



London Borough
of Hounslow

LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

POSITION STATEMENT 2025



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Introduction

Hounslow is London in microcosm and the world in one place. From Hogarth's House to Heathrow's hinterland, Brentford FC to Bedfont Lakes, Sky TV to street markets, our borough is one of contrasts: historic and modern, local and global, green and urban, diverse yet interconnected. It is this mix that defines us and drives both our challenges and opportunities.

A large slice of West London, we span from Chiswick in the east, to Feltham and Hanworth in the west. Our four town centres - Brentford, Chiswick, Feltham and Hounslow - each distinct in character, are complemented by other vibrant, urban village communities such as Cranford, Heston, Isleworth and Osterley.

Home to 300,000 residents living in 111,000 households, we're a borough that has grown by more than 40% since 2001. The average resident is 37 years old, and almost half were born outside the UK. More than 190 languages are spoken here, with Panjabi, Polish, Romanian, Urdu and Nepalese among the most common after English.

Diversity is in the very fabric of the place, a daily, lived reality. The huge breadth of perspectives, passions and experience it brings is one of our greatest strengths, but it comes with complexity. One in five residents do not speak English well. One third of adults are physically inactive, and 61% of adults are overweight or obese. Healthy life expectancy stands at just 60 for men and 62 for women — lower than the London and national averages. We are a borough of potential, but also one of sharp inequalities.

We are at the centre of two of the UK's most productive economies; London and the Heathrow/Slough/M4 corridor and - with seven mainline stations and eight underground stations, the Thames, major roads and Heathrow on our doorstep - we are one of the best-connected places in the country.

Hounslow is a place of business and entrepreneurship, from multinational HQs to 15,000 SMEs. This leads to an interconnected ecosystem of diverse organisations, powered by an industrious work ethic and strong educational performance. We have the highest concentration of media and broadcasting jobs in London, and we're a world-class centre for logistics, with more than 50,000 associated jobs.

Our GVA is among the highest in the country, yet too many of our residents are excluded from that prosperity. There is a £5,000 gap between the median job in Hounslow and the median income of a resident, showing that while good jobs are created here, not enough of them go to local people. This is something we're determined to address: growth without inclusion is not success.

Our schools - most rated Good or Outstanding - support almost 46,000 pupils. Many of our residents are bilingual or multilingual. 42% hold Level 4 qualifications or higher, but we also have a higher rate of people working in low-paying unskilled jobs than the England average.

Our role as a council is not only to manage services, though we do that at significant scale, spending about £1 billion annually across our capital programme, Housing Revenue Account, General Fund, trading companies and schools. We also provide homes for 13,200 tenants and 3,000 leaseholders, deliver social care for 4,100 adults, look after about 270 children, support almost 400 care leavers and our adult learning programmes support more than 2,000 residents every year. 850 residents engage with our community hubs each month, and our libraries have 56,000 visits a month.

These numbers matter, but what matters more is the difference we make to the borough and the lives of its residents.

There are many positives to take from our 2024 residents' survey: 82% of residents are satisfied with the borough as a place to live; 74% think we're 'doing a good job'; and 67% think we're trustworthy. Against most metrics we score significantly higher than the LGA average. However, some scores are trending downwards and that only 56% of residents think we provide value for money is a problem we're determined to address.

Recent inspections by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted have recognised the high standard of both adult and children's services. In October 2023 Ofsted judged the experiences and progress of children who need

help and protection to be Good, and our recent focused visit confirmed we've largely sustained practice and improved. Our ambition and progress was recognised by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission during the Area SEND Inspection in 2024, highlighting strong partnership working, effective early years support, and improved co-production with families. In 2024, the CQC rated the Council's Adult Social Care performance as Good, noting strengths in preventative services, hospital discharge, and safeguarding. Whatever challenges we face, we remain ambitious for our borough and passionate about improving outcomes for our communities.

WE ASPIRE TO OPERATE ON THREE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES:

We are a **VALUES-DRIVEN** organisation.

Our five values – lead with heart, do new, pass on the power, harness the mix and be a rock – are lived daily, shaping decisions and behaviours.

A **ONE HOUNSLOW SPIRIT** of collaboration and partnership.

We work by default across silos, across sectors and with our communities as equal partners.

Our guiding star is **EQUALITY**.

Every priority, every decision, every investment is tested against our commitment to making Hounslow a fairer, more equal borough.

We know that we do not always get everything right, however the whole Council is committed to listening, learning and improving based on these strong principles.

This is the context in which this Corporate Peer Challenge takes place. We welcome it as an opportunity for challenge and learning. We want peers to test our assumptions, stretch our ambitions, and help us sharpen our focus as we move into the next cycle of corporate planning and the next phase of our borough's story.

OUR PRIORITY AREAS ARE:

- **Continuing to sharpen our focus on high-priority outcomes.**
- **Embedding the golden thread of values and equality into every layer of performance management.**
- **Strengthening system leadership to deliver the common goals for the borough and residents, especially with our health partners.**
- **Balancing robust financial discipline with investment in prevention and innovation.**
- **Deepening and accelerating co-production with residents and capacity building across our VCSE sector.**



SECTION 1:

LOCAL PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES

Ambitions anchored in context

Our Corporate Plan remains the anchor for the organisation. It sets out our ambitions and explains how we are working to build a borough that is thriving socially and economically, becoming safer, healthier, greener and cleaner. A borough where people live in decent homes, in connected communities and are empowered to take opportunities.

Following from the Corporate Plan is our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (A Fairer, More Equal Hounslow), shaped by residents, partners, businesses and voluntary groups. This has three pillars – equality by place, equality by group, and equality as an employer. The strategy identifies 30 Equality Opportunity Areas, now grouped into 10 clusters, where inequality and its impact is most acute. These align with CORE20 health inequality areas, and are where we target efforts and interventions to test our ambition to tackle the causes of systemic and structural inequality.

Our Equality Partnerships on race, disability and age, women, LGBTQ+, and sensory equality provide direct influence on strategy and policy, and checks and accountability, to ensure decisions reflect lived experience. We link EDI ambitions with the Corporate Plan and service delivery, making outcomes visible and measurable.

These ambitions are underpinned by robust frameworks: the One Hounslow Financial Strategy (OHFS) – our Medium-Term Financial Strategy – and the One Hounslow Delivery Plan, which details transformation projects and programmes. Together, these create a strong corporate planning and delivery structure. They are not abstract documents, but shape real-world outcomes. Key programmes include Transforming our Community Experience, Adult Social Care Reform, SEND and Alternative Provision, the Youth Skills and Employment Guarantee, Children's Model of Care, and a comprehensive review of Enforcement and Community Safety.

