreciate your prompt responses and support. We value our relationship and look forward to continuing it in the new academic year.”

Call to action

Do you need some additional support to gain qualifications and find employment? Start your journey with a Learn Ealing course today.

For more information, you can visit the Learn Ealing website, with some direct links provided below:

- [Learn Ealing courses](#)
- [Adult learning service](#)
- [Muhammad Noor's learning story](#)
- [How Learn Ealing has helped residents upskill](#)

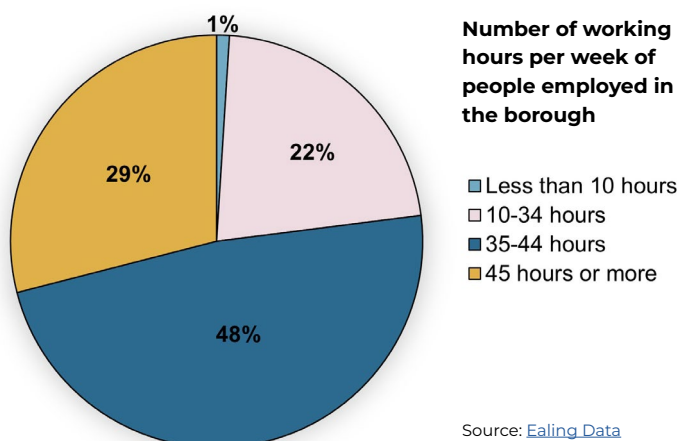


Work Ealing

Did you know?

- 80% of people aged 16-64 in the borough who work are in employment full-time, with 20% working part-time (as of December 2024)
- more than 1 in 5 males in employment in the borough are self-employed, and more than 1 in 7 females in employment are self-employed (as of December 2024)
- around 1 out of every 4 jobs in the borough were paid below the London Living wage of £11.05 per hour, much more than the London average of 1 out of 7 jobs²

- 18% of people are economically inactive, which means they are either students, taking care of families, on long-term sick, retired or not working for other reasons (as of December 2024)
- we know that good work improves people's health and wellbeing. Good work is defined as having a safe and secure job with good working hours and conditions, supportive management, and opportunities for training and development



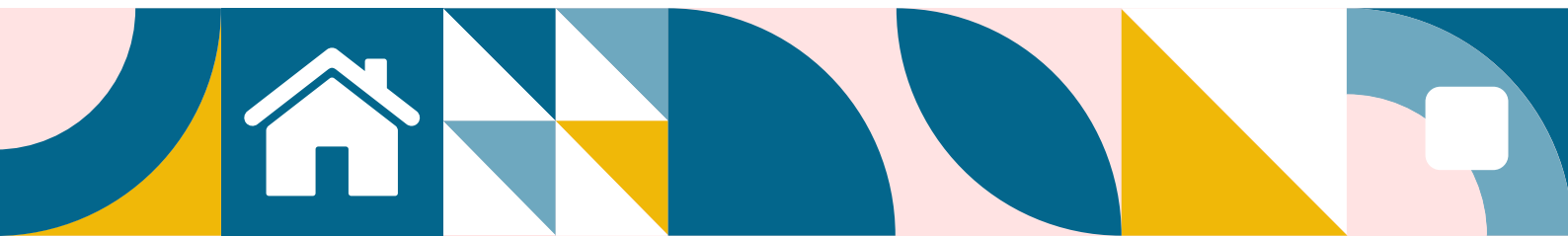
Work Ealing

Ealing Council's employment and skills service, known as Work Ealing, supports people to find jobs, training courses, and apprenticeships. The Work Ealing platform also facilitates this, and businesses and organisations can register with Work Ealing to advertise job opportunities and connect with interested residents.

Ealing Careers Hub

As part of Ealing Council's continued mission to support residents into sustainable employment, funding was secured to develop a Careers Hub programme. The programme has been designed to reduce barriers to employment for participants, who are guaranteed to leave the programme with increased employability and/or a sustainable job.

²[Number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage - Office for National Statistics](#)



The Careers Hub is comprised of 6 partners that were commissioned to run tailored services from April 2024 to March 2025. These bespoke employment services included:

1. **BEAM** – supports residents who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness into suitable housing and employment
2. **Action West London** – supports Black Caribbean and Black African men into employment
3. **Horizons Pathways programme** – a diverse range of more than 30 placements have been created within the council for care leavers, with 15 care leavers currently undergoing pre-employment checks
4. **apprenticeships** – Ealing Council has its own apprenticeship scheme for residents who want to work in the council, which is on track to achieve 15 apprenticeships in 2024/2025
5. **Seetec** – supports male residents who are over 50 years old into employment
6. **Gosad** – supports residents from minority ethnic backgrounds into employment

Trainers and tutors support learners into employment - or another positive outcome, such as the council's employability courses.

Below is a small selection of the positive feedback that learners have given to the tutor, Maria Davies, after receiving support:

- "I found your session to be both highly beneficial and informative. I feel invigorated to keep trying and not to get too disheartened by the process."
- "Thank you so much for all your kind words. I couldn't have progressed so far in the AI interview without your support and guidance."
- "It was a privilege to meet you with your set of skills. It was so helpful and inspired me to seek employment without too much fear in technology."

The council has also developed a number of other programmes to support residents into employment, training and education. This part of the service focuses on working with people who are aged 16-30, but also does some work with school pupils. Current programmes include the following:

- Youth Hub (established as part of a DWP initiative) – supports around 50 young people each year into education, employment or training
- supported internships – supports around 30 young people who have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), 9 of whom have found employment since April 2024
- Green Skills Bootcamp – supports 11 residents each year who have been trained in land management, 7 of whom are now in education, employment or training
- work experience (new programme in 2024/2025) – supports around 30 lower sixth form pupils into work experience placements within council services through a structured programme. 5 graduates who are experienced in care will start their work experience by the end of March 2025.
- Music Bootcamp – the project is currently registering up to 30 young people to learn about different skills within the music industry. This will include work experience and pre-employment support with the aim of supporting them into education, employment or training

The council offers a range of apprenticeships to residents through:

- The Council Apprenticeship Scheme – supported 326 apprentices over 18 years old (new starters doing level 2, 3 or 4 apprenticeships) with more than a 90% retention and employment, education or training (EET) outcome rate
- The Ealing Apprenticeship Partnership – aims to increase the number of apprenticeships and improve accessibility



for residents and employers. A series of webinars were organised as part of National Apprenticeships Week in February 2025

- The Youth Offer Partnership (partnership between the council and a number of local voluntary and community organisations) – aims to improve the number of young people going into education, employment or training. The Great Ealing Apprenticeship Fair was organised for National Apprenticeship Week
- The Schools Project – a pilot working with schools in the borough to increase the number of apprenticeships within the education workforce, starting with L3 teaching assistants with SEND training
- Apprentice Ambassadors in schools – this complements both the Connexions Service that works with schools' PAs and the 'Introduction to Apprenticeships' talks that are delivered in schools

Calls to action

- If you have lost your job, been made redundant or you are looking for a new job,

the council can direct you to one of its many local partners who can provide you with the support you need. You can be helped to find work or just make the right career choices. Email workealing@ealing.gov.uk or phone 020 8825 8486.

- You can also find courses and qualifications through Learn Ealing, such as college and university courses, volunteering opportunities, and apprenticeships to help improve your skills or help you get into employment. You can contact the Learn Ealing team for help with finding the right course or qualification for you on learnealing@ealing.gov.uk or phone 020 8825 5577, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Resources

- [Work Ealing portal](#)
- [Good for Ealing careers hub](#)



Cost of living support

As of March 2025, Ealing Council has helped distribute:



£5.3 million

£5.3 million directly to residents struggling with the rising cost of living



100,000

more than **100,000** shopping vouchers to **low-income families** and **care leavers** ahead of school holidays



£700,000

more than **£700,000** allocated to the **Local Welfare Assistance fund** for people facing financial crisis



£300,000

£300,000 to a selection of **local voluntary organisations** to help them to support people directly within their communities

Did you know?

- 31% of residents in the borough are considered to be living in poverty – that is more than the London average of 26% ([Trust for London](#))
- wards with the lowest median household income were Southhall Green, Southhall Broadway, Southhall West and Northolt West End³

The cost of living team

When the cost of living crisis hit the headlines, it was clear that it was one of the biggest challenges facing residents. In response, Ealing Council set up a dedicated cost of living team to co-ordinate a programme of support and raise awareness of how people could access both practical, immediate help as well as longer-term assistance. The team works closely with other council services and voluntary and community sector organisations.

