

# Health of the borough 2025-26



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# Foreword

Since the first Health of the Borough report in 2022-23, we have seen real progress across the borough.

Our Community Champions programme has grown from a small group into more than 130 local volunteers who now help neighbours every day and share information people can trust. Let's Go Southall has also grown into a strong community-led movement, supporting over 1,200 people to take part in physical activities. We have strengthened support for people who are sleeping rough, with daily outreach and new roles that help people move into safer places more quickly and stay healthy. Learn Ealing and Work Ealing have supported thousands of residents to build skills and confidence, with more than 4,000 qualifications completed this past year alone. The cost-of-living team has worked with voluntary sector partners to increase household incomes by millions of pounds, with £2.2 million secured for residents in just the last 6 months.

Together, these changes show what is possible when we work side by side with our partners and communities to build a healthier and more equal borough.

This year's Health of the Borough gives you an overview of what has happened since the last edition, the support available now, and the part you can play. It brings together work guided by our Council Plan, which sets out our priorities - creating good jobs, tackling the climate crisis, and reducing inequality - and Together in Ealing, our shared strategy for improving health and wellbeing. Together in Ealing guides us to listen to communities, act before problems grow, and improve access to the everyday things that shape health, such as safe homes, green spaces, stable work and strong local support.

This past year has shown what teamwork can achieve. Across the borough, services are getting better at working together, sharing the same aims, and using our different strengths to benefit residents. When we listen to each other and act early, we create better support and improve outcomes for people in all 7 of our towns.

The following is a summary of how this joined up work is making a difference:

## Supporting people when life is hard

We have helped residents with the cost of living, reached out to people who are rough sleeping, and offered specialist support for mental health, substance use and stopping smoking. Many services now work from places people already trust, such as GP surgeries and community centres.

## Putting communities at the centre of local change

We are backing local networks that give residents a stronger voice.

- Community Champions are residents who understand their communities' needs better than any service can and help us design support that fits real lives
- Town Teams bring residents, businesses and services together to improve local high streets and neighbourhoods
- the Community Resilience Forum strengthens how the council, voluntary groups and faith groups prepare for and respond to local emergencies
- Partnership Boards bring together residents with lived experience, the NHS, voluntary groups and the council to shape and improve services

We have also trained community researchers to gather stories and insights about the issues that affect health, such as housing, youth activities and



culturally relevant information. These insights help us improve services.

### **Improving the lives of children and young people**

Schools are using a new programme called Therapeutic Thinking to reduce suspensions and exclusions by creating calmer classrooms and stronger relationships. Staff and parents are taking part in suicide prevention training, so they can spot early signs when a young person may be struggling. Learn Ealing and Work Ealing also continue to help residents build skills, grow confidence and find apprenticeships and jobs.

### **Creating healthier, greener and more active places**

Let's Go Southall run nearly 80 free weekly activities that help people get active and feel connected. Work on the Regional Park is opening up new green spaces and safer routes to walk and cycle, supporting both health and climate goals.

### **Tackling unfair differences in health**

Partners have supported residents facing complex challenges, including people who are rough sleeping, people living with HIV, and newly arrived refugees. This reflects our shared commitment to building a fairer borough where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Working together is how we make change happen - with residents, communities and partners. I hope you find this magazine informative, helpful and inspiring, and that it shows what is possible when we come together to build a healthier, more equal borough.



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



# Partnership Boards – Shaping services through lived experience

Residents are using their experience to help shape adult social care in the borough, and the council is calling for more people to get involved.

Partnership boards bring together residents, the council, the NHS and voluntary groups to improve services. There are 7 boards covering older adults, carers, learning disabilities, mental health, autism, and physical disabilities or sensory impairments. Each board is co chaired by a resident with lived experience, ensuring that services are developed by the people who use them.

## Improving support for carers

Last year, the council launched its Carers Strategy 2024–2029. It sets out how the council will work with and support carers of all ages. The strategy was guided by residents on the Carers Coproduction

Board. They shaped the priorities, actions and support that carers need the most.

## Making a real difference

Residents involved in the partnership boards have made real, practical changes. After raising concerns about access in Acton town centre, they helped reinstate disabled parking bays. They are now helping develop the Kerbside Strategy 2026, which will improve how public kerbside space is used across the borough.

Feedback from board members has also led to the creation of a new access group. The group will work to improve access to public buildings and services for people with limited mobility, autism or learning disabilities.



