

Harrow

Economic Strategy

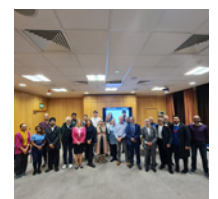
2023-2026



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

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Foreword

Councillor Norman Stevenson

Portfolio Holder for Business, Employment and Property

Welcome to Harrow's Economic Strategy 2023-26

Harrow is one of the safest places to live in London and has one of the most diverse communities in the country. Our schools and colleges deliver a high-quality education for our children and young people. We have outstanding green spaces with six Green Flag parks, including the Headstone Manor Recreation Ground which is the home of medieval buildings - Headstone Manor, Harrow Museum and The Great Barn wedding venue. Add to this the fascinating historic buildings at Harrow School on Harrow Hill, the Grade I listed Baroque St Lawrence Church in Stanmore and the old High Street in Pinner - I could list many more. All of which adds up to why people come to live here.

We are working in partnership with Wates to develop key sites in Harrow to deliver quality family homes and community spaces. This will help to boost the local economy, create jobs and improve the environment for our residents.

**We want Harrow to be a great place to live, bring up a family, work, or run a business.
This economic strategy is key to achieving this, restoring pride in Harrow and putting residents first.**



Introduction

Harrow is well-connected to the centre of the capital in under 15 minutes by train and the transport network with nearby tube stations on the Bakerloo, Jubilee, Metropolitan, Northern and Piccadilly lines and an excellent bus network. For those needing to travel further afield, Heathrow, Luton and London City airports are easily accessible.

This strategy is our framework to address some of the root causes of poverty and inequality, by addressing low skills and wages, creating jobs and addressing inequalities to improve the skills and employability of our residents and stimulating business growth and job creation. This strategy pulls together the opportunities to support the local economy, generate skills, employment and apprenticeships.

By restoring pride in Harrow, we are committed to achieving our corporate priorities:

- 1. A Council that puts residents first**
 - 2. A borough that is clean and safe**
 - 3. A place where those in need are supported**
-

This strategy sets out the Council's economic growth priorities from 2023 to 2026 and how we plan to maximise on social and economic outcomes for the benefit of local businesses and residents.

The strategy also directly supports other key related strategies including the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Climate Strategy, with a focus on developing a thriving local low carbon and low waste economy.