Becoming more financially independent

Ultimately, the cost of living team's mission is to support residents to lead financially independent lives. To achieve this, the team focuses on activities which fall into 4 areas, outlined below. Here are some of the team's achievements over the last 12 months (up to March 2025):

1. Early intervention

- co-producing a debt campaign alongside local organisations which included outdoor advertising and distributing 35,000 leaflets alongside council tax payment reminders
- calling more than 3,000 older people receiving disability benefits and writing to almost 1,500 people to check in and see how they are
- training council staff and voluntary

³[Ealing Data – Ealing Health Inequalities Dashboard](#)



organisations to carry out online benefit entitlement checks to ensure that people are receiving all the benefits that they are entitled to. Checks across the borough have increased from almost none to more than 1,000 per month

- arranging for customer service advisors to 'pop up' in places including local foodbanks to provide advice to residents in community settings
- arranging financial wellbeing courses for high school students and care leavers to give them the tools and skills to manage their money

2. Making life easier

- issuing more than 100,000 Household Support Fund payments (provided by the Department for Work and Pensions) totalling over £4 million
- providing £300,000 of Household Support Fund grants to voluntary sector organisations to help them provide direct assistance to vulnerable residents in their communities
- making more than 1,800 Local Welfare Assistance Payments, which provide emergency financial support for residents in crisis
- supporting all the borough's schools to access free sanitary products and reduce period poverty for young people and their families
- co-ordinating the borough-wide 'Warm and Welcome Spaces' programme alongside 22 voluntary, community and faith organisations to provide places where people can go, keep warm, and connect with the local community in autumn and winter
- directly targeting those eligible for Pension Credit, distributing £1.2million per year into more than 307 households as well as ensuring they qualify for the Winter Fuel Payment

- using data to identify and write to those at risk of missing out on the 2024 Winter Fuel Payment to highlight support available
- introducing an employee benefits package, which is non-wage compensation that supplements a salary, to help staff and care leavers save money on everyday spending
- working alongside Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre to promote and deliver school uniform donation schemes, supporting more than 2,700 families
- creating online content for families highlighting where kids 'eat for free' and free or affordable local activities

3. Getting people online

- donating 1,500 laptops to The Good Things Foundation device bank scheme, which provides refurbished laptops to individuals who do not have access to a device
- handing out 240 laptops to unemployed residents who are digitally excluded, meaning they do not have access to and/or are unable to use the internet or a computer, to support them back into work. 83% of respondents said the laptop was beneficial to gaining employment
- collecting more than 500 devices to be recycled and redistributed to digitally excluded families
- issuing more than 300 free SIM cards via our community hubs and providing all 339 care leavers with free data, totalling over £30,000 in financial value
- supporting the design of an online training module for professionals to raise awareness of social tariffs
- creating a chat-bot for borough advice services to make it easier for front line staff to signpost residents to digital support available across the borough
- providing online assistance to more than 10,000 residents through community hubs





4. Raising awareness

Many residents are finding their way through complex council services for the first time. That is why it is so important that information is easily available and accessible. Here are some of the ways the council has been promoting its services:

- an on-going multi-channel communications campaign to promote the financial and welfare support available, including:
 - a dedicated online space to hold all relevant information, which has received more than 28,000 hits so far this year
 - developing a short information film
 - publishing regular news features in Around Ealing magazine and website
 - using all of the council's social media channels
 - printing materials and a 3-metre banner on the side of Perceval House, the council's headquarter building
- introducing 'The Borough Frontline', a new approach to partnership working. It provides quarterly, multi-agency briefings to council staff and voluntary sector representatives to make sure they are all aware of any new and

relevant information that could help them to better support residents

- raising awareness of support available through the School Family Support Network, which brings together school staff across the borough to provide support to children and families outside of the classroom
- supporting online webinars for both staff and voluntary sector representatives on topics such as dealing with loan sharks, energy efficiency and financial wellbeing
- attending local events to engage with residents in community settings and highlight support on offer

Next steps

Despite the council's best efforts, the poverty level in the borough remains high. The cost of living team is working alongside key community partners to better understand the impacts of poverty and how they can all join together to make life easier for residents. These insights will inform the council's corporate plan moving forward.

Calls to action

1. make sure you are claiming everything you are entitled to. Do a quick and easy benefit entitlement check [online](#)
2. find out what other support is available. There is a huge amount of information on [the council's website](#)
3. talk to the council. If you are struggling, reach out. If you are falling behind on payments, the council can work with you to find a solution. Call the number on your bill, contact the Ealing Together helpline on 020 8825 7170, or drop into one of the [local community hubs](#)



Tackling violence against women and girls

Did you know?

- a recent survey found that 80% of women in the borough have little or no knowledge of support services available locally, so more work is needed to raise awareness of dedicated services and increase women's confidence to access them
- 94% of women in the borough would like to get support in a wider range of settings and community spaces, which highlights the need for safe and discrete ways to seek help. There are already some schemes that can help while you are in public, and more settings are being encouraged to participate:
- Ask for Angela – if you are in a bar, club, or venue and feel unsafe, ask the staff for 'Angela'. They will discreetly help you leave safely, call a taxi, or involve security
- Ask for Ani – if you are experiencing domestic abuse, visit a pharmacy and 'Ask for Ani'. A trained staff member will take you to a private space to help you contact support services or the police
- businesses can sign up to the Mayor's Women's Night Safety Charter to show their commitment to making venues safer for women – the charter encourages businesses to train staff, promote safety initiatives, and create a supportive culture
- men who are worried about their behaviour can also receive support – Respect is a national organisation that offers a dedicated freephone advice service that can support men who want to address their abusive behaviours

Advice and support for gender-based violence

It is important that women can easily access advice and information on what support is available to them, so Ealing Council has a dedicated website providing information on where people can get help both locally and nationally for all types of gender-based violence. Ealing Council also funds specialist independent domestic violence advocates to support people who have experienced domestic violence and help keep them safe. Furthermore, the council's safer communities duty team supports residents if they are concerned about their safety. They are available Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm on 020 8825 5994. However, in an emergency, always call the police on 999.

Events for the 16 Days of Activism

Partners from the council, police, youth services, and voluntary and community sector coordinated a calendar of events across the borough in support of the 16 Days of Activism from 25 November to 10 December 2024:

- men from the council and the community came together to make a pledge to end gender-based violence for White Ribbon Day
- the local knitting and crochet club hosted by Let's Go Southall provided donations of blankets, hats, and scarves for women and children staying at local refuges or accessing domestic abuse services
- a screening was held for 'Lucky', a film that was produced and directed in Acton and featured local girls who had experienced misogyny and gender inequality first hand



- organisations across the borough that support ending gender-based violence came together to deliver a conference, which was supported by the council and coordinated by FORWARD (Foundation of Women's Health Research and Development), the local African women-led women's rights organisation working to end violence against women and girls



International Women's Day events

An International Women's Day celebration was held on 8 March 2025 at Southall Town Hall, coordinated by Southall Community Alliance, Ealing Council, statutory and voluntary sector partners and a local high school. The event had a fantastic turnout with residents and community organisations all participating in celebrating local women and those across the world. There were fun activities, including art, music and writing pledges, with speeches by the local MP for Ealing Southall, Deirdre Costigan, Councillor Jasbir Anand (Cabinet member for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour) and Councillor Polly Knewstub (Cabinet member for healthy lives), followed by a panel discussion on women's rights.

A community iftar was also held to celebrate women and girls at the Young Adult Centre in Southall. It was facilitated by the Safer Ealing Partnership and Male Violence Against Women & Girls (MVAWG) group members, with the food generously provided by Chaii Mast, London Tigers and COSAD. Many residents, the local police, community and faith leaders, councillors and Deidre Costigan, the MP for Ealing Southall, all attended the event.

Calls to action

- report safely – use tools like **Street Safe** to report unsafe locations, instead of sharing reports via social media
- get involved in the community – join local groups or attend local ward panel meetings to voice concerns and support safety efforts
- raise awareness – promote better understanding of violence against women and girls, and guide others to resources via the [Safer Ealing for Women website](#)
- volunteer – get involved with local charities and initiatives tackling gender-based violence
- if you run a business, have your staff take part in WAVE (Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement) training – it helps staff to spot and intervene in situations that could potentially lead to harm. WAVE is a tool for educating staff about customer welfare and vulnerability. It gives the public visual signs that support is available and provides a code phrase that people can use to seek help



The development of a regional park

Did you know?

- the borough's population is expected to grow by more than 38,000 by 2031, increasing the need for accessible green spaces
- access for everyone to green spaces can be good for mental and physical health by reducing stress and promoting physical activity
- 21% of homes in London have no shared or private green space, making public parks important for wellbeing
- partners have started planning the creation of a new regional park that would span 575 hectares, connecting the borough's towns and neighbourhoods with trails, nature reserves, and activity hubs

Creating the borough's regional park

Ealing Council is leading the creation of a regional park to serve as a 'green lung' for London with community, culture, and biodiversity at its heart. The project will change existing green spaces into vibrant areas for recreation and nature conservation that everyone can enjoy.

Residents and stakeholders have participated in consultations and forums to shape the park's development. An online survey received 6,115 responses, with 76% of people supporting the idea.