Description: The Carers Strategy launch at St Andrews Church, Ealing, with Impact Theatre representatives, Carers Coproduction Board members and staff from Ealing Council, NHS and other voluntary sector organisations.

## Get involved

The partnership boards meet every 3 months to raise issues, share lived experience, and help shape services. They are always looking for new members. If you want to join a Partnership Board, visit the [Do Something Good website](#) or email [Beinvolved\\_ASC@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:Beinvolved_ASC@ealing.gov.uk).



# Your Voice, Your Town – Giving power to communities

All 7 towns in the borough have received a major cash boost to support projects chosen by local residents. A total of £480,000 is being allocated across the borough to fund improvements that people say will make the biggest difference to where they live.

This investment comes through Your Voice, Your Town — a programme that brings local people together to share their knowledge, skills and priorities, and turn great ideas into action.

The council started by asking residents what they wanted to change in their neighbourhoods. Each town now has its own Town Team, made up of residents, community groups, businesses, faith groups and councillors. The teams lead this work with support from the council, and their aim is simple: to make every one of our towns a better place to live, work and spend time.



Description: Your Voice, Your Town Acton community engagement event, May 2024

## Support for community projects

Each town has received a share of funding based on its population, and Town Teams have created

a community fund to support projects linked to residents' chosen priorities.

The towns are receiving the funding shown below to support projects focused on local priorities:

- Acton – £80,000 (priority: clean and pleasant area)
- Ealing – £120,000 (priority: feeling safe)
- Greenford – £60,000 (priority: clean and pleasant area)
- Hanwell – £40,000 (priority: feeling safe)
- Northolt – £40,000 (priority: clean and pleasant area)
- Perivale – £20,000 (priority: clean and pleasant area)
- Southall – £120,000 (priority: clean and pleasant area)

## Next steps

Each Town Team will award funding to voluntary organisations, community groups or individuals who will bring these projects to life, working alongside residents. All projects will be completed by September 2026.

If you want to see how funding is being used in your town or would like to get involved, visit the [Do Something Good website](#) or read more in [Around Ealing](#).







# Community Champions – Support led by locals

Parents, neighbours, faith leaders, students and organisers — what do they all have in common?

They understand their communities in ways that nobody else can.

That is why the Ealing Community Champions programme was set up more than 5 years ago. Since then, it has gone from strength to strength. What began as a small group of residents wanting to support each other has grown into a network of 130 local volunteers who use their lived experience, languages and community knowledge to help people feel connected and supported.

Champions learn new skills, take part in community projects and share information through forums, newsletters, training sessions and — most importantly — a lively WhatsApp group that keeps everyone talking, helping and supporting each other in real time.



Description: Some of our borough's amazing community champions

## A wave of new members

In the last six months, 38 new champions have joined, many after being personally recommended by others. The WhatsApp group has become a reliable, friendly space where champions share advice quickly and offer peer support when someone needs help.

Champions across the borough have also been recognised for their work. Ealing Repair Café received the King's Award for Voluntary Service, and Ealing Soup Kitchen became the Mayoral Charity for 2025/26.

Volunteers have taken part in a wide range of training including applying for small grants, using social media, spotting fake news, supporting smartphone free childhoods, safeguarding,

autism awareness and lung health services. Every champion can also train as a Mental Health First Aider. One volunteer said the training “really changed my life”. Another said the most valuable part was “meeting inspiring people and seeing how small actions can make a real difference”.

## Get involved

In 2026, the council aims to grow the champions network and help volunteers build even stronger connections with each other.

If you live or work in the borough, you can join the Community Champions network and help make sure local voices are heard. Email [communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk), or visit the [council's website](#) for more information on the programme.



# Evidence & Learning for Health

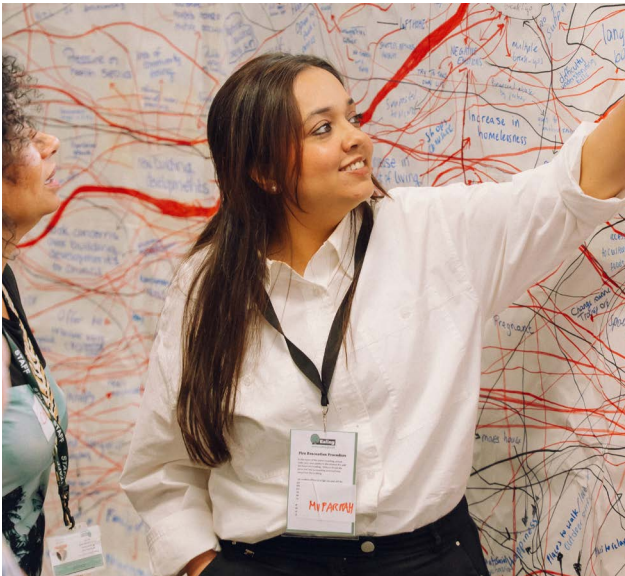
## Did you know?