Our People

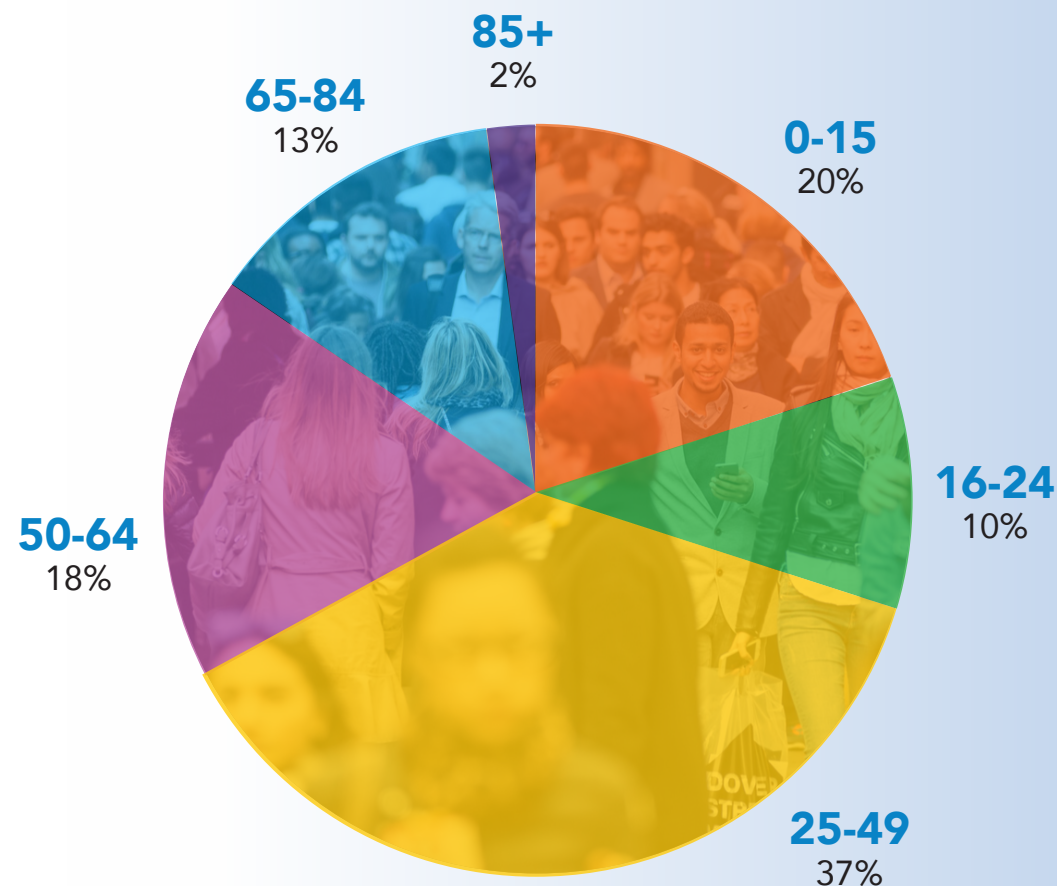
Our people

Harrow has a resident population of around 261,300¹. In the ten years between 2011 and 2021 we have seen some significant changes in our population:

- 9.3% increase in the population
- 7.8% increase in people aged 15 to 64 years, with 169k people of working age (65%)
- Growing younger population aged 0-15 of 18.5% (48,300), which is higher than the London average

The growth in the working age population and growing young population provides Harrow's economy with a distinct advantage in the labour market over areas which lack the advantages of a growing pool of economically active residents. It provides a pool of young people for post 16 options such as apprenticeships, traineeships and vocational qualifications, including in new emerging industries such as renewable energy solutions, as the wider economy increasingly transitions to low carbon solutions over coming years. This also means that Harrow's businesses will benefit from a strong growing younger population who will become part of the future workforce and contribute to the growth of the local economy. The data also indicates that Harrow is a popular destination for families.

As with most areas in the country, Harrow also has an ageing population, which is likely to lead to an opportunity for job creation in the Care Sector.



Census 2021 Harrow's population by age band

¹ Source: Census 2021

The number of men and women living in Harrow is almost equal and is made up of 132,500 women (50.7%) and 128,800 men (49.3%). Economic activity among Harrow's male population is higher than the London average at 89.2%, compared with 83.8%. Economic activity among females in the borough is also higher than the London average at 75.4%, compared with 74.9%².

6% of women in Harrow aged 16 to 64 years are self-employed, this is less than the London average of 8.5%. Whereas 13.5% of men in Harrow aged 16 to 64 years are self-employed, this is close to the London average of 14%³.

While the pandemic may have negatively impacted both genders, the shift to home working may have had a positive impact in enabling women to return to work since it has made it easier to share childcare responsibilities.

4,239 (1.65%) Harrow residents aged 16 years and over identify as being part of the LGBTQIA+⁴ community.

Harrow is one of the most culturally diverse local authorities in the UK, with over 60% of residents being Black, Asian, Multi-ethnic or Other ethnic group. This reflects the London average⁵.

Having such a highly diverse population is a source of competitive advantage and distinctiveness for Harrow.

Research undertaken by the Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) shows that with the right

support the contribution of Ethnic Minority Businesses (EMBs) to the UK economy could increase four-fold from £25bn to £100bn GVA*. The report states: "An estimated 250,000 ethnic minority-led firms contribute around £25bn per annum to the UK economy. EMBs have a strong ambition to grow; they are disproportionately involved in export activity and are more likely than non-EMBs to engage in various forms of innovation. EMBs additionally make an important social and cultural contribution by providing employment to marginalised groups excluded from the labour market, acting as vital social hubs of advice to new migrant communities to help them integrate, offering a wide range of products and services, revitalising deprived city areas and positively shaping the cultural diversity and attractiveness of British cities⁶".