Our Assets Strategy oversaw a comprehensive review of our entire corporate estate and guides how we ensure every asset is working hard for the Council, either through co-location of services, disposal of surplus property or commercialisation.

Our Local Plan, submitted this summer, sets out the planning framework for the borough to 2030. It is the key document shaping the future spatial strategy of the borough for the next 15 years. It provides for significant growth in new housing and jobs to meet our residents' needs, while requiring high-quality sustainable development that protects the unique characteristics and historic assets of the borough that our local communities value.

Building on our post-Covid Borough Plan for Recovery, developed with strategic and delivery partners in the autumn of 2020, the Council produced one of the first economic growth plans in London. Being positioned between central London and Heathrow may make economic growth in the borough inevitable. However, putting inclusivity and sustainability at the heart of our growth proposal, articulated in our 2024 Business Case for Growth, will help secure the benefits for residents and businesses in Hounslow.

Our 10-year Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) was agreed in July 2020 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency by Council in June 2019. The plan sets out targets across three areas of focus:

- ➔ Decarbonisation of Council operations and estate to achieve net zero by 2030
- ➔ Influencing a reduction in wider borough emissions
- ➔ Making the borough resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Delivering a 'Just Transition' so that all residents, and particularly those in greatest need, benefit from activity delivered through the CEAP is a critical component of our thinking and options assessment. It is important to recognise that there are significant benefits for residents and communities beyond the climate-related benefits. These include:

- Homes that are cheaper to heat and power
- Cleaner air
- Safer and better facilities for walking and cycling
- Opportunity to develop new work-related skills and access new jobs
- Economic growth through unlocking private capital to deliver projects

Meaningful engagement with residents, businesses and other stakeholders is core to our identity, and underpins how we set priorities and deliver services. Guided by principles co-created with communities and partners, we gather representative insight from residents, businesses and partners, use it to shape policy and services, and report back transparently. We provide accessible ways to take part - online, on paper and in person - tailored to purpose and audience. Methods, which include using other groups to conduct engagement where that's more effective, are designed to increase reach to marginalised and under-represented communities and remove barriers to participation.

Alongside formal consultation, our community development approach sees officers out in communities, connecting people and organisations to each other and the Council as needed to address issues and build networks, and reporting what they see and hear on the ground. This qualitative evidence is distilled into Community Insight Reports that inform future engagement and collaboration. New models of coproduction are strengthening how residents shape our policies and services, but this needs to go further.

Each year, the Council conducts a comprehensive analysis of Hounslow's economic, social and environmental landscape. These 'State of the Borough' reports provide vital data and insight to the Council and key stakeholders, supporting decision-making targeted at the current challenges residents are facing. The data and analysis help to target interventions, drive the borough's economic growth agenda, and inform strategic planning.

We are now nearing the end of the current Corporate Plan cycle. Ahead of next year's local elections and development of the subsequent Corporate Plan the organisation has an opportunity to reflect, recalibrate and be ready to support the Council to deliver on renewed ambitions.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Performance management is strong. Every service is scrutinised through regular Finance, Performance and Risk meetings; an Assurance Board has been established to strengthen oversight; alongside quarterly Lead Member Portfolio Reviews with the Leader and senior officers. The Directors' Group addresses performance by exception, applying a strong cross-cutting lens. We introduced Pentana to strengthen performance monitoring and are embedding its use across services.

Our next phase is to ensure performance management is truly engrained at every level, to ensure that every service, team and individual can understand how their work connects to corporate objectives; and to explore the connection between service need and demand, with our performance data enabling us to identify and be responsive to emerging issues. There is a vital opportunity to exploit the use of Artificial Intelligence to be more proactive and preventative through data and insight.

We are embedding a culture of 'continuous improvement' in our service performance and corporate operating model. The Delivery Plan introduced in 2022 marked a step change, creating clearer programmes of work with measurable outcomes. We ensure that evaluation and learning are fully embedded at each stage of our business case methodology, so that successes are scaled and failures are not repeated.

MARKET PLACE - HOUNSLOW -



OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

We judge ourselves by outcomes for residents, recognising that many aspirations are long-term. Examples include:

- **HEALTH AND WELLBEING:** We have launched targeted initiatives in our Equality Opportunity and CORE20 areas to reduce obesity, improve oral health and tackle cardiovascular risk factors. Our work directly with communities as well as with health partners is delivering improvements. The work of our Health Outreach Team, working with VCSE groups and local pharmacies, increased vaccine uptake from 4.6% to 17.2% in Heston in just one week.
- **HOSPITAL DISCHARGE:** Hounslow's hospital discharge performance has improved through strategic initiatives and integrated care. The Integrated Discharge Hub - partnering NHS trusts, Adult Social Care and the British Red Cross - scored highly on the national matrix, while the Alcohol Care Team cut readmissions by 55% in its first year. There has been a concerted drive across NWL to improve our Pathway 1 delays days performance, and with the introduction of a bespoke Bridging Care model in the Hounslow system, we have improved our 2023/24 baseline performance by 28% to 2.24 delay days in 2025/26 Q1.

Other improvements include short-term mental health discharge beds, enhanced frailty pathways to prevent readmissions, and a Hospital@Home model targeting patients with frailty, dementia or delirium to be transferred from West Middlesex Hospital back home to receive care and support by an integrated team of clinicians and social care staff. The borough's approach to Pathway 1 discharges was shortlisted for a Health Service Journal award, with future plans under the Hounslow Care Together programme.
- **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:** Our Young Persons' Skills and Employment Guarantee, which sees the Council work with local businesses, partners and other organisations to create pathways for young people, has secured 25,000 hours of work experience and supported 450 young people to access education, training or employment opportunities.
- **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS:** Housing delivery is strong - 1,340 affordable homes completed since April 2022 in collaboration with Lampton, our wholly-owned delivery company, and development partnerships - but need outstrips supply. Temporary accommodation use is very low for London and falling, with the Council being able to move people into social housing or the private sector.
- **EDUCATION:** Hounslow's schools and colleges deliver outstanding results, with students outperforming national averages in both GCSEs and A-Levels. A new partnership between the University of West London and the Feltham Community Hub will expand access to higher education and skills training in the west of the borough, particularly for communities historically underrepresented in university participation. UWL will work with the Council to deliver career-focused courses supporting progression into good work and growth sectors.
- **CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT:** We have invested £5m in parks and open spaces, planted 20,000 new trees, and are investing in our housing stock. We have a clear plan to achieve net zero as a council by 2030 and to support the decarbonisation of the borough in line with central government targets.