- Our health and wellbeing are shaped by things like housing, green spaces, and feeling connected to others
- Residents and community groups now help choose research priorities and lead action with council staff

## Doing research and taking action with communities

Evidence & Learning for Health brings together the council, community groups, residents and universities to understand what affects people's health.

Through community-centred research, residents and council staff work together to improve policies and services for people who face the biggest challenges. The programme also provides learning and development to build skills in the council and community groups. The aim is to learn more about what causes health inequalities and how we can effectively tackle these inequalities.



## Impact

22 residents are being trained as community researchers. This has involved collecting more than 140 life stories from across the borough, especially from residents facing the biggest challenges. The photo is of a community researcher showcasing the map that was created of the borough's strengths and challenges.

They have identified 6 priority areas for further research and targeted action:

- housing conditions
- availability of youth spaces and activities
- access to green spaces
- information and support for parents of children with additional needs
- language barriers to work
- domestic abuse

Community researchers are now working with the council and community groups to explore actions that could help address these challenges.

## Next steps

Council and resident groups will meet until the summer to share learning and influence council policies and services. Progress will be shared across the council and with communities.

## Call to action

To learn more and stay up to date, you can visit the new [Evidence & Learning website](#).





# Ealing Roots & Wings – Improving health outcomes for Black communities

Research in the borough - including findings from the Race Equality Commission - showed that Black residents consistently experience poorer health than other groups. These differences are unfair and avoidable.

In response, the council launched the Roots and Wings programme with support from the NHS, Ealing and Hounslow Community and Voluntary Service (EHCVS) and Voices of Colour, a community led organisation experienced in peer research.

Roots and Wings gave local organisations the chance to design and run their own projects. 10 organisations, led by Black African and Caribbean leaders, each received £5,000 to deliver work that supports health and wellbeing. Leaders also took part in peer research training, helping them understand what matters most to their communities and share those insights with the people who make decisions.

## Sharing findings and co-designing next steps

In October 2025, the leaders came together to host a showcase event where they shared what they had learned, talked openly about the challenges facing small Black led organisations, and discussed ideas with partners from the council, the NHS and the voluntary sector.

A month later, co design workshops focused on how leaders can build on their findings and work with services to make them more inclusive.

Another workshop took place in February 2026 to shape the next phase of the programme, which may include a development network for leaders and targeted support to address community needs.



## In the words of Victoria Lynch, Operations Manager of Zebra Sports

“Before partnering with the Roots & Wings programme, many families in our community simply viewed gymnastics as an unattainable luxury; the costs of coaching, uniforms, transport etc were a significant barrier for those already struggling. Through our work, we’ve been able to bridge that gap, providing high-quality opportunities for children who previously couldn’t afford to participate.

The transformation has been incredible—not just in their physical skills, but in their self-belief. Seeing black children and their families reclaim a space in a sport where they haven’t always felt represented has been deeply moving. It’s more than just a class; it’s about fostering a sense of belonging and proving that financial status should never dictate a child’s potential.”

## More information

To learn more about the programme, you can contact the public health team, at [publichealth@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:publichealth@ealing.gov.uk), or read articles on [Around Ealing](#).



# Building resilient communities

## What happens in an emergency?

Last year, Ealing Council responded to 53 emergencies. These included fires, power cuts and flooding. But it's not just first responders and emergency services who play a vital role in keeping people safe.

Local community groups, voluntary organisations and places of worship are often the first to step in. They open their doors, offer support to people who have been affected and help keep information flowing at a critical time.

The council knows how important this community response is. That is why it set up the Community Resilience Forum with Ealing and Hounslow Community and Voluntary Service (EHCVS) and members of the Ealing Borough Resilience Forum. The forum brings groups, faith organisations and local businesses together so the borough is better prepared for major incidents.

## Impact

Since June 2025, the council's Emergency Management Service has worked with EHCVS to build the forum. It gives residents and organisations a clear way to take part in emergency planning. More than 15 organisations have joined so far, and events have reached more than 500 residents.