The 2021 Census shows that 9.75% of Harrow's population aged 15 to 64 years have a disability this equates to 16,840 people. There is a strong correlation between disability, in particular the extent of the disability and economic inactivity. There are also particular groups that have specific obstacles in progressing to the labour market or sustaining self-employment. These include adults with learning disabilities and those with severe mental health issues. Disabled people are also likely to be under-represented among business owners within Harrow.

This aligns with the Government objective to increase employment levels for people with disabilities who are claiming benefits.

² Source: ONS annual population survey (September 2022)

³ Source: ONS employment data (June 2022)

⁴ Source: Census 2021

⁵ Source: Census 2021

⁶ Source: CREME Report: Time to Change: A Blueprint for Advancing the UK's Ethnic Minority Businesses (EMBs)

*Gross Value Added (GVA) is an economic productivity metric that measures the contribution of a corporate subsidiary, company, or municipality to an economy, producer, sector, or region.



Free training and employment
support for Harrow

ask to us about:

- Improving your skills
- Apprenticeships
- Job search
- Writing CVs and applications



- Performing at interviews
- Getting into construction
- Business mentoring
- Vocational

Our challenges

Our challenges:

- Unemployment in Harrow has almost doubled since the pandemic. In June 2019, 1.8% of working age residents aged 16 to 64 were out of work, this rose to 3.6% in February 2023⁷.
- 17.4% of Harrow residents have no qualifications and are furthest away from the job market⁸. This is higher than the London average and presents a need for more support with entry level qualifications including GCSE level English and Maths.
- Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic residents are more likely to experience barriers to employment due to lack of English language, functional and digital skills.
- Job density measures the number of jobs per working age resident and in 2021 the figure for Harrow was 0.50⁹. This is significantly lower than neighbouring boroughs and is the lowest in the West London Alliance* (WLA) region.
- Harrow is a low wage borough, with all those that are employed in the borough earning gross weekly earnings of £514.20, which is 37% less than the London average of £815.90. Women in the borough have gross weekly earnings of £485.90 and men in the borough earn £615.00. The London average earnings for women is £669.20 and for men it is £935.10¹⁰.
- Harrow's business base is predominantly micro-businesses; this means that most employee jobs are provided by a small number of larger employers. Of the 15,000 businesses operating only 102 employ 100 people or more, this equates to just 0.68% of the business base¹¹.
- There has been a decline in the number of Harrow businesses surviving beyond five years which fell from 44% in 2020 to 40.9% in 2021¹². This may be reflective of a business base dominated by micro-businesses who are likely to have struggled to stay open after the pandemic and face barriers to accessing finance.

⁷ Source: ONS claimant count

⁸ Source: Census 2021

⁹ Source: ONS jobs density

¹⁰ Source: ONS earnings by place of work: 2021

¹¹ Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register: September 2022

¹² Source: ONS Business Demography Enterprise Births, Deaths and Survivals

* The WLA is a regional public sector partnership between the seven West London local authorities - Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow.



Cost of living

Photo credit: Eduardo Soares

Cost of living

We face unprecedented times with the rise in the cost-of-living having significant impact on people's lives. While there is insufficient data available to measure the real impact that this is having on Harrow's local economy, we do know that everyone is paying more for energy and everyday living costs.

We will continue to work in close partnership with our further education providers, the voluntary and community sector, businesses and statutory bodies to ensure that those in the most need are supported and do not fall through the cracks. Partnership working will minimise the negative impact that this crisis could have on Harrow's skills levels, employment rates and business survival.

The cost-of-doing-business has also risen and there are opportunities to see how we can address this through continuing to build local supply chains and improve digital connectivity. Many businesses are finding it harder to stay open, especially those based on the high street which rely on passing trade. It is for this reason that the strategy includes a priority that is focused on our High Streets.