The creation of a regional park offers a chance to develop a wider, more connected borough that can help address the climate crisis. There is also a growing recognition of the need to

restore natural habitats, increase biodiversity, and provide space for nature to re-establish itself. Putting nature first can help drive local economic growth by benefitting nature, the climate, and people.

Key highlights from the last year

- regional park concept plan: In July 2024, a vision for the regional park was created. The report sets out a vision to change the disconnected green spaces in the borough into a joined-up and vibrant regional park, focusing on biodiversity of wildlife, health and wellbeing, and community involvement. It highlights ideas to improve accessibility and establish cultural, leisure, and ecological areas
- in March 2025, a summary of the plan was shared with the public and partners who had been involved so far to get feedback to help shape the next stages of the project
- in July 2024, hundreds of visitors enjoyed a free event to mark the opening of Pear Tree Park, a new 49-acre park just next to Perivale Park, which is around the same size as 30 football pitches. It is proposed that it could become a key part of the new regional park and is the latest of 10 new promised parks in the borough. Its name was inspired by Mahad and Taim, year 4 pupils from nearby Brentside Primary Academy school





- in March 2025, the council planted 5,000 trees in Pear Tree Park in partnership with Letting Grow, local schools, and other local community groups
- in January 2025, planning permission was granted for a new Gurnell Leisure Centre, which sits within the proposed regional park area. The project aims to improve the green spaces surrounding the leisure centre, with plans including a new skate park, BMX track, and play area, and a new bridge linking the space to Perivale Meadow Wetlands

Next steps

A public consultation on the regional park provided useful insights for a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The purpose of the HIA is to support decision-making in relation to impacts of the park on people living and working in the borough. It is a process which looks at the potential and sometimes unintended effects of a project, plan, or policy on the health of local communities, including how different groups are affected. The HIA identifies actions needed to avoid or reduce risks to people's health and wellbeing, as well as promote opportunities for improving health.

The HIA recommendations help to make sure groups with the highest risk of poor health and wellbeing do actually benefit from using the park, as well as reducing any potential negative, or unintended, impacts.

Furthermore, demolition of the old Gurnell Leisure Centre began in March 2025, with improvement works due to start in autumn/winter 2025. It is estimated the leisure centre and surrounding green spaces will open to the public in 2027/28.

Call to action

Would you like to get involved in shaping the borough's new regional park? Join the consultations so you can share your ideas, support community-led activities, and help the council create a more connected, sustainable, and healthy borough.

Additional links

- learn more about the regional park on the [council's website](#)
- contact the council about volunteering in the borough's parks on [the council's website](#)



Green Schools - driving sustainability and innovation

Did you know?

- 70% of schools in the borough have now appointed a teacher to take the lead on sustainability. They volunteer their time to help the school progress towards achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions and cut the number of harmful gases created by things like heating and other everyday activities. This is in line with national sustainability goals, specifically the Department for Education's (DfE) mandatory Climate Action Plan requirements for 2025
- Ealing Council's partnership with Sustainability Managers for Schools (SMS) is the first of its kind. Trained sustainability professionals are supporting 3 schools to create and implement their own climate action plans over a year. This hands-on approach ensures that schools can put advice and ideas into practice
- there is also a Green School Network, a partnership between ActForEaling, a community organisation focused on climate and biodiversity action, and Ealing Council's health improvement team. This year, the Green School Network had its first ever Big Green Ideas Competition, inviting schools to come up with creative solutions to reduce their carbon footprints. The competition offered a £1,000 grant to the winning school, providing funding and expert support to turn their vision into reality

The Green School Network and Big Green Ideas Competition

Ealing Council's health improvement team worked with Natalie Bayliss, the founder of SMS and a steering group member of

ActForEaling, to develop a range of free resources, activities, and training opportunities for schools. This complements the support provided by the Green School Network, which helps them create and implement climate action plans that address the following areas: decarbonisation; adaptation and resilience; biodiversity; and climate education and green careers.

The Big Green Ideas Competition has proven to be an exciting platform for innovation. Eight schools submitted a 1-minute video outlining their proposal, which was reviewed by a panel of judges. The first year's winners, at Featherstone High School, are building a carbon-capture pond. They will present the learning and outcomes from their project to the wider Green School Network in July 2025.

Sustainability Managers for Schools (SMS) programme

The SMS programme, also led by Natalie Bayliss, is working closely with 2 primary schools and a secondary school in the borough to implement actions that address the schools' needs. Each school has a dedicated Sustainability Manager, a professional who works with the sustainability lead and pupils to develop sustainability and climate change initiatives for the school.

Success stories

Since the SMS programme started in September 2024, it has had excellent results. Schools involved in the programme have already:

- calculated their carbon footprint and agreed climate action plans



- saved more than 3 tonnes of food waste from landfill
- saved more than 300kg of carbon with a clothes and uniform swap
- provided training to more than 100 teachers and 2300 pupils across a variety of sustainability topics including carbon literacy, sustainable fashion, plastic reduction, and social justice
- planted more than 50 trees, enhancing biodiversity and creating green spaces

Our Lady of the Visitation Primary School has an Eco Group of passionate pupils, who reviewed their school's practices and showcased their findings in an 'Eco-Dragon's Den' presentation. This led to the development of new projects such as composting and wildlife conservation, making the school a leader in sustainability practices.

The Big Green Ideas Competition has encouraged schools to be creative and work together to take meaningful steps towards a greener future. By providing funding

and recognition, it supports schools to progress innovative projects, celebrates their achievements and inspires other schools to take action.

Call to action

Schools in the borough have an opportunity to lead by example in the fight against climate change. Schools are encouraged to appoint sustainability leads and participate in the Green School Network. You can visit the [School Sustainability Resources - ActforEaling Climate Action Hub](#) and follow [Sustainability Managers for Schools C.I.C. \(@smsmakingadifference\)](#) to benefit from all the resources and support available.

You can email Nicole McGregor at McGregorN@ealing.gov to get involved.

Additional resource

More information is provided on the [Sustainability Managers for Schools \(SMS\) – Nurturing sustainability in education website](#).



Therapeutic Thinking in schools

Did you know?

- pupils of certain ethnic backgrounds have a higher chance of being suspended or permanently excluded from school, which can have a negative impact on their development and health and wellbeing
- Therapeutic Thinking is a training programme for school and service leaders which aims to prevent this from happening by encouraging staff to consider children's behaviour as a reaction to their thoughts and feelings and understand where these come from

The Therapeutic Thinking training programme

The programme began in the borough in 2022, co-funded by the NHS, with 3 main aims:

- reduce rates of suspensions and exclusions for certain groups who experience unfair and avoidable differences in these, especially black Caribbean pupils, mixed white and black Caribbean pupils, and black Somali pupils, in line with a recommendation of the Ealing Race Equality Commission
- establish a consistent approach to supporting students' social, emotional, and mental health needs, in line with a recommendation of a 2021 review into the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students
- identify students' needs as soon as possible so problems are less likely to escalate

Some local families were recently involved in developing and testing out a new workshop to educate other families about Therapeutic Thinking. Community organisations were

also involved in the process, including ESDEG (Education and Skills Development Group), PARC (Parents Action and Resource Centre), HSENA (Holistic Special Educational Needs Alliance), and Contact Ealing. The training will now be offered to families across the borough.

Rapid expansion of training across schools

Around two-thirds of schools in the borough (91 council-run schools) have at least one Therapeutic Thinking tutor, a teacher who has completed the Therapeutic Thinking tutor training programme and champions this way of thinking in their school. There are now around 200 professionals, mostly school leaders, in the borough who have taken part in the full 3 days of Therapeutic Thinking training, with the potential to reach more than 35,000 pupils. Feedback so far has been very positive, and there is still high demand, with even more teachers signing up to participate in the trainings from April 2025.

One senior leader said: "The training was incredibly informative, applicable to school context and delivered in a way that allowed me to remember and feel confident delivering in my own setting."

Successes of the programme

Some highlights from this term include:

- school staff using Therapeutic Thinking tools to give them insight into a pupil's negative behaviour and support the pupil better
- a teacher using the Therapeutic Tree approach, helping them to identify harmful behaviours in their class, as well as the feelings and past negative experiences of pupils which may be contributing to these



behaviours. The approach also provides guidance on how things can be done differently to ensure positive experiences for pupils. Behaviour is now reportedly improving

- a school allowing teaching assistants (TAs) 30 minutes each week to reflect on pupils' behaviours and consider their feelings. As a result, there is greater empathy and more confidence among TAs

Changes in suspension and exclusion levels

A recent Ofsted inspection in the borough noted: "The Therapeutic Thinking programme had a 'positive impact on attendance' with attendance levels improving in schools where there has been a reduction in suspensions."