SECTION 2:

ORGANISATIONAL AND PLACE LEADERSHIP

Values-driven leadership

Leadership in Hounslow is rooted in our five organisational values. These shape how we make decisions, how we work with residents and partners, and how we lead as an organisation. They were first developed in 2020, and the behaviours that bring them to life were refreshed in 2025. They remain central to the way Members, officers and communities interact. They have high staff recognition and our annual staff awards, which are framed around our values, result in more than 350 nominations each year.

Our Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), led by the Chief Executive and Executive Directors, meets weekly to steer strategy. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT), comprising all Chief Officers, Directors and Assistant Directors, convenes bi-monthly to provide advice and ensure alignment. The Hounslow Leadership Group, with about 200 senior managers, brings leadership to every corner of the Council. Together, these forums provide continuity, shared purpose and aligned action.

Members bring deep local knowledge, professional expertise, lived experience and passion for communities. They play a critical role in connecting residents with services and shaping community responses, and we want to go further to develop that spirit of local advocacy and leadership. Ward Walks, Area Forums, Cabinet Question Time and promotion of engagement projects are all spaces where Members, officers and residents lead together.

A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

One Hounslow means collaboration rather than silos, system-wide thinking rather than service-boundaries, and the ability to act as convener as well as deliverer. This is evident in the way we work with partners.

The Hounslow CVS partnership and Hounslow Voice Network, which bring together voluntary and community groups across the borough, demonstrate how we invest in and work with the VCSE sector. We have strong relationships with grassroots organisations across the borough, from Brentford Voice and Bedfont Lane Community Centre, to Heston Action Group, Sunshine of Hounslow and the Chiswick Repair Cafe. Our Borough Based Partnership in health and social care shows us acting as connector between NHS systems and community insight.

We know we are strongest when others lead alongside us. Our role is increasingly to pass on the power to residents, businesses, VCSE organisations and partners, while still being a rock when people need us most.

It was our One Hounslow spirit and values, and the way we galvanised our workforce, partners, businesses and VCSE sector during the Covid pandemic, which was at the heart of our submission which saw us win LGC Council of the Year 2021.

PLACE LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

Our influence extends beyond council services. We play a leading role in shaping the borough's identity and future direction, whether that be on climate action and inward investment, or health and culture. Throughout the pandemic, our partners stepped up and partnerships have continued to grow stronger, with unwavering support from both officers and Members. We are now enabling and facilitating others to lead and regularly acting as convener.

→ **REGENERATION, ECONOMY AND SKILLS:** Our ambition is for economic growth that benefits our residents. We're intentional with the use of our own capacity and resources to achieve this, often using other organisations and seed funding to unlock major opportunities. The Business Case for Growth is our strategic plan to deliver inclusive growth and unlock regeneration, housing, jobs and investment.

Our annual Opportunity Hounslow Conference, this year held in partnership with the University of West London, convenes leaders from business, education, development and the community to shape Hounslow's future. It focused on opportunities associated with the Great West Road, celebrating its centenary year, and Feltham in the west of the borough. We work with partners, such as the Golden Mile Developer Forum and Feltham Town Centre Partnership, in our role as convener and influencer of economic growth.

Our Limitless Strategy aims to unlock the full potential of every resident by transforming lifelong learning, skills and employment services. It will reduce inequality, improve access to good work, and ensure local talent is matched with economic opportunity across the borough.

In September this year we agreed a flagship partnership between the Council, GLA and MOD to deliver one of west London's most ambitious regeneration projects on MOD land in Feltham. It will transform the town centre, breathing new life into the area and delivering a significant number of new affordable homes, jobs, and community facilities. Beyond Feltham, we have a pipeline across five sites for almost 1,500 new council homes.

→ **CLIMATE:** We have set an ambitious target of being a net zero council by 2030, and borough by 2050. This requires system-wide leadership across housing, transport, business and behaviour change. The Council is leading key climate initiatives, notably the development of a new District Heat Network and the Hounslow Green Investment scheme, which will channel new investment into local environmental projects.

→ **HEALTH AND CARE:** Our Borough-Based Partnership brings health, community services and local authority services together to remove barriers and enable collaboration. Successes such as the Alcohol Care Team, Enhanced Dementia Care and the Pentagon discharge model show the value of joint working. A new integrated model of care, Hounslow Care Together, will support frail adults and those with complex needs. The model puts residents at its heart, strips out fragmentation to avoid unnecessary referrals and improves independence and wellbeing. Our approach is to design, test, learn and create a model that can be rolled out across the borough, and potentially beyond once the benefits of the model are established. The Council's focus is on where it adds most – convening partners, enabling prevention, embedding community insight, and ensuring investment supports health and environmental priorities.

→ **BRAND AND IDENTITY:** Our new place brand, co-created with partners and communities, presents a compelling story of Hounslow as a place to live, work, visit, do business and invest. A newly formed Place Brand Network is now driving this forward, ensuring we harness this shared ambition, attract the people, businesses and investment we want, and enhance our profile and influence.

→ **CULTURE:** Culture plays a vital role in shaping our place identity, enabling residents to share stories, build skills, improve wellbeing and strengthen community cohesion. We work closely with partners and stakeholders through our Cultural Providers Network to deliver a cultural offer that reflects the borough's diverse communities. A new Culture Strategy being launched this year will articulate a shared vision for culture and model for delivery.

→ **VISION 2050:** Our Vision 2050 project will shape the borough's direction over the next 25 years. Based on horizon scanning, trend analysis, scenario planning and wide-spread engagement on what our communities want for the future, it will act as a North Star to guide policies and longer-term strategic thinking.

The many statutory and non-statutory boards and forums in Hounslow create much opportunity for collaboration, recently leading to initiatives such as the Hounslow Assembly which brings together diverse partners to address key challenges across the borough. Building on this momentum, the Council is shaping the Promise Initiative to support young people to thrive through enhanced employability and wellbeing opportunities. Such efforts reflect a strategic commitment to partnership, place leadership and inclusive growth, but require considerable effort in aligning and working alongside partner organisations. Silo working can still persist across the system. Our challenge is to ensure meetings are aspirational, not merely procedural.

We also recognise that leadership forums inside the council need clearer connections to delivery on the ground. Staff feedback from the Hounslow Leadership Group suggests people want stronger links between corporate discussions and their day-to-day work. Embedding leadership development consistently across forums is the next step.

STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

We harness the mix of the diversity of our staff, Members and communities by ensuring diverse voices shape decision-making. Our community Equality Partnerships (on race, disability, women, LGBTQ+ and sensory equality) provide direct checks on policy. Our recognition of care experience as a protected characteristic makes us one of the first councils in the country to do so. Diversity strengthens our leadership, making it more representative and more accountable.

COMMUNITY COHESION

One of the greatest positives of our 2024 residents' survey was that 88% see their local area as a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This stands well above the national benchmark, and more positive still is that there was no decline from the previous survey.