One of the routes that we will take to address the cost-of-living is to maximise the opportunities that will come from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), this is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious levelling up agenda, nationally it provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025.

The UKSPF invests domestic priorities and targets funding where it is needed most:

- building pride in place
- supporting high quality skills training
- supporting pay, employment and productivity growth
- increasing life chances

Harrow has been allocated £1.4m of funding to deliver projects under the UKSPF themes of Communities and Place and Supporting Local Business. Our proposal is to deliver a range of projects to support our local businesses, town centres, parks, open spaces, culture and help residents with the cost-of-living crisis.



The projects aim to develop more community facilities and amenities that residents want, so Harrow becomes the place they want to spend their time and money, creating a thriving local economy and supporting our local businesses, while providing energy advice and support for the cost-of-living.

To minimise the negative impact that the cost-of-living crisis will have, the Council and its partners are committed to working closely with and supporting the voluntary community sector to ensure that resources are directed to those that are most in need.

In January 2023, the Council hosted a summit bringing together a panel of expert speakers sharing insight on local initiatives. The panel included representatives from the Young Harrow Foundation, Harrow Voluntary Action Co-Op, Harrow Voluntary Community Sector Forum and Harrow Borough Based Partnership. There are a number of faith and community groups supporting residents with food banks, warm hubs, health and wellbeing and financial advice, that play a key role in supporting residents in the cost-of-living crisis.

The Council has pledged to sustain local action around the rising cost-of-living and support residents and businesses in the following ways:



- Reduce Council tax bills for our least well-off families
- Designing the Household Support Fund for 2023-24, including a review of the Council's support for food aid in the borough
- Roll out one-hour free parking to all Council spaces
- Free bulky waste collections
- More Council apprenticeships
- Warmer homes for the poorest 10% of residents
- Full fibre broadband to Council housing
- Reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes



Opportunities

Opportunities

Situated on the outskirts of London, Harrow's accessibility makes it an attractive location for business investment with good transport links and easy commute into central London and other destinations.

There are a large number of opportunities to deliver business growth, job creation, vibrant high streets and support residents into sustainable employment. These include:

- Build on the borough's high employment rates amongst 18 to 24 year olds by working with local employers to create jobs and apprenticeship opportunities for those that are completing 6th form and college education. In September 2022 only 3.9% of 18 to 24 year olds in Harrow were unemployed compared to 5% in London.
- Through the development of our growth sectors, investing in the economy and regenerating our high streets there is an opportunity to increase wages, create sustainable employment and improve the skills levels of our residents through apprenticeships.
- Effective engagement with the 102 organisations based in Harrow that employ over 100 people. The top three private sector employers collectively provide 6,366 jobs and have a combined turnover of £257m¹³.
- There were an estimated 31,600 green jobs in West London in 2020, of which 3,600 jobs were in Harrow (11.4%). The total number of green jobs in West London are projected to rise to 64,000 in 2030 and 122,000 in 2050, representing a near-4-fold increase¹⁴.
- The Government's recent commissioned independent report into national net zero climate change targets, published in 2023, has also emphasised that there is no future economy but a green economy and that net zero represents the economic opportunity of the 21st century¹⁵. To maximise the uptake of green jobs by Harrow residents we will ensure that the appropriate careers information, advice and guidance is available.
- The Council is working to prepare a new Local Plan, which will look to assist in delivering the strategic direction of the Council. The new Local Plan will deliver a policy framework for growth and development across the borough, including matters relating to economic development.