There has been progress in reducing suspension rates over the last year, bucking the national trend of rising suspension rates, but there are still areas that need some work:

- just 8 high schools suspended a greater percentage of pupils than the borough average. Interestingly, 3 of the 4 schools that do not have a Therapeutic Thinking tutor are part of this group. This suggests that these schools could benefit from the training. .
- while permanent exclusions in secondary schools in the borough during 2023-24 increased by 2, from 58 to 60, this is not as significant an increase as the approximately 20% increase in exclusion rates seen nationally. However, children from black Caribbean, black Caribbean and white, and black Somali backgrounds continue to be excluded from school more frequently than those from other backgrounds.

Next steps

The aim is for all the borough's school staff and pupils to benefit from this programme, but it is not just schools that can take part. Across the borough, children's services teams have started learning about Therapeutic Thinking, applying its principles and using its language in their work with schools. A new borough lead will be joining the service later this year, which will increase capacity for further raising awareness of the programme and expanding its reach across schools in the borough.

Additional information

More information on Therapeutic Thinking training and support for schools can be found on the [Ealing Grid for Learning website](#).

Advice for parents and guardians

Here are some tips for parents and guardians who may be concerned about the behaviour of their children:

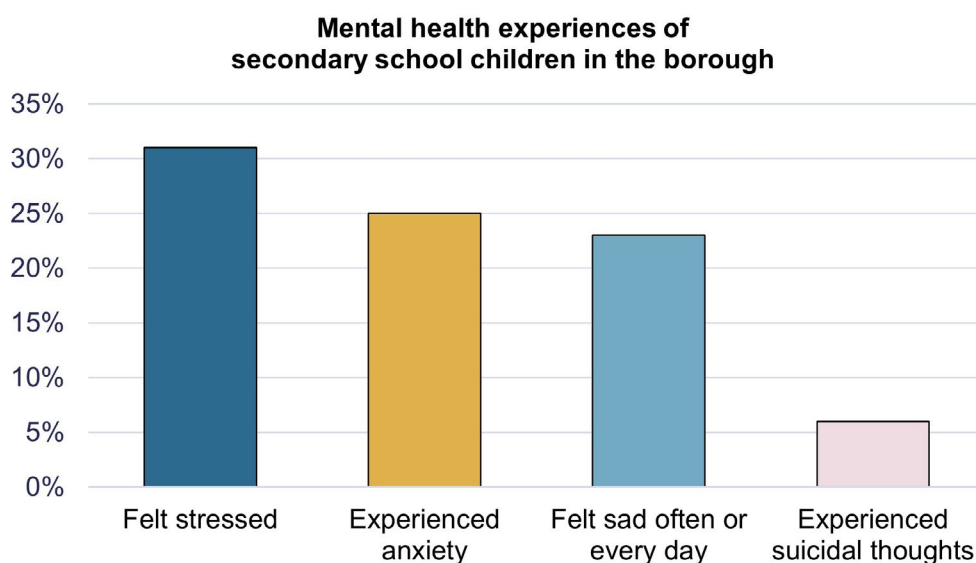
- be curious about the thoughts and feelings your child is having. Think about what need their behaviour might be addressing.
- aim to build stronger relationships with your child. Strong, healthy relationships provide children with safety and confidence, so they are more likely to behave in valued ways.
- contact your child's school. Ask about Therapeutic Thinking and how it informs the school's approach to behaviour.



Taking a whole school approach to improving mental health

Did you know?

- 27% of primary school children in the borough worried about how they felt 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'. This rose from 23% in 2021 (Ealing Health Related Behaviour Survey 2023)
- 1-in-5 children and young people in England aged 8 to 25 had a probable mental disorder in 2023. ([Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2023 - wave 4 follow up to the 2017 survey - NHS England Digital](#)) Probable mental disorders are mental health conditions that create distress and affect a person's ability to function in life. Anxiety and depression are examples of these



Source: Ealing Health Related Behaviour Survey 2023

Mentally Healthy Schools programme

Poor mental health can affect a pupil's behaviour, attendance, and academic achievement. Schools play an important role in helping to promote good mental health

in their pupils, spotting early signs of poor mental health, and providing relevant support or referring pupils on to specialist services.

The council's Mentally Healthy Schools programme is guiding schools to help them



review the approaches they currently use and see what they need to do to make sure they are meeting the government's guidance which wants them to take a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

The programme uses Anna Freud's 5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing, helping schools to develop a thorough mental health strategy. The 5 steps include: leading change; working together; understanding need; promoting wellbeing; and supporting staff.

One of the main principles of a whole school approach is taking action to prevent poor mental health, rather than reacting when difficulties arise. While it is important for schools to have plans in place to help pupils in need of extra support, it is also important to create an inclusive, supportive environment across the school in general, and to teach pupils about wellbeing and provide tips on how to achieve it and to feel confident about asking for help.

Supporting school-led improvements

The council's lead officer for the Mentally Healthy Schools programme has so far met with 7 schools, guiding them through the review process and identifying areas they would like to develop. Examples of areas that the schools want to work on include:

- developing a mental health and wellbeing policy
- workshops for parents and carers
- staff professional development related to supporting children's mental health
- identifying need by measuring pupil wellbeing
- understanding what health and wellbeing support is provided to pupils in the school
- setting up activities for pupils to offer support to other pupils
- promoting staff wellbeing

The first phase of this programme has highlighted that schools in the borough are doing amazing work in making sure they are mentally healthy places for children and staff alike. They are committed to further developing in this area as well, despite facing increasing pressures but having less resources.

More schools are also going smartphone-free, as increasing evidence shows the negative impacts that smartphones and social media can have on children and teenagers' mental health and wellbeing, as well as their educational achievement. In fact, 72 primary schools in the borough have already pledged to ban smartphones in support of the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign.

Next steps for the programme

A toolkit is being developed to support schools, and an event is due to be held for all schools in the borough by the end of the academic year. Attendees will hear from schools that have taken part in the Mentally Healthy Schools programme, learn about their experiences and achievements, and find out more about becoming a mentally healthy school. The aim is for all schools in the borough to take part in this programme, as well as support the Smartphone Free campaign.

Find out more

- schools can contact Liz Ainsworth, Ealing Council's mental health improvement officer, at ainsworthl@ealing.gov.uk
- [5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing – free framework | Anna Freud](#)
- [Around Ealing article about Smartphone-free schools](#)



Healthy Zones - supporting healthier lifestyles in schools

Did you know?

- more than 1 out of 3 Year 6 students and 1 out of 5 Reception pupils in the borough of Ealing are overweight or obese
- a local survey highlighted that only 27% of Year 4 and Year 6 students eat the recommended 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day, and 10% have takeaway meals at least 3-4 times per week
- poor nutrition and physical inactivity during childhood increase the risk of long-term health conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease. These figures underline the urgency of creating healthier food environments and improving dietary habits across the borough's schools

Healthy Zones programme

Ealing Council is working in partnership with School Food Matters (SFM) to deliver the Healthy Zones programme, supporting schools to make healthier food choices more accessible and a part of daily school life.

SFM is a registered charity that campaigns for and provides food education and better school meals. It supports schools and communities to prioritise children's health by improving food provision and creating meaningful learning opportunities. Over the years, the charity has worked with schools to: introduce hands-on cooking sessions that teach children and families how to prepare nutritious meals; provide training and support for school staff to create healthier food environments; develop healthy school food policies; and run programmes that give students practical life skills, such as cooking, public speaking, and

creative activities like video-making.

This academic year, 8 primary and secondary schools in the borough (Wood End Infant School, Acton Gardens Primary, Downe Manor Primary, Grange Primary, St. Raphael's Catholic Primary, The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls, Brentside Primary Academy, and Mayfield Primary) have taken part in the Healthy Zones initiative. The programme adopts a whole-school approach, involving not only pupils but also staff, parents, and governors.

Below outlines the activities that were done:

- each participating school was assessed, which included visits, meetings, and surveys, to understand their unique priorities and challenges
- plans were developed for each school, outlining initiatives such as staff training, advisory sessions for parents, and practical cooking classes for students
- schools were supported to develop tailored food policies, shaped by input from students, staff, parents, and governors
- workshops and assemblies were held to educate students on healthy eating
- parent coffee mornings were put on, offering practical advice on preparing healthy packed lunches and addressing cautious eaters
- parent-child cooking sessions were provided, teaching families to cook simple, budget-friendly meals together
- staff training was provided to ensure all members of the school community understand and contribute to improving the school's food environment



Successes of the programme

The programme has already achieved notable successes in the borough:

- families have enjoyed participating in parent-child cooking sessions, with more than 50 families attending workshops showcasing recipes for a range of nutritious dishes
- one participating school has introduced sensory food education sessions for all year groups, inspiring students to try new fruits and vegetables
- parents who attended coffee mornings have given positive feedback, reporting that the practical tips, such as creating budget-friendly lunchboxes, have been easy to implement at home
- training provided to school staff has empowered them to make changes to school meal menus and food environments, ensuring healthier options are readily available for students

Next steps

As the first phase of the Healthy Zones programme finishes, the council's health improvement team, who has been trained to continue providing support to schools, will now oversee its coordination. Schools that participated in the first phase, as well as those new to the programme, can now access the

programme's activities through the health improvement team's new initiative called Sugar Smart Schools.