The value of this work was clear during the Bridge Road industrial fire on 25 November 2025, when community groups came together within hours. St John's Church and the Gurdwara offered warm, safe spaces and hot meals for around 60 people. British Red Cross volunteers supported vulnerable residents on-site. It showed how strong community links help keep people safe and supported in moments of real pressure.

## Get involved

The forum formally launched in January 2026. It will host sessions on fires, flooding and severe weather, and provide training and mapping of community strengths across the borough.

You can take part by joining a local group, signing up for training, or representing your organisation on the forum. By getting involved, you help shape how our borough prepares for and responds to emergencies — and help keep people safe and well.

## More information

[London Resilient Communities - Groundwork](#)



Description: Major fire incident in Southall on 25 November 2025



# Regional Park - £1million boost brings regional park a step closer

A regional park for west London is one step closer after Ealing Council secured nearly £1 million in National Lottery funding.

The £999,595 grant, awarded in July 2025, came from the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the national Nature Towns and Cities programme. The funding will help design a new trail through the park, enhance wetlands and wildlife habitats, and support extensive engagement with residents.

## Progress so far

Improvements to green spaces across the borough are already happening. The former golf course at Pear Tree Park is being transformed, with new wetlands to support wildlife and better play and sports areas for local families. The park also welcomed a new addition in November 2025 with the opening of the Pear Tree Park Bistro.

To deliver the regional park, the council is working closely with the National Trust, Environment Agency, and Hounslow Council to ensure the park extends beyond Ealing's borders and connects more people with nature.

The project also looks at how access to nature can improve health and wellbeing. As part of this work, a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was carried out in early 2025, with the findings published in July. It explored how the park can support residents' physical and mental health and highlighted the importance of involving the community in shaping the plans. The HIA also stressed that the park must work for everyone, especially people who face barriers to using green spaces or who experience poorer health.

## How residents are getting involved

Residents will continue to co design the plans for the park. A Community Advisory Group, made up of community representatives, local organisations, council officers and business voices, meets every 3 months to provide advice and recommendations. The group helps the council think through proposals, identify risks and opportunities, and find ways to involve residents in the development of the park. Workshops with young people and under represented groups are already part of the programme and will continue as the plans evolve.

## Next steps

Work with partners and residents will continue through 2026, with an initial focus on trail design and developing a clear identity for the park. [The council webpage](#) shares updates and ways that residents can get involved, from engagement activities to volunteering. You can also sign up for the regional park newsletter through [the council's communication preferences form](#).



# Learn Ealing – No qualifications? Here’s how we’re changing that

18% of adults in the borough have no qualifications. That is a big barrier to confidence, good jobs and everyday life. That is why Learn Ealing helped 1,136 people complete more than 4,000 qualifications in 2024–25 - from English and maths to digital skills and vocational training.

## What is Learn Ealing?

Learn Ealing is the council’s adult learning service. It offers free courses in local venues, shaped with employers and community organisations so they meet real needs and support career growth. Courses include ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), maths, digital skills, creative arts and vocational training.

People who take Learn Ealing courses often talk about gaining confidence and feeling more positive about their future.

“The teaching has been outstanding. I have learned so much and made new friends. I have been taken out of my comfort zone, which is good.”

— Digital skills learner

ESOL also has a very high achievement rate, and almost 60% of ESOL learners move up to higher levels. Many go on to work, volunteering or further study, while meeting people who support them along the way.

## Amalia’s story

Amalia Laiscea took an ESOL course with Learn Ealing.

“The teachers were welcoming and supportive, and the course was inclusive. Learning English helped me feel in control of my life and advocate for my own health.”



“In July 2025, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I have been able to communicate effectively and ensure the best interaction with the medical team that has kindly supported me — thanks to my English skills.”

Amalia is now volunteering as a teacher, giving back to the community.

## Take the next step

In 2026, Learn Ealing will expand digital skills and employability courses and test new ways to reach even more residents, so more people can gain the confidence and qualifications they need. If you want to learn new skills, improve your confidence or move forward in your career, join Learn Ealing today. Visit the [Learn Ealing website](#) or call 020 8825 5577 to enrol. You can also read more on [Around Ealing](#).





# Work Ealing – Supporting residents into training, apprenticeships and jobs

## Did you know?

- Work Ealing helps residents find jobs, training and apprenticeships

## Skills development and employment support

Work Ealing is the council's employment and skills service. It helps residents build confidence, learn new skills, and find work. It offers tailored support for people who may face many barriers to employment, such as offenders and young people who have been in care.