Crime in Hounslow remains below the London average, but many residents still feel unsafe, particularly at night. Closing this perception gap is the priority of the Community Safety Partnership, which aims for communities to both be safe and feel safe. Initiatives such as Safer Communities Action Days, youth engagement, and the Violence Against Women and Girls Plan show progress, though sustained collaboration with residents, Members and VCSE groups is vital.

Our Prevent and Counter Extremism work demonstrates strong local leadership through safeguarding, inter-school debates, and community projects that build resilience against misinformation. The Council has continued to fund this work even with the withdrawal of Home Office funding. This is further enhanced by our Counter Terrorism Preparedness Plan which strengthens our capacity and the CONTEST Board, chaired by the Lead Member for Communities, ensuring coordinated action across statutory and community partners.

COMMUNICATING THE AMBITION, DELIVERY AND CHALLENGES

The Council's corporate communications function tells our story, and that of the borough and its communities, across a range of channels, from quarterly magazines and printed marketing materials, to social media and e-newsletters. Our reach continues to grow year-on-year, with many tens of thousands of people subscribing to various platforms and products, and our evaluation measures show we perform well against industry benchmarks. Our latest residents' survey found 67% of people felt informed about the council; an increase on the previous survey and above the national average.

The communications support offer to council colleagues and Members continues to improve, empowering them to better deliver day-to-day communications and advocate for the council, freeing the corporate communications team to focus on more strategic priorities. Adapting approaches and content to connect with a greater diversity of residents is also a priority, a key element of which is the greater use of community organisations or representatives to disseminate our messages.



SECTION 3:

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Strong foundations

Since the last Corporate Peer Challenge, Hounslow has significantly strengthened its governance arrangements. We have worked to ensure decision-making is transparent, Member-led and well-supported by clear officer processes. The Constitution has been refreshed, providing clarity on delegations, reducing reliance on single-Member decisions and strengthening accountability. The Leader of the Council has emphasised the importance of this, and it's particularly reflected in capital spend decisions where Members are instrumental.

At the heart of this progress are our organisational values and the One Hounslow approach, which shape how officers and Members work together and with residents. These values are embedded not only in formal processes but also in day-to-day behaviours, creating a shared cultural foundation of openness, transparency, challenge and scrutiny. Having stood the test of time, they remain a real strength across the organisation.

Our Governance Statement sets out the strategies, systems and processes in place that form the Council's governance arrangement covering the six core principles set out in the CIPFA good governance framework 2016 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. Cabinet, Scrutiny, Audit and Governance, Planning and Licensing committees provide the statutory structure. Cabinet Members hold clear portfolios, supported by senior officers and aligned with corporate priorities. Overview and Scrutiny has been recognised as effective and impactful, with a recent review by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, completed in spring 2024, confirming this while identifying areas for further strengthening, such as prioritised work programming aligned to corporate priorities and resident outcomes.

We have strengthened regular reporting through Finance, Performance and Risk meetings. Audit and Governance Committee provides assurance on risk management, financial performance, and constitutional matters. It also acts as the Standards Committee, promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct among Members.

A new Assurance Board with officer representation from across the Council ensures our statutory duties are effectively discharged, efficiently implemented and any issues, risks, lessons and good practice are shared.

RELATIONSHIPS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Council is Member-led and relationships between Members and officers are constructive, characterised by a positive blend of formal governance and informal collaboration. Formally, the Member-Officer Protocol underpins these relationships. It ensures roles are understood and respected.

A senior leadership development programme has included work on respectful challenge, accountability and resilience and fed into the refreshed behaviours framework. All Members, whether new or returning councillors, attend an intensive induction programme, followed by a development programme for the life of the administration, combining structured development sessions with discursive briefings, delivered flexibly to suit councillors' preferences and availability. This helps ensure Members are well-equipped for their leadership role and supports a consistent culture of respectful challenge and learning.



DECISION-MAKING

Decisions are taken at multiple levels: full Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Members, sub-committees and officers under delegation. These are supported by the Forward Plan and the Hounslow Advance Report Plan (HARP), a version of the Forward Plan used internally to manage decisions and items that need to progress to Members or Chief Officers ensuring visibility.

Officer-level governance has been better codified. Processes ensure the right colleagues are engaged at the right time, from cross-directorate input into policy and projects to assurance on financial and risk matters. This has reduced reliance on individual judgement and created clearer accountability lines. Working together to ensure governance is robust is continuous.

While processes are embedded, they require ongoing development to ensure consistent quality and accessibility of decision-making. Greater ownership is also needed at Director level to strengthen accountability across the system and ensure codified officer governance is fully understood and applied.

SCRUTINY AND AUDIT

We are committed to openness and transparency. Our Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meets up to six times a year and oversees three thematic panels. The OSC scrutinises the budget, performance, and Cabinet decisions, with the ability to “call in” decisions for reconsideration. In 2024 the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny commended the introduction of our Scrutiny in a Day model; a focussed, one-day event to explore an issue in depth, complementing the work of the formal committees. In 2025, the Scrutiny in a Day topic was Neighbourhood Enforcement, a service that directly affects residents’ sense of safety and community wellbeing, with Scrutiny’s recommendations now informing the Council’s Enforcement Review.

External challenge is important. We commission independent reviews where needed and welcome Ombudsman feedback and complaints as opportunities to improve. We also use audit findings to identify weaknesses, implement corrective actions, and track improvements.

Our approach ensures transparency and accountability, drives organisational learning and delivers resident-focused service improvements.

RISK MANAGEMENT

We fully revised our approach to risk management in 2022 and a refreshed framework, considered by Cabinet this Autumn, will continue to be reviewed regularly. The Corporate Leadership Team owns and monitors the Corporate Risk Register, reported quarterly to Audit and Governance Committee. Directorate and project risk registers sit beneath this.

We are embedding risk management more fully in decision-making, increasing engagement beyond CLT through more dynamic reporting and strengthening organisational culture around risk.

Risk management needs deeper ownership across the organisation. We are embedding a renewed One Hounslow emphasis on accountability to close the gap between process and practice.

WORKFORCE CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Driven by our values, our Organisational Wellness Strategy is currently being refreshed and focuses on wellness, inclusion and development. It defines what this means for the people who work for and with us, and the skills, behaviours and culture we need to deliver transformation successfully.

The strategy is built on four guiding principles which enable our people to thrive: Connect, Belong, Grow and Flourish. Our People, Equality and OD teams lead on creating the cultural and structural conditions for success, framed by our One Hounslow values. Regular check-ins are in place to support performance, wellbeing and feedback.