Each participating school receives 14 hours of dedicated support from a nutritionist, helping them to improve food provision and reduce sugar consumption among pupils. If schools complete the required activities in the sugar smart checklist, including becoming a water-only school, having a whole school food policy and healthy packed lunch policy, and carrying out nutrition-related learning activities for pupils and parents, they are then awarded Sugar Smart School status.

Call to action

Would you like your child's school to take part in these important initiatives? Speak to your school's headteacher about the health improvement team's Sugar Smart Schools package.

Additional resources

- Visit the [Ealing Grid for Learning](#) to explore resources and learn more about how the team can help improve your school's nutrition
- Learn more about [Nourish \(Healthy Zones\)](#), a School Food Matters initiative



Health support for people who are sleeping rough in Southall

Did you know?

- almost 4 out of every 5 people sleeping rough have a physical health condition
- people who sleep rough are at a much higher risk of developing health concerns compared to the general population

Importance of access to health services

When someone is homeless, they do not have anywhere permanent or safe to call home. People temporarily sleeping on someone's sofa or living in temporary accommodation are considered homeless. But sometimes people do not have anywhere to stay, so they resort to sleeping on the streets or in empty buildings, which is called sleeping rough.

Someone who is homeless and/or sleeping rough is far less likely to access advice and treatment for any health problems. A third of people who sleep rough are not even registered with a GP, increasing their risk of issues related to their eyes, teeth and feet. It often means they end up using more expensive services, with research showing they are 8 times more likely to end up at accident and emergency departments at hospitals than people who are not homeless.

Hope for Southall Street Homeless drop-in

The charity [Hope for Southall Street Homeless](#) offers emergency support and a day centre to people sleeping rough who have a connection to Southall. It started in 2016 as a night shelter for 14 people identified as homeless and living on the streets of Southall.

However, it grew to become a well-established drop-in service every Tuesday afternoon, for

anyone sleeping rough in the town. Between 50 and 70 people attend the sessions, held at St Anselm's Church in The Green each week. As well as providing people with hot meals, clothing, showers, and somewhere warm, the charity's team also provides help with filling in GP forms.

Other local services began attending the drop-in to provide support to people for a range of issues including mental health, drug and alcohol dependency, and legal advice.

This one-to-one support has been provided by other homelessness charities such as St Mungo's, Thames Reach, and Groundswell, in addition to RISE (Recovery Interventions Service Ealing, which supports adults with drug or alcohol problems) and RAMHP (Rough Sleeping and Mental Health Programme).

Stepping up health care

Ealing Council recognised the potential impact of further expanding the offer of support to the well-attended drop-in.

It approached Hope for Southall Street Homeless about providing clinical services from the drop-in's familiar, comfortable environment. It was agreed that the most needed services were optometry, dentistry, and podiatry to tackle common health issues related to the eyes, teeth and feet. So, the council organised for Dentaaid, First Vision and the NHS to each run clinics at the drop-in sessions on a rotational basis.

Success in numbers

Optometry clinics began in June 2024 and take place every 3 months. In the 3 clinics



held up to February 2025, First Vision had carried out 50 eye tests and provided more than 30 people with glasses. An additional 4 individuals have been referred for cataract treatment.

Dentistry clinics began in October 2024 and occur monthly. During the 3 clinics held up to February 2025, 23 people received treatment from Dentaaid. All of them had an oral health check and cancer screening and were also offered an oral hygiene kit. Meanwhile, 6 people had X-rays, 10 received a scale and polish or fluoride varnish, and 8 either had fillings, a tooth removed, or an infection treated with antibiotics.

Podiatry clinics began in December 2024 and will occur monthly. At the first clinic, 4 people

received treatment on their feet, one of whom was found to have a severe infection and was sent to A&E. It is possible the infection would have gone untreated leading to more serious health issues had they not been helped by this clinic.

Next steps

Conversations with people attending the drop-ins will identify if other sources of support are required. If so, partners will consider how the offer can be expanded even further to ensure that individuals who sleep rough are supported to address all their needs.



Supporting people who are experiencing homelessness

Did you know?

- the rate of households in the borough owed a prevention duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act is double the national rate and 68% higher than the London rate, so preventing and addressing homelessness is a priority amongst partners in the borough⁴
- the borough of Ealing historically has a relatively high number of people sleeping rough in comparison to other west London boroughs. However, many people sleeping rough have no recourse to public funds, which means that their immigration status prevents them from claiming most benefits, tax credits and housing assistance paid for by the government
- since people with no recourse to public funds cannot receive statutory housing support, they lack a safety net if they become homeless and sometimes resort to sleeping rough
- people experiencing homelessness often struggle to engage with services which can result in them not accessing healthcare and other types of support they need. This leads to unfair and avoidable differences in the health and wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness, compared to other people

Outreach team

Ealing Council commissions an outreach team, which is run by the homeless charity St Mungo's. The team has received funding to provide emergency beds and intermediate beds with wrap-around support for some of the borough's most vulnerable people.

If people have limited or no recourse to public

funds, the team refers cases to West London Immigration Advice Service. There is also a Street Legal Worker, operated by St Mungo's, who provides legal advice to people and helps co-ordinate cases with the advice service.

Impacts

In January 2025, the Street Legal Worker was supporting 90 people experiencing homelessness who needed immigration support in the borough. In the 3 months leading up to this, 11 new people accessed the service, and the Street Legal Worker made 15 referrals for immigration advice. There were 4 immigration and fee waiver applications submitted, and 10 immigration decisions received (either status grants issued, full settled status granted, or 2.5 years leave to remain with full recourse to public funds granted). In January 2025, 15 people were working with immigration advisers on an immigration application.

The following is a case study showing the positive impact of the service.

Despite having cancer and a stoma, Joe (not his real name) was sleeping rough in the borough, increasing the risk to his health. Since he was eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme but had missed the deadline, the Street Legal Worker worked with him to gather all the required evidence for a late application. With the support of the North Kensington Law Centre and Ealing Law Centre, Joe was connected to an immigration adviser, who was able to submit his application within 3 weeks of being verified rough sleeping. Joe received a positive decision from the Home Office granting him full settled status

⁴[Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)



3.5 weeks later, meaning he was then able to live in the UK legally and access the full range of support available. This allowed him to be successfully moved into temporary accommodation by Ealing Council.

Providing shelter for people sleeping rough during severe weather

At the end of 2023, the Old Southall Library in Osterley Park Road was set up as a rest centre to provide shelter for rough sleepers with limited eligibility to public funds during severe weather periods. Positive feedback was received by those using it, as well as residents who noticed a significant decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour. Following its success, council colleagues across departments have worked together to secure the use of the building again this winter. So far, the centre has been opened 6 times (as of April 2025) to provide people sleeping rough with a safe and warm place to stay. It will be opened during any additional periods of severe cold weather to support some of the borough's most vulnerable residents.

Next steps for preventing and ending homelessness

The Ealing Homeless Health Board is a positive example of a partnership of different community organisations working to prevent homelessness. It recognised that many people who were homeless were not supported in a co-ordinated way, sometimes because of problems collecting and sharing personal data. Partners on the board realised that improving co-ordination between homelessness services should lead to fewer evictions and therefore better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness.

The council's rough sleeping team is now working with the NHS, Recovery Interventions Service Ealing (RISE) and other partners to create a new co-ordinator post within the team. Improvements will include better service co-ordination, data collection, and follow-up.

By increasing staff capacity and improving the timeliness of follow-up with patients, the scheme aims to improve health and wellbeing for individuals at increased risk of homelessness.

Call to action

If you are rough sleeping or are aware of somebody rough sleeping, you can alert the council and outreach services by making a referral to [StreetLink](#).

StreetLink is a partnership between Homeless Link and St. Mungo's. It ensures that the concerns you raise about a rough sleeper are referred to the most appropriate local outreach service, which is run by St. Mungo's in the borough of Ealing.

When you refer a rough sleeper to StreetLink, it is important to give as much information as you can, including a very specific location, rather than just a street or park. This will help the outreach team to find the person when they go out at night. It is also important to say what time of day you saw the person sleeping there and how often you have seen them. If you can give a brief description and any other relevant information, that will also be useful. All these bits of information will make contacting and helping the person easier.

Ealing Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) operates during periods of severe weather, providing shelter to people sleeping rough. The outreach team carry out extra shifts to make sure that they can offer help to as many people as possible. If you are concerned about someone sleeping rough during severe weather, please contact StreetLink.

More information on StreetLink

[StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services](#)



Supporting Ukrainian refugees



Did you know?