Programmes for young people include the Horizon Pathways Programme, which provides paid placements with mentoring, and the council's work experience and supported internship programme.

The Careers Hub programme, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, had a successful first year, and has now been extended until March 2026. The programme aims to reduce barriers to employment and support residents into secure work.

## Helping people find meaningful work

A key project trains people in prison so they have the skills and certification needed to work in construction when they are released. Of 100 participants, 60 passed health and safety training, 29 gained the certification, and 8 secured jobs.

Work Ealing supports young people through diverse work experiences, internships and industry insight days. During October half-term last year, a group of 12 Ealing students experienced how theatre, television, film, and art and music festivals are produced. They also presented a project to a Dragons Den panel of experts from the industry.

Since April 2025, the Careers Hub programme has supported 132 residents, 42 of whom have secured jobs and 6 have moved into education and training.

## Call to action

If you want help finding work, gaining skills or starting training, call 020 8825 8486 or go to [Work Ealing's website](#) to find out what support is available.



Description: Ealing borough residents supported by Work Ealing at London Job Show Westfield





# Cost of living support – Helping residents unlock millions in unclaimed support

Many households in the borough can get extra help from benefits such as Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance, Healthy Start vouchers and Carer's Allowance. But every year, around £6 million in support goes unclaimed.

That is why the council is using better data, including the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT), to identify people who may be missing out. This means the council can reach residents directly and help them get the money they are entitled to.

## More money for residents who need it most

In just six months, this approach has helped residents bring in more than £2 million in extra income. Here are some of the gains:

- £1.3 million a year unlocked through a Pension Credit campaign, after 220 households applied
- £216,000 a year gained after 45 households claimed Attendance Allowance
- £12,000 a year brought into families through 143 Healthy Start voucher applications
- £52,000 a year saved by households automatically enrolled for Free School Meals
- £500,000 a year in pupil premium funding for local schools
- £335,000 a year saved by 810 families automatically enrolled onto Thames Water's social tariff

Ealing Council issued nearly 70,000 supermarket vouchers to low-income families through the Household Support Fund, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), from April 2025 to January 2026. The council also used the fund to provide selected voluntary sector organisations with £300k of funding this financial

year to ensure that vital support is getting to the right people.

These gains mean warmer homes, lower bills and less pressure for residents who need help. Having more money makes life easier and helps people stay independent.

## Get extra help

The council now has a new [online benefits calculator](#). It is quick and easy to use. By answering a few simple questions, you can check whether you might be entitled to more money.

If you know someone who could benefit from extra support, please encourage them to check too.

Every claim matters.



# Supporting people who are sleeping rough

You may see people sleeping rough in our 7 towns. Each person has a different story. Some lose their home after a family breakdown. Others leave prison or hospital with nowhere to go. Some cannot get benefits or housing support because of their immigration status. Many live with mental health conditions or substance misuse.

The council is here to help. For most people, that begins with a simple conversation on the street. It is often the first step towards safety and support.

## Meeting people where they are

The council commissions St Mungo's to run an outreach service that searches for people sleeping rough each day. The team spends time in doorways, parks and town centres, building trust with people who may have been let down by services before. When someone is ready, the team helps them get the support they need. This can include health care, immigration advice, temporary accommodation, or support with drug or alcohol use. No two journeys are the same, so the support is flexible.

## A safe place in severe weather

Cold weather can be dangerous if you are sleeping outside. During extreme weather, the outreach team works longer hours and searches for anyone who may be at risk. A rest centre in Southall opens overnight and offers warmth, food and a safe place to sleep. It is open to everyone, including people who have no recourse to public funds.

St Mungo's runs the shelter with support from Hope for Southall Street Homeless. For many people, it provides safety when they need it most.

## New roles to remove barriers

The council has created new roles to bring services together and strengthen the support on offer:

- a senior mental health housing liaison officer, who links mental health services and housing teams
- an outreach nurse, who works with St Mungo's and takes health care directly to people on the streets and at drop-in centres in Southall and Acton
- a homelessness response officer, who brings services together, tracks cases and helps people move into stable housing more quickly

These roles help make support easier to access and form part of the council's long-term work with NHS partners and voluntary organisations to reduce homelessness across the borough.

## Worried about someone sleeping rough?

If you are sleeping rough or know someone who is, [contact StreetLink online](#) or call 0300 500 0914. Give as much detail as you can about the location and what the person looks like. This helps the outreach team find them quickly and offer support.