Our approach to workforce development includes:

- ➔ **LEADERSHIP AND COLLEAGUE FRAMEWORKS:** developed through Values Refresher workshops in 2025, these define what brilliant leadership looks like at Hounslow - inclusive, authentic, values-driven - and support all colleagues to live our values in everything they do, every day.
- ➔ **LEADERSHIP GOALS:** embedded into performance conversations and development pathways, ensuring consistency.
- ➔ **RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK:** replaces traditional disciplinary and grievance procedures with a restorative approach focused on resolving issues quickly and constructively.

- **TRANSFORMATION THROUGH ENGAGEMENT:** a new approach to delivering people change.
- **LOCAL POTENTIAL:** talent pathways for young residents and staff to grow skills and careers within the borough.
- **CORPORATE PARENTING:** recognising care experience as a protected characteristic and supporting young people into apprenticeships and employment.
- **EVERYDAY LEARNING:** creating a culture where all staff are learners, innovators and contributors to improvement.

Personal development is built into everyday practice. At Hounslow, colleagues have clear routes for growth, supported by managers and the People, Equality and Organisational Development teams. Development is guided by our One Hounslow values and behaviours, Leadership Competencies, Colleague Competencies and the EDI Strategy ensuring consistency across the organisation. Meetings and progress are recorded and reviewed through Clear Review, with a strong emphasis on linking learning to performance and service improvement.

Our current offer for development is strong and uptake is significant: 107 colleagues are undertaking Level 3 and Level 5 apprenticeships, with a further 51 staff on upskilling apprenticeships. 160 leaders have completed EDI workshops, and a Data Academy for 30 additional staff will start in early 2026. In addition, each directorate has its own tailored development work to meet service needs. Success in personal development is measured through both quantitative data and the lived experiences and feedback of our colleagues and communities.

The My Experience Matters (MEM) survey in 2024 showed strong engagement, inclusion and pride in working for Hounslow. However, it also highlighted areas where improvement is needed: career progression, visibility and communication from senior leaders, and greater consistency of inclusion across different demographic groups.

Looking ahead, the new two-year Diversity and Inclusion Plan (launched June 2025) will be supported by directorate-level briefings, focus groups, and integration of MEM data into EDI dashboards and action plans.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Effective internal communication is central to our One Hounslow ethos, ensuring that every colleague feels informed, valued and connected to our shared purpose.

We recognise that communication is a two-way process. Recent staff surveys and feedback sessions have highlighted the need for more opportunities for colleagues to share their views, ask questions and influence decisions. In response, we have introduced regular Q&A sessions (known as LBH Live) with senior leaders alongside a range of channels – weekly all-staff bulletins, leadership briefings and virtual and in-person events - to keep staff updated on key developments, celebrate achievements and share important organisational news. We have created new forums for staff to contribute ideas and feedback using employee engagement apps like Viva Engage.

Our focus is on making internal communications even more inclusive and responsive. We are working to ensure that messages reach all parts of the organisation, including frontline teams and that communication supports wellbeing, inclusion and a sense of belonging. By embedding regular feedback loops and acting on what we hear, we aim to build a culture where every colleague feels listened to and empowered to contribute to Hounslow's success.

COMPANY GOVERNANCE

The Council commissions its wholly owned companies, the Lampton Group, to deliver a range of environmental services - grounds maintenance, leisure, recycling and waste collection, and housing repairs and maintenance. Lampton Investment holds a portfolio of 629 properties providing much needed homes for local residents.

The Hounslow set of companies operates to its own Board overseen by a Council Shareholder Committee. Governance for the companies was refreshed completely in 2023 providing clarity over accountability and decision making and included a new business growth framework. The Shareholder Committee meets quarterly to review financial and operational performance against the business plan which is itself agreed by Cabinet.

This model has strengthened governance over council-owned companies, though ensuring transparency, accountability and alignment with council priorities remains an ongoing focus. This reflects our broader commitment to codified officer governance, constitutional clarity and effective Member-led oversight.

SECTION 4:

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Clear on priorities and position

Hounslow has been financially resilient compared with many councils, but the challenges we now face are significant and growing. Like many other local authorities, we face structural pressures from inflation, rising service demand, the housing crisis, uncertainty in national funding and shifts in welfare policy. One per cent of inflation costs us around £4m annually.

We are clear about our priorities and financial position, and we align resources accordingly through the Corporate Plan and One Hounslow Financial Strategy. Financial management has been guided by the OHFS, approved in September 2022, which provides the medium-term financial framework for 2022–26. It marked a shift to more structured financial planning, management and performance.

Hounslow benchmarks regularly against other councils through LG Inform and LGA tools. This shows that, while our financial resilience is stronger than some, we face similar trajectory risks. We also draw on external challenge, including CIPFA guidance, independent reviews and LGA support. This ensures our approach is not insular and that we learn from best practice across the sector.

GENERAL FUND

The Council's original 2025/26 General Fund service budget is £245m and is broken down across directorates as follows:

Communities and Strategy	£24m
Children and Adult Services	£127m
Finance and Resources	£25m
Health and Social Care Integration	£16m
Regeneration, Housing and Environmental Services	£53m

Our reserves have been managed prudently over the years, but are now significantly reduced, having been appropriately invested to support transformation activity in the Delivery Plan, including a new Children's Model of Care, a comprehensive plan for Adult Social Care System Reform and our Transforming the Community Experience programme to enable residents to access many more services online, by phone and face-to-face at any of our borough-wide community hubs.

Alongside tighter revenue management, capital delivery and balance-sheet risks are in focus. Our Capital Strategy Board oversees the programme and pipeline of capital projects and provides robust scrutiny and challenge on expenditure decisions ahead of progression to formal approval.



HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Hounslow is the landlord for around 13,200 council homes, including around 900 sheltered homes for older people. The Council is also the freeholder for 3,000 leasehold properties. Similar to other Social Housing landlords, Hounslow is experiencing long-term financial challenges for its Housing Revenue Account (HRA). These challenges reflect ongoing demand for affordable social housing and statutory limits on allowable rent levels.

Against this backdrop the Council has continued to deliver new and improved housing stock and has aligned the HRA Business plan development and OHFS strategy with the principles and processes applied across General Fund services.

The 2025/26 HRA Business plan is a good case study of how a multi-disciplinary approach can maintain strategic outcomes within the context of building back financial resilience. The refreshed HRA Business plan was published alongside the 2025/26 budget, and a specific savings programme has been developed to support delivery of the business plan and the rebuild of HRA general reserves. A range of actions have been implemented including strengthened demand management of repairs, contract and specification reviews, enhanced asset management and a comprehensive review of the capital programme has been undertaken.