- from March 2022 to January 2025, the Homes for Ukraine Scheme has helped relocate 1417 Ukrainians to the borough, making it host to the second-largest Ukrainian refugee community in London
- according to [government data](#), 70% of adults arriving via the Ukrainian refugee schemes were women, since Ukrainian men aged 18 to 60 are not allowed to leave Ukraine
- [national statistics](#) show that despite efforts to learn English, 37% of Ukrainian refugees still find that the level of English at which they can speak and write limits their employment options

Helping find people a home away from home

The Ealing Ukrainian Infrastructure Support Network has successfully supported Ukrainian refugees to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Through partnerships with local organisations, including Ealing Council, the

network supports refugees with education, employment, mental health, and social integration.

Here are some of the projects that are currently under way (as of March 2025):

- mental health support – emotional wellbeing sessions, including psychological support and coaching, focusing on stress, trauma recovery, and coping mechanisms for people displaced by the war
- art and cultural events – these provide a comforting taste of home and platform for self-expression. Many local events showcasing Ukrainian music, art, and film have been open to the public, encouraging cultural exchange and integration with the wider community

Success stories

In 2024, the project co-ordinated 34 group wellbeing sessions, supported more than 350 people, and connected more than a hundred Ukrainian households to support and services to help them build their lives here.

Participants reported a significant improvement in their overall health and wellbeing, especially in relation to:

- emotional support – a trial of wellness sessions received positive feedback, with participants, particularly women, reporting reduced stress and anxiety levels
- mental health and trauma recovery – many refugees are dealing with the psychological impacts of displacement and the council's support has helped them to cope with and



address these challenges

- language skills and employment – support to improve their English and find work has helped refugees build confidence in their new environment and gain economic independence

Here is what some of the participants had to say about the network:

- Yulia (aged 38) said: “The sessions helped me to look at my strengths from a different perspective. It boosted my confidence.”
- Magdalyna (aged 53) said: “I had a fantastic opportunity to connect with other Ukrainians. Additionally, I received valuable information about employment, language learning, and volunteer registration. I also learned how to apply for additional support with housing payments and everyday expenses. These sessions made me feel welcomed, valued, and supported.”

Next steps

The network is funded by Ealing Council. To help ensure the sustainability of this successful project, the Ealing and Hounslow Community and Voluntary Service (EHCVS) team worked with volunteers from the network to create Bridge for Ukrainians, which is now a registered charity. This will allow them to apply for other grants and hopefully secure the long-term stability of the work.

The network is still focused on improving English language skills and employment

opportunities, as well as providing ongoing mental health support. These are important for the successful integration of Ukrainian refugees into the local community.

The plan is to increase the mental health support options on offer, create more opportunities for job placements, and continue the ongoing cultural and community-building efforts. The team is planning more mental health support groups, including running movie therapy sessions, to help participants explore their feelings and develop more self-awareness. Another exciting new initiative is the development of peer-to-peer coaching to help refugees improve their English and successfully find employment.

Call to action

The Ealing Ukrainian Infrastructure Support Network is looking for volunteers who can use their skills to support refugees, particularly:

- English language volunteers who can help people during the Saturday sessions
- mentors who can help people improve their employability
- enthusiastic volunteers who can help run activities that improve health and wellbeing – for example, sports or arts and crafts for both children and adults

If you would like to get involved and offer your help, you can email the coordinator, Olga Dudnik, at olga@ehcvs.org.uk.



Drug and alcohol support

DID YOU KNOW?

around 1 in 4 adults in England regularly drink more alcohol than the low-risk guideline



This is equal to about
6 pints of beer



6 medium size
glasses of **wine**



or **7 double**
measures of **spirits**

(Alcohol Change UK)

Did you know?

- around 1 in 4 adults in England regularly drink more alcohol than the low-risk guideline, which is 14 units of alcohol per week. This is equal to about 6 pints of beer, 6 medium size glasses of wine, or 7 double measures of spirits (Alcohol Change UK)
- there are an estimated 3,658 dependent drinkers in the borough, meaning they feel they are unable to function or survive without alcohol. However, 82% of dependent drinkers are not in treatment
- drinking alcohol can cause more than 60 medical issues, including: mouth, throat, stomach, liver, and breast cancers; high blood pressure; cirrhosis of the liver; and depression
- the borough of Ealing had the highest rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions (628/100,000) in London in 2023/24⁵
- there are an estimated 2,103 people in the borough who are using opiates, which are pain relief drugs that can be obtained legally (via a prescription) or illegally, or crack cocaine, which is an illegal drug (National

drug treatment monitoring system)

- addiction is a complex disease that changes the brain in ways that affect the reward system and decision-making. These changes usually cause people with alcohol or drug addiction to relapse, even after treatment, which makes it a very difficult disease to overcome
- genetics can sometimes increase a person's risk of addiction, in addition to experiencing trauma, having a mental health condition, environmental influences, and social factors

The Primary Care Assessment Team (PCAT), provided by Recovery Interventions Service Ealing (RISE)

PCAT provides drug and alcohol support and interventions to residents aged 18 and older, who reside within the borough of Ealing. The team organises and provides treatment at GP surgeries and Ealing Hospital, as well as from 3 Ealing RISE treatment hubs across the borough.

Analysis of patient data identified that a small percentage of people who were referred from primary care to Ealing RISE for support to

⁵Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care



address their substance (drug and/or alcohol) misuse went on to access treatment.

In response, PCAT was created in June 2024 to try to improve engagement and access to support. It created a new pathway so that cases referred by GPs could be prioritised by urgency and need and assessed quickly. PCAT also offers treatment to people within familiar settings, such as their GP surgery, and helps them before their substance misuse worsens.

PCAT offers the following:

- holistic assessments of individuals' drug and/or alcohol use
- one-to-one sessions providing information and advice to help people change their unhealthy or risky behaviours
- 6-8 in-depth sessions for people who need more support
- identification of people who require longer-term treatment

PCAT provides support at Ealing Hospital 3 days per week. The team works as part of the Ealing RISE Hospital Alcohol Liaison (HAL) team, which helps people engage with drug and alcohol support in the community after they have been discharged from hospital.

In September 2024, PCAT started a pilot project running a clinic every 4 weeks in 2 GP practices in the borough, Hanwell Health Centre and Mansell Road Practice. This model allows patients requiring drug and/or alcohol support to get an appointment quickly with a PCAT Recovery Worker, who can then schedule follow-up appointments as needed.

Successes of the team

PCAT has quickly integrated into primary care and become a helpful resource within GP surgeries, offering advice as well as short-term and longer-term support. Since PCAT was created, patients have accessed support much more quickly and more patients have taken part in treatment. The percentage of people

referred by GPs to drug and alcohol support who have gone on to attend their assessments has increased from 20% to 70% over the last 6 months.

People using the service have shared that accessing treatment at their GP surgery is more convenient and discreet for them, and importantly, also provides more opportunities for advice and information which can prevent an escalation in their substance misuse.

Next steps

The PCAT service will be introduced to more GP surgeries over the next few months, with a view to eventually reaching every GP practice in the borough. A group of partners meets monthly to shape ongoing work, to make sure it meets the needs of residents and GP surgeries.

PCAT has also developed a drug and alcohol training programme for professionals, which is being offered to all staff within GP surgeries across the borough throughout 2025. These training sessions focus on:

- issuing Naloxone, a medicine that can rapidly reverse an opioid overdose
- drug and alcohol awareness
- alcohol AUDITS (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test), a screening tool used to assess how much alcohol someone drinks and identify possible alcohol-related problems
- Change Talk, an approach which encourages people to make verbal commitments to changing their behaviour
- practices that try to reduce the harm that people do to themselves or others from their substance misuse

Additional information

For more information about the support available for drug and alcohol misuse, visit [Change Grow Live's Ealing RISE webpage](#).



Substance misuse and mental health support

Did you know?

- the borough of Ealing has its own drug and alcohol team – it is called Ealing RISE (Recovery Interventions Service Ealing) and provides substance misuse support and treatment for residents aged 18 and older
- [Ealing RISE](#) is made up of different organisations working together – it is led by a national charity called CGL (Change Grow Live), which funds CNWL (Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust) and BoB (Build on Belief, which provides peer-led social support) to deliver RISE
- the aim is to help residents live happy, healthy, and drug and alcohol-free lives by providing a service tailored to each person's needs and preferences, including in relation to family and carer involvement during their recovery journey
- almost three-quarters of adults starting treatment for substance misuse have a co-existing mental health treatment need

The dual diagnosis team

In 2020, the dual diagnosis team was created to better support people living with substance misuse and mental health conditions. It started with only two team members, a specialist senior recovery worker and a volunteer. Because of local needs and high demand for this type of support, additional funding was secured to expand the team and enable co-location with West London NHS Trust teams.

Dual diagnosis team members are now integrated into other teams to make it easier to access the service. This 'team around

the person' approach removes barriers to treatment and involves people in decisions about their care, improving the care they receive.