# Helping Ukrainian families build new lives in the borough

Since 2022, more than 1,600 Ukrainians fleeing conflict have been supported by Ealing Council, making the borough home to the second largest Ukrainian community in London.

Homes for Ukraine is a national support scheme run by the government that helps people who have left the war find safety, stable housing and a welcoming community in the United Kingdom.

By September 2025, the scheme had supported 1,616 Ukrainian residents in our 7 towns.

In the borough, the council works closely with [Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service \(EHCVS\)](#). This partnership makes sure that people receive the help they need to settle and rebuild their lives.

The council and EHCVS offer support with housing, benefits, schools, health services, safeguarding and day-to-day wellbeing. People can also get help with English, work and training.

Support is provided through group sessions, workshops, one-to-one advice, casework, community events, coaching and digital support. English language support has been especially popular. Many Ukrainians have joined English conversation clubs to practise speaking the language. Others have taken part in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes and skills workshops. These sessions help people gain confidence and move closer to work. Several residents have already secured jobs.

Lyudmyla is a Ukrainian woman who arrived with limited English. She found it difficult to look for work because she did not feel confident speaking English. She was matched with a volunteer who speaks Ukrainian. This made the learning experience feel comfortable and familiar. Her confidence has grown, and she now feels ready to take her next step towards employment.

Olha is a single mother who was at risk of losing her home after false complaints were made by her landlord. With support from EHCVS, the decision was overturned. Olha and her children were able to stay safely in their home. She also kept her job, which prevented a crisis and helped the family stay stable.

The programme has also supported the creation of [BRIDGE for Ukrainians](#). This is a new charity run by Ukrainians who live in the borough. It offers practical help, local knowledge and strong community links. Volunteers use their experience to guide others through everyday challenges. These include understanding local services and adjusting to life in a new country. This strengthens long-term support for Ukrainian residents and helps people feel part of community life.

Residents and local organisations can support this work by volunteering, sharing information or working in partnership with EHCVS. If you would like to get involved, you can contact Olga Dudnik, Service Manager, at [olga@ehcvs.org.uk](mailto:olga@ehcvs.org.uk).



Description: Members of the Ukrainian community during one of the sessions in Ealing



# Ending HIV stigma – raising awareness through World AIDS Day

## Did you know?

- World AIDS Day takes place every year on 1 December
- HIV treatment means people with HIV can live long, healthy lives and prevent the virus from being passed on to partners
- People without HIV can take PrEP, a drug to reduce the risk of getting HIV



Description: Perceval House lit up red for World AIDS Day

## A day of reflection

World AIDS Day is a chance to think about the people who have been affected by HIV, raise awareness and challenge stigma. The council works with the NHS and local voluntary organisations like Spectra, Living Well and Positively UK to share information, support events and promote understanding.

## Amy's story

A recent [Around Ealing article](#) highlighted Amy's story. She is a support worker for Living Well who spoke about her experience of living with HIV and how she supports others. Her story shows how important it is to break down stigma and ensure people feel safe to seek help.



## National action

On 1 December 2025, the government launched a [national HIV action plan](#) aiming to end new HIV transmissions by 2030. The plan focuses on prevention, testing, early diagnosis, reducing stigma and improving quality of life for people living with HIV.

## Next steps

The council and partners will work together to support the national HIV action plan and strengthen local HIV awareness, prevention and testing.

## Available support

You can order a free, easy test kit for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) from [SHL's website](#). There are free, confidential STI and HIV testing and prevention clinics near you. For local service information, go to [London Northwest Healthcare Trust's website](#).





# Therapeutic Thinking – Rethinking behaviour, reducing exclusions

The number of children being suspended or excluded from schools in the borough has fallen. Between June 2025 and January 2026, schools taking part in a new programme saw an 8% fall in suspensions and a 42% fall in permanent exclusions.

## Changing how we understand and respond to difficult behaviour

The Therapeutic Thinking programme, backed by the council, helps schools understand behaviour in a different way and support children before situations escalate.

Therapeutic Thinking encourages staff to view behaviour as communication. Many children express their feelings through their actions, especially when they feel overwhelmed or do not have the words to explain what is happening. The programme gives staff practical tools to respond with compassion, consistency, and an understanding of trauma.

So far, more than 70 schools have taken part by training at least one Therapeutic Thinking tutor. It is estimated that the programme is reaching more than 37,000 pupils across the borough.