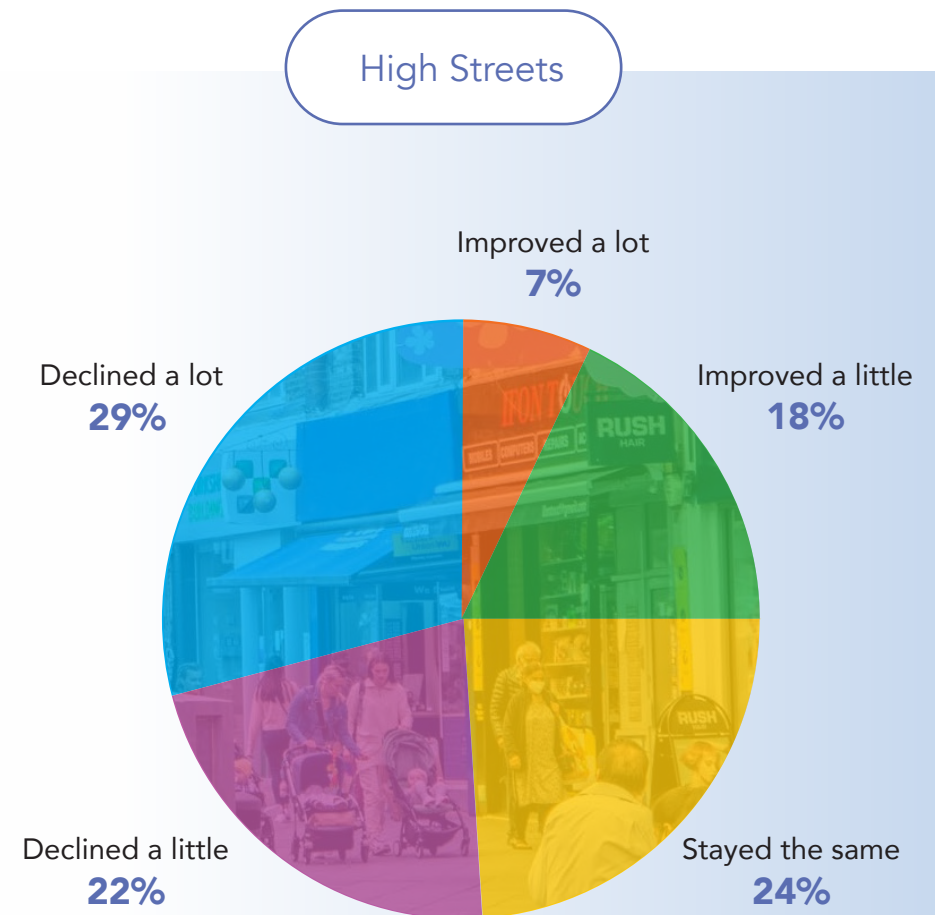
¹³ Source: Beaufhurst Harrow businesses data

¹⁴ Source: Green Jobs and Skills in West London, A WPI Economics Report for and Institute for Employment Studies Report for West London Alliance

¹⁵ Source: Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero (2023)