After significant expansion, the dual diagnosis team now consists of:

- a team leader
- a worker from Acton MINT (Mental Health Integrated Network Team)
- a worker from Southall MINT
- a worker from North MINT
- a crisis worker (who supports people alongside the Ealing Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team, Mind Safe Space which provides mental health crisis support, and Amadeus Crisis Recovery House)
- an in-patient engagement worker (who supports people directly from West Middlesex University Hospital Lakeside Mental Health Unit, Charing Cross Hospital Hammersmith & Fulham Mental Health Unit)
- 5 volunteers who have experienced substance misuse and lived with a mental health condition at the same time

In addition, staff speak a variety of languages, so the team remains representative of the people they are supporting. This has helped address stigma and sensitive cultural issues related to substance use and mental health.

The borough's dual diagnosis service is considered a gold standard in the sector, thanks to its efficient multi-agency working on reviews, care planning and risk assessments and focus on sharing learning.



Successes of the team

From 2024 to 2025, the dual diagnosis team has supported more than 150 residents. It continues to provide support to groups of family members and carers of people living with substance misuse and mental health conditions. The team has also hosted more than 20 training sessions for professionals across the borough to build their skills, increase their knowledge, and reduce stigma around addiction.

People using the service and their families have shared that they found it easy to access support and they feel their voices are heard by the team.

Next steps

There are plans to recruit a senior dual diagnosis recovery worker, who would work closely with the community rehabilitation teams in the borough, as well as the intervention psychosis services. Feedback from residents will allow us to continue adapting the service so that it better meets their needs and preferences.

More information

For more information about the support available for drug and alcohol misuse, visit [Change Grow Live's Ealing RISE webpage](#).



World AIDS Day 2024

– ending HIV stigma

DID YOU KNOW?



London has the highest number of people **living with HIV** in **England**.



There are about **1,000** people living with a **HIV positive** diagnosis in **Ealing**.



You can order a **free HIV testing kit** online **via Sexual Health London**.



People without HIV can take **PrEP**, a drug to **reduce the risk** of getting HIV (available, **free**, from Sexual Health clinics).



If you have **HIV** and are taking the **right treatments**, you **can't pass on the virus** to partners.

Did you know?

- **there are around 1,000 individuals living with HIV in the borough**
- London has the highest number of people living with HIV in England, and it recorded the highest new HIV diagnosis rate of any region in England, with 6,008 HIV diagnoses (including those previously diagnosed abroad) in 2023 (UKSHA 2024)
- while there is good progress in increasing HIV testing uptake, treatment and prevention, it is important that people get tested so they can receive treatment and care as soon as possible. Increased awareness and addressing HIV-related stigma can help with this
- the introduction of routine HIV testing in accident and emergency departments, initially piloted in London but now being rolled out further, is helping to reach more people who may not access sexual health testing services or consider themselves as at risk
- more people are living with HIV who have more complex age-related needs. People from black ethnic groups are being diagnosed with HIV at a later stage as well
- **you can order a free, discrete, and easy test kit for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) from [SHL's website](#)**
- an HIV test is an easy way to look after your health
- other ways to help prevent HIV transmission include condoms, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and antiretroviral therapy (ART)
- PrEP is a drug, which, if taken by people who



do not have HIV before sex, can prevent HIV transmission. It is currently available for free at sexual health clinics

- ART is a combination of HIV medicines that people with HIV take to treat the virus
- **people living with HIV who take certain treatments cannot pass on the virus to sexual partners. This is called Undetectable = Untransmittable, known as U=U**
- most people living with HIV in London who are receiving effective treatment do not have enough virus in their bodies to pass it on through sex with a partner

Available HIV testing and support

It is important that people get tested for HIV so that they can receive early treatment and support.

Residents can access a range of services including HIV testing (and other STI testing), prevention, and support.

As well as the SHL online service, clinical services are available:

- there are free, confidential STI and HIV testing and PrEP clinics near you. For local service information, go to [London Northwest Healthcare Trust's](#) website. Information on


other open-access services are on the [NHS website](#).

- [Spectra](#) offers free, confidential, and inclusive sexual health awareness services to residents in the borough. This includes advice, rapid HIV testing, free condoms and lube, and sexual health sessions for diverse LGBTQI+ communities. Spectra also works with partners to provide in-reach to more vulnerable communities who may not access mainstream services, such as people experiencing homelessness and refugees
- Ealing Council's HIV support service partners are [Living Well](#) and [Positively UK](#). They offer needs-led, free, and confidential services, including support with welfare and employment, counselling, wellbeing coaching, peer support, and healthy living
- HIV support services also work closely with [the HIV Treatment service at Ealing Hospital](#)
- [Terrance Higgins Trust](#) offers national support for people living with HIV


World AIDS Day events

Key partners from the council, NHS, and voluntary sector across the borough came together in support of World AIDS Day in December 2024.


BE SURE. KNOW THE FOUR PROVEN WAYS TO PREVENT HIV




TESTING
Know your HIV status and be in control of your sexual health



CONDOMS
An effective way to prevent HIV and a range of other STIs



PrEP
People who are HIV negative can take a daily pill to prevent getting HIV



UNDETECTABLE
Undetectable = untransmittable (U=U) for people living with HIV



- Perceval House, Ealing Council's headquarter building, was lit up red and displayed the World AIDS Day flag
- the Spectra HIV testing and awareness bus was outside Ealing Town Hall on 1 December 2024. Councillor Polly Knewstub went to get tested, and around 200 people stopped by. Spectra continue to deliver a range of outreach and community-based HIV and sexual health awareness events. You can check their website for upcoming events
- 5 people living with HIV and 3 professionals took part in an event run by Living Well at Questors Theatre on 2 December 2024. During the event, participants learned more about how they could work together to develop activities that strengthen HIV support. Discussions focused on the themes of mental and emotional health, physical health, spiritual health, and stigma
- Living Well and Positively UK provide a safe space for people living with HIV and a range of activities and social outings. However, social isolation and stigma remain a barrier for some people who are most in need of support
- Spectra's targeted outreach at Ealing RISE (Recovery Interventions Service Ealing)

and Acton Homeless Concern had good engagement with vulnerable people, particularly individuals with substance misuse and those who are sleeping rough.

These events, and ongoing outreach and awareness throughout the year, provide opportunities to reach people who do not access routine services or consider themselves as at risk.

Find out more in an [Around Ealing article](#).

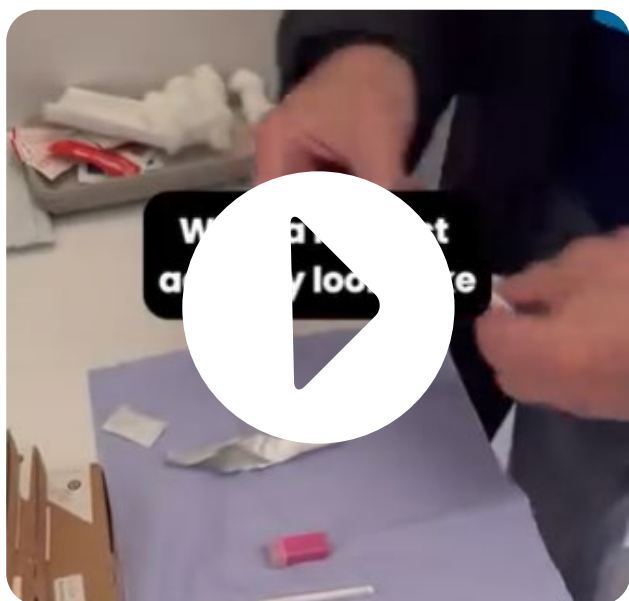
Call to action

People working and living in the borough can help us raise awareness of the 4 ways to prevent HIV transmission (Testing, Condoms, PrEP and U=U), as well as support the London HIV Fast Track Cities ambitions of removing HIV stigma, ensuring that all people living with HIV receive treatment and care, and ending new HIV transmissions by 2030.

More resources on HIV

[London HIV Fast Track Cities](#)

[UKHSA HIV Action Plan 2024 report](#)



Celebrating success on No Smoking Day

Did you know?

- just over 1 in 5 (22.3%) adults in the borough smoke⁶
- national No Smoking Day aims to raise awareness about the benefits of quitting smoking and offer support to help people quit for good
- quitting smoking has huge benefits not only for your health but also for your family, community, and even the environment



Story of success

In the words of one of our happy residents:

“Having smoked fairly heavily for more than 30 years on and off, I was looking for support to help me stop and was getting nowhere. I thought giving up would be impossible.

“Thankfully, the NHS had reintroduced a smoking cessation service at my local NHS health centre, so I self-referred myself.

“The 8-week support is well organised and well thought through.

“The greatest benefit I am getting from the service is the ability to talk to my NHS counsellor each week. It is really helping me having caring, capable, expert advice.

“The service has provided me with nicotine patches, starting with a higher strength to match the levels I was smoking, and then reducing over time. For me, these patches plus the ongoing advice are working very well and I am successfully re-entering my life as a non-smoker, which feels great.