The training helps staff respond calmly, build relationships and create safe, stable spaces for children. The approach is now used not only in classrooms but also by attendance officers, social care teams and the Virtual School to support vulnerable children earlier.

Schools using Therapeutic Thinking report:

- less challenging behaviour
- calmer classrooms
- stronger relationships
- improved confidence among staff

They also say they can provide support earlier and prevent crises from developing.

These changes buck the national trend of rising suspension rates and compare favourably with schools in the borough that have not yet taken part.

Schools have asked for more coaching, support with complex behaviours, and more opportunities to share ideas with each other as the approach continues to grow.

## What you can do

You can find more information about training and support on the [Therapeutic Thinking pages of the Ealing Grid for Learning](#).

If you are worried about your child's behaviour, spend time with them one on one and talk calmly about how they are feeling. You can also raise your concerns with your child's school so you can work together to help them feel safe, understood and supported.





# Suicide Prevention – Giving schools the tools to keep young people safe

More than 1 in 5 young people in the borough say they sometimes want to harm themselves, and 7% say these thoughts happen “often” or “every day”. These findings come from the 2025 Health Related Behaviour Survey (HRBS), a national survey completed by pupils to help local areas understand young people’s health, wellbeing and daily experiences.

The survey also shows that 16% of females and 7% of males have been shown online content that promotes suicide or self-harm. Many pupils also say they do not feel confident speaking to an adult when they are worried about their own safety.

These findings highlight why staff in schools need the right skills to notice when a young person may be at risk, to have safe and sensitive conversations, and to work with pupils to develop plans that help keep them safe. Suicide is preventable, and early, confident support from a trusted adult can make a positive difference.

## Everyone has a role to play in preventing self-harm and suicide

Many crises can be prevented when adults and young people notice warning signs early and act. To help ensure this happens, Ealing Council funds free suicide prevention training, delivered by PAPYRUS, for school staff, parents and carers. The sessions build confidence to spot early warning signs, start conversations and make a safety plan with a child or young person. They also explain how to get support from local services.

Schools told the council they needed clear guidance on how to identify risk and what to do if a child or young person talks about having suicidal thoughts. In response, short online sessions were developed to teach practical skills such as having the first conversation, agreeing a safety plan, and directing

people to support. Reviews at 6 and 12 months check how safety plans are being used and whether referrals have increased. This helps schools improve their support over time.

Training will continue so more staff, parents and carers feel confident supporting children and young people who may be at risk.

## In the words of a deputy headteacher

Beth Reynolds, deputy headteacher at Villiers High School said: “As the Designated Safeguarding Lead in a secondary school, I see every day how important it is that we understand what young people are going through. Myself and the Safeguarding Team are undertaking PAPYRUS suicide prevention training because we want to be as prepared as possible to spot the early signs that a young person might be struggling and make sure they get the help they need when they need it. Young people are facing more pressures than ever, especially with the influence of the online world, social media, and new technologies like AI, and we need to make sure we keep up with those challenges. This training will help us support pupils more effectively, but it will also give staff more confidence to have important conversations and create a school environment where young people feel safe, listened to, and supported.”

## What you can do

You can take part in the free training. It will help you recognise when a child or young person may be struggling and how to respond. You can check dates and register on the [PAPYRUS website](#).



# Bringing judgement free support for mental health and substance use into the community

Asking for help with drug or alcohol use, or with mental health problems, can feel daunting, especially when specialist services feel unfamiliar or might be perceived to carry stigma. That is why support in the borough is increasingly being brought into the places people already know and trust.

## Local, stigma-free help

The borough's Primary Care Assessment Team (PCAT) and the Dual Diagnosis Team (DDT) work across GP surgeries, community hubs, mental health services and hospital wards to help residents get support early, safely and without judgement.

Both teams are part of Ealing RISE, the borough's drug and alcohol support service and together they provide flexible help for adults facing substance misuse, including with co-occurring poor mental health problems.

## Support in familiar settings

- PCAT brings drug and alcohol support directly into Ealing Hospital and GP surgeries across Southall and Northolt, reducing travel barriers and the fear of being seen entering a treatment centre
- DDT supports residents with with co-occurring mental health and substance use needs wherever they feel comfortable, from GP practices to community hubs and hospital wards
- both teams also work alongside GP and mental health staff, building confidence to spot early signs of difficulty and start supportive conversations

## Helping more residents get the support they need

From April to December 2025, PCAT supported 234 residents, with 60 achieving their goals through short-term support and 97 moving into longer treatment. DDT supported a further 104 residents

with more complex combined needs. PCAT's work was also highly commended at the North West London Health Equity Awards for improving access for underserved communities.