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

The Council's 2025/26 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget is £378m. The Council entered into the DfE's Safety Valve programme in 2022/23 which is based on funding contributions from the DfE (£26m) and the Council's General Fund (£12m). The Council is currently on track to fulfil its agreement and reach a balanced High Needs budget by 2027/28, while recognising that the largest reductions in cost and the most significant changes are being implemented over the next two financial years. The programme is managed through the SEND and Alternative Provision Transformation Board and there is regular dialogue with the DfE, alongside the usual Safety Valve governance processes and monitoring returns.

While the Council works closely with schools, and that partnership working has been key in reducing the DSG deficit, school balances have reduced over the last few years and currently stand at £2.8m. The Council is currently undertaking a programme of work across its schools to address the deterioration in schools financial position, aligned to the wider

work on financial resilience and following the production of three-year budget forecasts and participation in the DfE Schools Resource Management Adviser Programme.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE

Addressing financial sustainability is one of our strategic priorities. We designed a robust and inclusive approach that focussed on income and spending, and on cost and value. We have the rigor of routine monitoring alongside deep-dives into areas of high spend. We apply a robust approach to contract management as well as our direct expenditure, revenue and capital. By holding this deeper knowledge we retain the agility to manage situations as they arise.

We hold budget holders to account through monthly progress reports to CLT and Cabinet, and quarterly assurance through Audit and Governance Committee and Finance, Performance and Risk meetings. Actions focus on savings delivery, reserves strategy, capital re-profiling, company oversight, and strengthening accountability and financial literacy across the organisation. During the last year we have introduced further mechanisms to deliver a continuous and dynamic approach to financial management as well as in year controls:

- **'STAR CHAMBERS'** chaired by the Chief Executive have provided rigorous review sessions with senior officers to test assumptions, identify savings and ensure alignment with priorities.
- **A CORPORATE CONTROL GROUP** provides oversight of spend and recruitment, with tightened authorisation thresholds.
- **CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEWS** ensure major investment is affordable, deliverable and aligned with strategy.
- **CONTRACT REVIEWS AND STANDARD FINANCE TEMPLATES** ensure focus on reducing cost and driving consistency.
- **IMPROVED FORWARD-LOOKING ANALYSIS** supports work to anticipate demand/cost drivers and prioritise prevention.
- **THE COMMISSIONING, PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** structures our commissioning, procurement and contract management activity, ensuring decisions are strategically aligned, comply with governance requirements, and deliver value for money.

These mechanisms position us well to address the acute financial challenges which face the sector and lead to improved understanding and visibility. Changes to the OHFS and budget process include earlier savings development, tougher assurance gates, clearer ownership and a reserves rebuild plan.

Complementing this is an emphasis on embedding a commercial mindset and approach to increase income generation. An organisational-wide project is underway to realise the commercial potential across the organisation.

FUTURE DEMAND AND INTELLIGENCE

We are developing our approach to better analyse future demand and build a programme of work that focuses on prevention. By investing in early help, digital transformation and community capacity, we reduce demand and improve outcomes.

Our Social Care modelling uses robust forecasting across adults' and children's services to inform long-term planning, enabling earlier, preventative support that reduces reliance on high-cost interventions and helps people maintain independence.

The Children Affected by Domestic Abuse project (CADA) offers therapeutic support for children, young people and non-abusive parents affected by domestic abuse. The first of its kind in the UK, this coordinated early intervention work, in partnership with the police, schools and nurseries, supports families before they reach crisis. In 2022, the outcome of the CADA project evaluation calculated a £1.2m cost avoidance to the Council and improved outcomes for young people.

These are long-term investments that require upfront cost but deliver financial and social dividends.

LAMPTON GROUP

The financial position of the Lampton Group is managed by the company Executive Team, overseen by the Group Board and scrutinised by the Council Shareholder Committee. The financial position comprises a number of distinct elements.

The draft accounts for 2025/26, in the final stages of audit show the companies had a gross turnover of over £95m. Over £50m is attributable to services provided to the Council and £16m from operating leisure centres. A further £9m is received from rental income, £8m from completion of the New Road Triangle development, £10m of intragroup activity and £2m from other trading activities.

The Council has provided a loan of £226m to Lampton Investment 360 Ltd which has been used to acquire 629 residential properties, providing much needed homes for residents in the borough.

The 2025/26 Business Plan and report to Cabinet in February 2025 sets out the detail of the financial position for the Group itself. It outlines a path towards stability, by reducing costs, improving efficiency and applying organic growth principles to its business plan. The company also acknowledges the context of the challenges from the past few years and is developing the next iteration of its business plan to tackle the £13.9m structural deficit over the medium-term.

The financial position is being addressed through reductions in the corporate over-head of £1m in 2024/25, a review of the rental levels on the investment portfolio, securing additional commissioned work for council services to increase productivity and putting in place a new contract for housing maintenance. The Council and Lampton Group have also commissioned an external review to develop options to ensure Lampton Investment 360 Ltd is able to service and repay the loan from the Council.

SECTION 5:

CAPACITY FOR IMPROVEMENT

Transformation: the new normal

Hounslow continues to deliver high-quality services that residents value and depend upon. This strong baseline provides confidence in the organisation's ability to meet current needs, and we are equally clear that transformation is essential if we are to remain resilient, sustainable and responsive in the years ahead.

Our Delivery Plan, underpinned by the One Hounslow approach to transformation, provides actionable steps across people, capital and digital priorities. It has shown our ability to do new; to deliver both small and large-scale change. We take a flexible and responsive approach, willing to adapt, change course and innovate where needed, always with a mind to collaboration. We recognise the need to design, test and learn refining programmes over time. This prevents paralysis by perfectionism and ensures progress, even in challenging contexts.

The Council's Programme and Project Management framework provides governance, standard processes, and stage-gate approvals to support delivery. While this creates the foundations for strong delivery, the challenge is ensuring consistency of application across all portfolios and services.

TRACK RECORD

The Council has a strong track record of delivery, with evidence over several years of being able to translate ambition into action. Delivery Plan programmes such as SEND and Alternative Provision, Youth Skills and Employment Guarantee, and the Radical Overhaul of Consultation and Engagement have demonstrated how this approach can succeed, but other programmes have been slower to embed benefits.

Our programme to Transform the Community Experience represents a central plank of the Council's ambition to improve the resident journey. It comprises a review and redesign of the access arrangements for all frontline services drawing on digital capability, a new Resident Experience and Improvement

Service, and in-person advice and support available at Community Hubs across the borough that incorporate the library service and adult education, and are supported directly by our voluntary and community organisations.

WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION AND RESILIENCE

Strategic workforce planning is central to transformation. We have strengthened succession planning, expanded apprenticeships, and introduced inclusive learning pathways. Initiatives such as diverse recruitment panels, targeted programmes for under-represented managers, and publication of pay gap data are positive steps.

Where transformation requires changes to structures and roles, this process is guided by our Transformation Through Engagement principles and policy. This sets out our commitment to open and clear dialogue, collaboration and empowerment; ensuring that our people have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and expertise at every stage of the transformation process.

Each Directorate now has EDI dashboards and priorities, supported by a two-year Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. The challenge is ensuring these structures lead to visible improvements in progression and representation, particularly at senior levels.

The Council employs 2,607 staff, equating to 2,423 full-time equivalents, and is committed to fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture that supports staff wellbeing, development and retention.

Average sickness absence stands at 6 days per employee per year, and the staff turnover rate is 5.7%, with the highest proportion of leavers (31%) having between 1–3 years of service. These metrics are closely monitored to identify trends and inform targeted interventions, particularly in areas with recruitment or retention challenges.

To strengthen workforce resilience and reduce turnover, the Council is investing in talent development and career pathways. This includes a growing apprenticeship programme, with 191 staff currently enrolled, and a focus on encouraging internal progression and upskilling, especially among underrepresented groups.

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

We have access to high-quality, accurate service data. We are developing our Business Intelligence function and working hard to bring together and use data effectively, both using the tools we already have and identifying new applications to improve our systems further. Developing this capability, and ensuring we exploit the potential of Artificial Intelligence, is a clear organisational priority. Work to achieve this is underway through the Corporate Services Review and the development of a new project in the Delivery Plan dedicated to Business Intelligence.

We are increasingly using data to drive policy. Our Annual Public Health Report identifies CORE20 areas where health inequalities are most pronounced, and our Equality Opportunity Areas framework does the same for wider socio-economic inequality. These have informed changes to our approaches which have, often in collaboration with partners, yielded meaningful benefits and improved outcomes.

Our ability to capture, interpret and share data is increasing, especially through the ongoing development of our Data Hub. We are proactively breaking down silos, ensuring the evidence drives decisions across the organisation. Our focus is on embedding a culture of evidence-based decision making, and ensuring that performance data, risk management and community insight inform each other.

DIGITAL

The Hounslow Digital Strategy 2021 – 25 set out a vision that ‘We will use digital to create connected and inclusive communities in Hounslow supported by innovative and digitally optimised services.’ This has then been delivered through four pillars:

- Staff and workforce
- Services and customers
- Place and community
- Collaboration and data

A review of the Strategy, currently underway, will lead to more focus on harnessing artificial intelligence, not only to free up staff time, for example by exploiting opportunities to summarise case notes in social care, but to use predictive analysis and programme future work.

CLIMATE AND NET ZERO

We declared a climate emergency in 2019 and are taking decisive action to address the environmental challenges facing the borough. Central to this commitment is the Climate Emergency Action Plan adopted in 2020 and currently undergoing a mid-term review. The plan sets out a clear roadmap to achieve net zero emissions for council operations by 2030, while supporting borough-wide decarbonisation by 2050 and enhancing climate resilience.

The Council’s approach is structured around three strategic pillars:

- **DECARBONISING COUNCIL OPERATIONS** – working to eliminate carbon emissions from our own estate, fleet and operations by 2030.
- **BOROUGH-WIDE EMISSIONS REDUCTION** – includes a Local Area Energy Plan outlining a phased approach to decarbonising the borough; a District Heating Network using waste heat from a sewage treatment works to provide low-carbon heating to homes and businesses; a Net Zero Neighbourhoods feasibility study exploring how to attract private investment to retrofit homes and support sustainable living.
- **BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE** – a Climate Change Resilience Plan will assess and address climate risks across services, infrastructure and vulnerable communities. This plan will consolidate existing efforts and identify gaps to ensure the borough is prepared for the impacts of climate change.



Together, these initiatives reflect Hounslow's ambition to lead by example, foster innovation, and work collaboratively with residents, businesses, and partners to create a greener, healthier, and more sustainable future.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Improving how we engage has been front and centre of this administration's priorities and public commitments. We believe public services are strongest when shaped with, not just for, the people they serve. That ethos has driven a major shift in how we engage, consult, and co-produce over recent years.

The Radical Overhaul of Consultation and Engagement programme transformed engagement from fragmented and inconsistent to coordinated, representative and inclusive. The new principles, practices and processes it developed were shaped by more than 1,200 staff, Members, residents and partners in a range of different ways, including an independent Citizens Jury. It created a hub-and-spoke model that supports the delivery of our new, co-created engagement principles, and embeds the new protocols, processes and evaluation measures to add rigour and a spirit of continuous improvement.

Other elements include a new Residents' Panel of more than 2,000 people representative of the borough; an Engagement Network to support the coordination and sharing of best practice internally and between partners; a comprehensive toolkit advises staff on good engagement and how to reach different groups; and refreshed Area Forums transforming what were poorly attended meetings into vibrant, community-led events with 60+ attendees, live action plans and trackers.

Demonstrations of the step-change in participation and reach include 1,580 people shaping our EDI strategy, 826 giving views on the future of Brentford Fountain Leisure Centre, more than 2,000 engaging in Vision 2050, and a further 2,000 young people helping develop our Children and Young People's Plan. As well as ROCE improving our engagement outcomes, it's also reduced significantly what service areas were spending on commissioning third-party engagement.

While our engagement is strong, there is more to do. Adult social care and SEND can demonstrate genuine coproduction where new approaches and partnerships are shaping services, but we want to embed this deeper level of engagement in more areas.

TRANSITION TO CAPACITY-BUILDING

Our approach is evolving from strong engagement towards deeper community capacity-building and peer connection. While meaningful engagement with the Council will always matter, we recognise that lasting strength comes when communities can support one another.

Through Community Development Networks (CDNs), around 100 VCSE organisations and residents come together each month to collaborate, share resources and form new partnerships. These networks are community-led rather than council-driven, reflecting an asset-based model that values the skills, knowledge and resilience already present locally. The goal is empowerment, ensuring communities work alongside the Council rather than depend on it.

Our VCSE sector is one of the borough's greatest assets, with more than 800 active organisations. The Thriving Communities Strategy (2024–28) sets a clear framework for partnership and investment. Support ranges from the Thriving Communities Fund, which enables community-led projects, to commissioned infrastructure support through Hounslow CVS, providing leadership and advocacy for the sector. The Volunteer Centre helps organisations recruit and retain volunteers, while joint commissioning with the NHS and VCSE partners delivers preventative and specialist services. These investments go beyond funding: they are about creating a sector that is resilient, collaborative and able to influence strategically.