“The battle is more mental than physical, and I am creating new, healthier habits and saying goodbye to all the negative aspects smoking cigarettes brought.

“I feel physically better, and the service is giving me the tools I need to keep building on the benefits.”

“I am so grateful that this NHS service exists.”

No Smoking Day events

To mark No Smoking Day on 12 March 2025, the Smokefree team went out in the

⁶ [Public Health Outcomes Framework - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)



community, offering helpful quit-smoking advice and support at the Perivale Tesco and Greenford Bus Garage.

Free Stop Smoking support

If you live in the borough of Ealing or are registered with a GP in the borough and want to quit smoking, help is available. Ealing Smokefree service offers a free 8-week support programme to help you break free from tobacco. Research shows that the best way to quit is with a combination of expert support and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). The Ealing Smokefree service has helped more than 200 people set quit dates (up to December 2024), with more than 100 people quitting within 4 weeks of joining the service.

How the service works

- You will get weekly support sessions with a specialist who will help you build new habits and cope with cravings.
- A range of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products are available to help manage withdrawal symptoms, including patches, lozenges, mouth spray, and inhalators.
- Support is tailored to your needs. You can choose from:

- face-to-face support – clinics are available across the borough in Acton, Greenford, Perivale, and Southall
- virtual or telephone support – provides a remote option if you prefer getting help this way
- pharmacy support – many pharmacies in the borough offer stop-smoking support and NRT
- group sessions – get motivated by quitting alongside others
- Swap to Stop scheme – receive a free vape starter kit and 4 weeks' worth of e-liquid as an alternative to smoking
- Stop Smoking app for Londoners – get 24/7 real-time support for 6 months and a 12-week supply of nicotine replacement or a vape kit

Call to action

If you need support to stop smoking, you can call the team at 0208 354 8889, or email wlm-tr.hls@nhs.net. You can also refer yourself or someone you know by filling out the [Ealing Smokefree Service Referral Form](#).



Oral health outreach work in 2024

DID YOU KNOW?

Tooth decay can lead to:



**pain and
discomfort**



**sleepless
nights**



**time off
school**

It can also impact the development of skills needed to succeed in school.

Did you know?

- tooth decay can lead to pain, discomfort, sleepless nights, and time off school and can impact the development of skills needed to succeed in school
- it also has an effect at the family level, with parents needing to take time off work to care for children with toothache or take them to the dentist
- despite improvements in children's oral health over the past 30 years, tooth decay remains a significant public health problem, with 1 in 3 5-year-old children in the borough displaying dental/tooth decay
- north-west London has some of the highest rates of poor oral health in our children and young people in the country, with 5-year-old children living in more deprived areas displaying higher numbers of decayed, missing (because of decay) or filled teeth
- in our borough, 526 per 100,000 of our children and young people under 19 require dental extractions in hospital – this is much higher than both the London and England average of 360 (based on 2023 data). Often dental treatment for young children (such as extractions of decayed teeth) may only be done under general anaesthetic, which is distressing for the families concerned, and it can be costly for the health service

Oral health outreach events

During 2024, partners from across the borough came together to put on 11 oral health outreach events for children, 8 of which were held at primary schools and 3 at community-based venues. These events promoted good oral health, offered dental checks to children, and promoted other related children's services. A range of staff across the NHS and council were involved, covering public health,



healthcare, dentistry, education, employment, and children's services.

The events promoted oral health and encouraged people to get dental check-ups, while raising awareness of support and services that are available for children and families in the borough. The children's services team spoke to families about the support they offer and shared important messages about how parents and guardians can improve their children's health and wellbeing.

Dental staff checked children's teeth and applied fluoride varnish when needed. They also asked families whether they were registered with a dental practice and encouraged them to sign up. In cases where children were identified as needing further treatment, the family were provided with a letter and advised to go to a local dentist. The team will follow up with these families to find out whether they did seek further care and treatment.

Impact of the events

Over the course of 2024, almost 800 children had dental checks during the outreach events. Many of these children also had fluoride varnish applied (where applicable). A number of children were found to have decayed, missing or filled teeth and needed further treatment, so they were referred to local dental practices and given advice about how to access a dentist. Additional advice on oral hygiene was given to children and their families.

Staff from children's services said the events offered a great opportunity to speak directly with families about the different services available. Information was also shared about routes back into work through local training programmes, benefits families were entitled to, and advice on public health programmes available to support children and families. Parents and guardians had an opportunity to

find out more about healthcare, public health, and education services, as well as nutrition and physical activity opportunities for their children.

Guidance for parents and guardians

Tooth decay is preventable. The risk can be reduced by:

- brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, first thing in the morning and again at night – start brushing your baby's teeth when the first tooth comes through. This helps clean the teeth and establishes a brushing routine. Continue to supervise your child's teeth brushing at least up until the age of 7
- eating less sugary food and drinks – sugary drinks should be reduced and limited to mealtimes. Fizzy drinks (with sugar or sugar-free) should not be given to children as they contain acid that damages the outer surfaces of teeth
- visiting the dentist regularly – make sure children attend their free NHS dental check-ups and receive any needed care

Further guidance

[More advice on how to brush children's teeth](#)



Let's Go Southall – a social movement

Did you know?

- only two-thirds (68.6%) of adults in the borough are physically active⁷
- a survey in 2019 found that 43% of Southall residents did not take part in any physical activities (First Steps report, Social Change UK)
- Let's Go Southall (LGS) is a community initiative, hosted by Ealing Council, which aims to increase the number of residents taking part in physical activity in Southall
- LGS is a social movement, growing from 23 Southall residents supporting its co-ordination in 2020 to more than 80 residents in 2024
- over the last 5 years, LGS has helped more than 9000 Southall residents to become physically active

Let's Go Southall activities

The active communities team, now consisting of more than 80 Southall residents, is split into 5 groups:

- Forever Young for people over 60 years old
- Happy Families for families with children and young people
- Active For All (A4A) for people with disabilities and health conditions
- Girl Power for women between the ages of 16 and 60
- Men Active (MA) for men between the ages of 16 and 60

The team put on between 80 and 90 activities per week, consisting of indoor and outdoor activities as well as online activities. In 2024,

there were more than 2000 visits to LGS's virtual activities and online classes, while there were more than 16,000 visits to LGS's activities led by residents, including team sessions, outdoor gyms, canal and river walks, parkrun, gardening, cycling, and other community initiatives. On average, residents who participated got active more than once a week.

The team also organise events that focus on health and wellbeing. On 11 June 2024, residents were invited to have free health checks at the Dominion Centre. Checks included diabetes, blood pressure, and Body Mass Index (BMI), and advice was given on podiatry, nutrition, and quitting smoking. The event was a success, with 180 people attending and around half of them completing a health check.



Women's Team campaign activity

⁷[Public Health Outcomes Framework - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)





Active Travel consultation



Let's Ride Southall Community Cycle Hub



Southall Bridge opening, Nov 2022



Health Check Events



Northolt Visions Opening, Sept 2024

The Let's Ride Southall campaign

Let's Ride Southall (LRS) is a bike giveaway programme that was set up in July 2021, with the aim of changing the culture to one that embraces cycling and improves the community's physical activity levels. From July 2021 to December 2024, 1,200 bikes were given out to residents, but there were more than double this number of applications. To increase cycling levels even more in Southall, another 450 bikes will be provided to residents by June 2025.



From May to October 2024, more than 1,000 Southall residents cycled with LRS. The approach has been successful thanks to the provision of free bikes, as well as the unique level of support provided which gives people the skills and confidence needed to cycle. Active communities team members support others to not only participate in bike rides but also to lead rides themselves.

In October 2024, an impact evaluation by Brunel University and the LRS team, which involved surveys, workshops, and observations, found:

- there was notable participation from underrepresented groups, such as women, girls, and older adults
- most participants were from Asian backgrounds, but there was representation from all ethnic backgrounds
- one of the main reasons many participants joined the initiative was to protect the environment
- around half (49%) of the people who responded to the survey attended a health check coordinated by the active communities team
- participants felt that the programme had a large impact on their ability to cycle, their physical health, the environment, and time saved on transport

The following impacts were found on physical activity levels:

- at the start of the LRS programme in March 2024, less than half (47%) of the people who responded to the survey said that they had done more than 30 minutes of physical activity on at least 3 days in the previous week. In January 2025, 90% of people responding said that they had done this
- from March 2024 to January 2025, participants felt that their mental wellbeing improved, especially in relation to feeling less anxious, happier, and more satisfied with their lives
- 93% of LRS participants who responded to the survey saw an improvement in their health, such as their mood and energy levels, thanks to their increased physical fitness or activity levels

Call to action

LGS is still running, so there are lots of opportunities to get involved in local activities that can boost your wellbeing and improve your physical and mental health. To find an activity that interests you, visit [the movement's website](#).

Further links

There are [some videos on YouTube](#) which highlight residents' stories and the impact that the LGS movement has had in their lives.