## Residents' stories

After being hospitalised for cocaine use, a resident, who will remain anonymous, was referred to PCAT. Over 4 months, the team helped him manage cravings and stay motivated, alongside group support at RISE. He stopped using drugs, is now working full time, and is giving back to his community.

Another resident, who will remain anonymous, was referred to DDT when cannabis use started to affect their mental health. With regular 1-to-1 sessions, a support group, and joined-up work between DDT and mental health services, they reduced their use and made steady progress toward recovery.

## What's next

- new PCAT clinics are launching in Southall in March 2026 to reach more residents locally
- training for partners in early 2026 will help reduce stigma, build understanding of dual diagnosis, and strengthen joined-up care across the borough

## How to get support

If you're worried about your drug or alcohol use, speak to your GP, who can refer you to PCAT.

For support with both mental health and substance use, contact Ealing RISE by calling 0800 195 8100 or emailing [EalingRISE@cgl.org.uk](mailto:EalingRISE@cgl.org.uk).

More information is also available on [Ealing RISE's website](#).



# Let's Go Southall – A growing community-led social movement

Around 100 Southall residents are putting their pedals to the metal thanks to a council backed cycling push.

Southall has some of the borough's highest rates of poor health, diabetes and obesity. Residents are less likely to be physically active than people in other parts of the borough.

That's one reason Let's Go Southall (LGS) was set up, helping people to move more, feel healthier and connect with others.

LGS runs 79 activities every week, offering everything from walking groups to tailored fitness sessions. The programme also supports a fast growing cycling club, which now has around 100 regular riders. Daily rides take residents to parks and green spaces in Northolt using new cycle paths.

One resident said: "After many attempts, I finally learned to ride a bicycle – and it feels like I have conquered the world!"

LGS also encourages more people to use Southall Park, where the local parkrun celebrated its fourth anniversary in January 2026 with 258 people taking part.

LGS puts on regular health events linked to national and local campaigns. These offer body mass index, blood pressure and blood sugar checks, and people who would benefit from being more active are invited to join LGS sessions for 6 weeks to help improve their health.

## Other LGS support

Southall has one of the highest rates of unpaid carers in the borough. During Carers Week 2025, the team showcased local walks and outdoor activities that help carers feel healthier and happier.

They also work with Hope for Southall Street Homeless, providing knitted hats and scarves and running weekly art sessions for people who need support.

## Next steps

The team will keep working with partners, including the police, to make local spaces safer and increase the range of activities on offer in 2026.

## Join in

You can join local walks, cycling sessions or fitness groups. Check the timetable on [Let's Go Southall's website](#) to find out more. You can also follow @gosouthall on social media.



# Support to stop smoking

A former smoker in Ealing is urging others who want to quit to avoid going “cold turkey” and use the support that helped him stop for good.

Ealing Smokefree Service is encouraging residents who smoke to reach out for help. The team knows that quitting is easier when people have support, advice and the right tools behind them.

## About the service

Ealing Smokefree Service is open to any resident over 18 years old who uses tobacco and is registered with a GP in the borough. Since its launch in July 2024, the service has supported more than 1,880 people to begin their quit journey, with over 1,200 going on to set a quit date as they work towards a healthier, smoke-free future.

The service offers free in-person, phone or digital support, with a trained advisor working with each person for 8 weeks. Medication can be prescribed to help manage cravings and withdrawal.

## Taking the first step

Keith R, who quit with support from the service, said:

“What finally pushed me to take that first step toward quitting was talking with my 1:1 practitioners, who told me the Smokefree team would be at an event. I spoke with them there and had my first CO reading. The number shocked me.

“The sessions with my advisor, Maria, were honestly a godsend. She kept me motivated and on track when I needed it most.

“Early on, I struggled with switching to a vape. As a full-time carer and with my parents in the hospital, the stress made things really hard. But I chose not to buy more cigarettes, even when it meant leaning on the vape more than I wanted.

“My advice to anyone: get your CO checked so you can see what smoking is really doing to your health. Don't try going cold turkey - it rarely works. And get proper support and tools. If I can do it, so can you.”

## How to get support

If you want to stop smoking, you can [self-refer online](#), call 0208 354 8889, or email [wlm-tr.hls@nhs.net](mailto:wlm-tr.hls@nhs.net). The team will contact you to arrange support in a way that works for you.