Looking ahead, our focus is on stronger connections between programmes and places, and on deepening shared ownership of change. We will strengthen co-production, scaling up community networks and asset-based approaches. We will continue to prioritise inclusion, ensuring that under-represented groups are heard, and create space for open and honest conversations about trade-offs and competing priorities.

REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL ROLE

Hounslow contributes meaningfully to sub-regional and London-wide thinking. Across West London we are leading work on growth, health and care integration, climate, digital, housing, resilience, aviation and skills. Our Place Brand and Business Case for Growth position us as leaders in regional conversations. This external role strengthens our improvement capacity by bringing insight, partnership and influence from beyond our borders.

FUTURE POSITIONING

Our track record shows we can deliver, but there is more to do to fully realise our ambitions. We're simplifying and better integrating diverse systems, and improving our approach to business intelligence, performance, and financial and risk management. The Delivery Plan has enabled significant progress, but the Council must now be more selective and outcome-focused in setting priorities in the face of funding pressures and limited capacity. By addressing challenges candidly, and building on examples of success, we can sustain improvement and ensure transformation becomes business-as-usual.

As we look to the future, our focus is on four themes:

Ensuring our organisation is efficient, modern and forward looking. Our review of corporate services will support the design of a new operating model for the Council. Corporate and enabling functions will work together, work for the services we provide, and deliver a sustainable financial position.

A relentless focus on service improvement and transformation, driving value for money and innovation to balance meeting current, while preventing future, needs.

Community leadership, harnessing the efforts of local partners, securing inward investment and building community capacity.

Making a strong contribution to public policy development and practice – locally with other public services, sub-regionally and into London and nationally. Our innovation and creativity, our resident-first approach, our robust programme and performance management arrangements position us well we look to make a bigger contribution to sector led improvement.

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY: Heston in the Loop

Heston in the Loop was a 12-month circular economy initiative led by the Council in collaboration with ReLondon, a Mayor of London led partnership to improve waste and resource management, and 21 delivery partners. It demonstrated how neighbourhood-based interventions can cut waste and emissions while building stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities, and in 2025 won the MJ Award for Innovation in Delivering Sustainability and Social Value.

Launched in March 2023, it was designed to embed sustainability into everyday life in Heston, which was selected because of its vulnerability to climate change and relatively high levels of deprivation and unemployment.

It embedded circular solutions into daily life through 20 interventions in schools, shops, workplaces and community spaces. Activities targeted food, plastics, textiles, electricals, furniture, bicycles and more, and included surplus food redistribution; rental and sharing schemes; improved recycling facilities; affordable refill stations; and repair skills training and services.

OUTCOMES INCLUDED:

- Community and skills: More than 300 residents gained skills in repair, entrepreneurship and sustainable living and more than 5,300 items shared or rented.
- Environment: 629 single-use bottles eliminated, recycling up 5%, residual waste down nearly 30%, 3,400kg of food redistributed, and carbon savings up to 19 tonnes.
- Economy: 2,000+ items exchanged digitally, two tonnes of surplus food redistributed (saving £8,000), new jobs and volunteer roles created, and the Hounslow Repair Café CIC established to sustain long-term benefits.



The initiative was guided by a Theory of Change framework and underpinned by robust monitoring and evaluation. The initiative not only delivered measurable impact but also embedded circular economy principles into council policy and community identity.

CASE STUDY: Meadowbank Community Hub

Hounslow is transforming how residents access services and support through its growing Community Hub network, bringing help closer to home and tailored to local needs.

By the end of this year, all eleven Hounslow libraries will operate as Community Hubs offering flexible services and support tailored to the location that reflects the unique character and priorities of each neighbourhood.

One of the most significant developments is in Cranford, a priority area identified in our EDI strategy. Here, the Council has delivered a brand-new Community Hub and Library at the Meadowbank centre designed to improve access to education, support and community activities.

As part of this transformation the former Cranford Library was relocated into Meadowbank, a long-standing Adult Learning Centre, creating a vibrant, multi-use space. The vacated library building is now available for alternative use as part of the Council's Assets Strategy, which aims to maximise the value and efficiency of public buildings.

THE NEW MEADOWBANK COMMUNITY HUB OFFERS:

- A modern, fully accessible library, including a dedicated children's area to support early literacy and family learning.
- Integrated support services delivered by trusted local partners such as Citizens Advice, Healthy Hounslow, Crosslight and the Recovery College, covering topics from money management and employment to health and wellbeing.
- A welcoming, inclusive environment with comfortable seating and private spaces for confidential conversations and support.
- A rich adult learning programme, offering courses in digital skills, languages, arts and crafts, and more - empowering residents to learn, grow and connect.



This initiative reflects the Council's commitment to place-based working, inclusive growth, and maximising the impact of local assets, ensuring that every resident, regardless of background, can access the support they need in a way that works for them.

CASE STUDY: Hounslow Health Outreach Team

Hounslow Health Outreach Team (HOT) delivers face-to-face engagement to reduce health inequalities by offering free health checks, vaccinations and signposting to services. Using NHS England's Core20PLUS5 approach, the Council identified priority neighbourhoods and groups - such as asylum seekers, homeless individuals, and young carers - facing poor health outcomes.

From April to May 2024, the Council partnered with nine VCSE groups to engage CORE20 residents and understand barriers to good health. Key findings included high rates of chronic conditions (e.g. asthma, mental health), Low awareness of preventative services, financial stress and poor access to health services, and limited transport connectivity.

TO ADDRESS THIS, HOT DEVELOPED A FIVE-POINT PLAN:

- Local recruitment: Multilingual team of local residents
- Data-driven outreach: Targeting CORE20 and PLUS groups
- Holistic engagement: Health discussions, checks, and referrals
- Promoting key services: Mental health, befriending, debt support
- Community feedback: Interviews to inform NHS improvements



SUCCESSES INCLUDE:

Heston West: Chosen for its significant health disparities, particularly low vaccine uptake, and high A&E attendance, HOT tailored engagement and partnered with pharmacies in Heston West, increasing vaccine uptake from 4.6% to 17.2% in one week.

Traveller Communities: Historically, engaging with Hounslow's traveller communities has been challenging for health services. Over seven months, HOT built trust and introduced vaccine, sexual health and community services - boosting NHS confidence and engagement.

Community Events: HOT attends community engagement events to deliver health checks, sign-post to services and speak to residents from groups with worse than average health outcomes. Examples include Bowling Balls and Boobs & Bingo, co-designed with residents to raise cancer awareness among people with learning disabilities.

Last year, the team was 'highly commended' at the MJ Awards in the category of Innovation in Reducing Health Inequalities.



London Borough
of Hounslow

LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

POSITION STATEMENT 2025