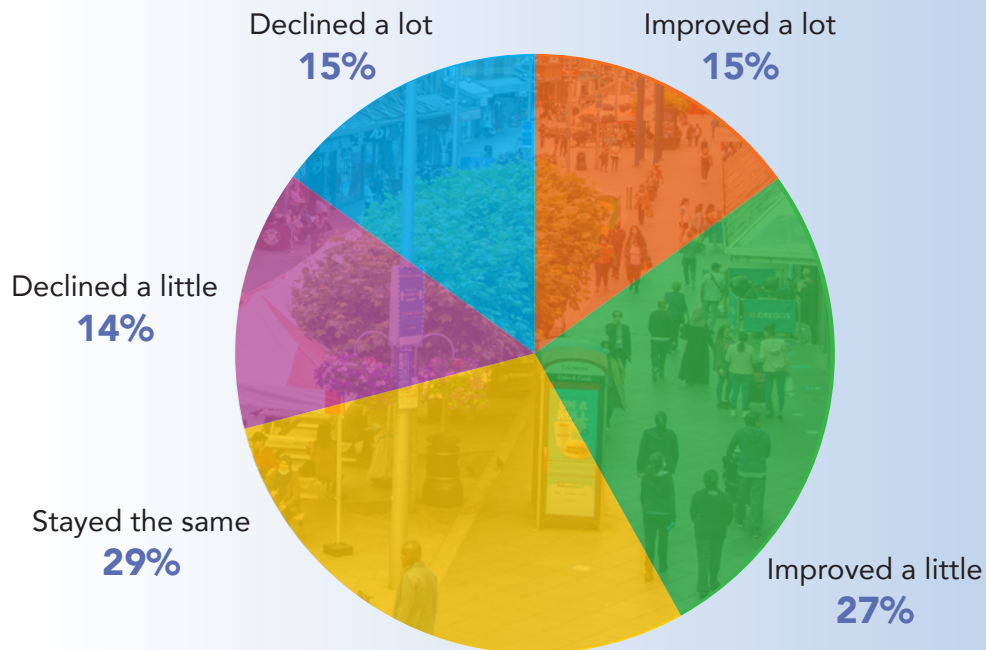
- To be focus on strengthening local spend, by having a more vibrant retail offer through inward investment. Where appropriate, the Council could support by streamlining some of the policies on procurement, licensing, parking, planning and regeneration.
- Public sector procurement activities and local supply chains can stimulate growth in the economy. SMEs will be supported to become procurement ready and have opportunities to work with the Council and other public sector bodies.
- The Council is working with providers to roll out gigabit-capable 100% full fibre broadband for thousands of local Council housing residents.
- The Council is working with providers to promote digital inclusion to help residents become more digitally empowered. The investment in full fibre broadband will also provide employment opportunities for residents.
- Social Tariffs provide a safety net for residents who are struggling to afford their broadband or phone services. This offer will be promoted to residents to increase take-up amongst those who would most benefit.
- Transport for London (TfL) are due to roll out mobile data connectivity on the entire London underground network, this is expected to be extended to other TfL assets, for example bus stops and lamp columns on main roads.

In 2019, the London Borough of Harrow carried out a Reputation Tracker survey on local people, the survey asked, "To what extent do you feel the following services have improved or declined over the last few years?" and these were the responses:

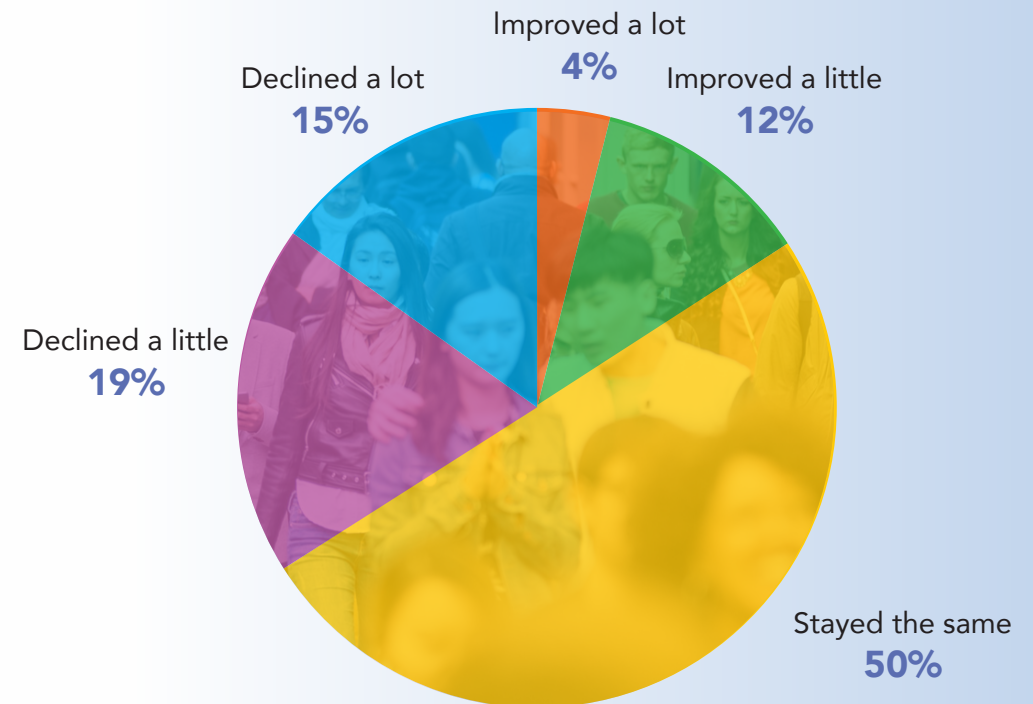


Source: London Borough of Harrow Reputation Tracker Survey 2019

Choice of
shops, restaurants and bars



Job
opportunities



In response to the survey results here are some of the interventions that will be delivered:

Investment in our town centre and high streets

Use of meanwhile use projects to reduce the amount of vacant and under used buildings and outdoor spaces

Working with partners and providers to improve digital connectivity in our high streets

Unlocking community assets to bring them to use to benefit the economy and community, such as using the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy to invest in physical improvements and the beautification of our streets and green spaces

Ensuring that new investments provide impactful social value through the creation of more local jobs, apprenticeships, traineeships and upskilling opportunities for residents

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and a green apron, is smiling and serving a glass of orange juice to a customer. She is standing behind a counter in a community kitchen. In the background, another person is visible working behind a glass partition. The kitchen has a white brick wall and wooden shelving units displaying various items like tea bags and small plants. On the table in the foreground, there are two plates of sandwiches with salad, a glass of iced coffee, a small potted plant in a metal cup, and two small white bowls.

Priority: Skills and Employability

Kickstarter working at London Community Kitchen
Photo credit: Lucy Baker

Priority: Skills and Employability

Harrow residents are well qualified and are in the top 10% in the UK for residents with high level skills. Nearly half (45%) of residents aged 16 years and over hold the equivalent of a Level 4 qualification. This is above the England and Wales average of 33.8% and just slightly lower than the London average of 48%¹⁶.

However, 17.4% of residents aged 16 and over have 'No Qualifications'. These residents are more likely to be on lower incomes or out of work. 3.2% of our residents hold 'Other Qualifications', which includes some foreign and professional qualifications. This reflects the diversity of nationalities living in Harrow.

We want to work with residents to improve their social mobility by breaking down barriers to learning, training and employment. Our goal is to upskill residents for roles that are fit for the future and targeted towards our growth business and employment sectors.

Those who are unemployed and on benefits will have a better understanding of their career options, including moving into apprenticeships, employment, or voluntary roles.

Through Harrow's local job brokerage services support will be given to residents that are transitioning from out of work benefits into paid employment.

Learn Harrow is the Council's Adult Community Learning Service and focal to its provision is to achieve the Council's priority

to support those most in need, in doing so the Community Learning programme will include targeted support for the following groups:

- Unemployed adults and residents at risk of redundancy
- Adults in low-paid employment (earning less than London Living Wage)
- Older learners, particularly those in an isolated or vulnerable situation
- Families, particularly where parents have basic English or Maths needs or who have not reached Level 2, where there is a single parent or families with complex needs
- Disabled learners including those with mild to moderate mental health issues, learning difficulties or physical and sensory impairments

There will also be a focus on increasing the participation of male learners.

Another vital element of raising the employability levels of our residents is to provide a well-rounded skills and employment support offer that does the following:

- Supports local people to gain the skills they need to access jobs in the area and delivers outreach and mentoring programmes
- Supports employers to recruit from a skilled local workforce
- Creates more sustainable and better paid entry-level jobs at the London Living Wage and above

¹⁶ Source: Census 2021

The Council's Adult Learning strategy sets out how the borough will increase the skill levels of adult residents and collaborate with schools and further education providers and funding bodies to ensure that all residents have access to opportunities that will bring them closer to achieving their aspirations.

There is also an opportunity to develop a job brokerage service with key growth sectors and micro-businesses. This will give employers access to a skilled local workforce and support residents to achieve their career aspirations. To achieve this the Council will encourage collaborative partnership working

between key partners and stakeholders including Learn Harrow, Xcite, Job Centre, Harrow and Uxbridge College, Stanmore College, Ignite Youth, Shaw Trust, Young Harrow Foundation, HA1 BID, Central and North West London NHS, Wates and other local employment, training and skills providers.

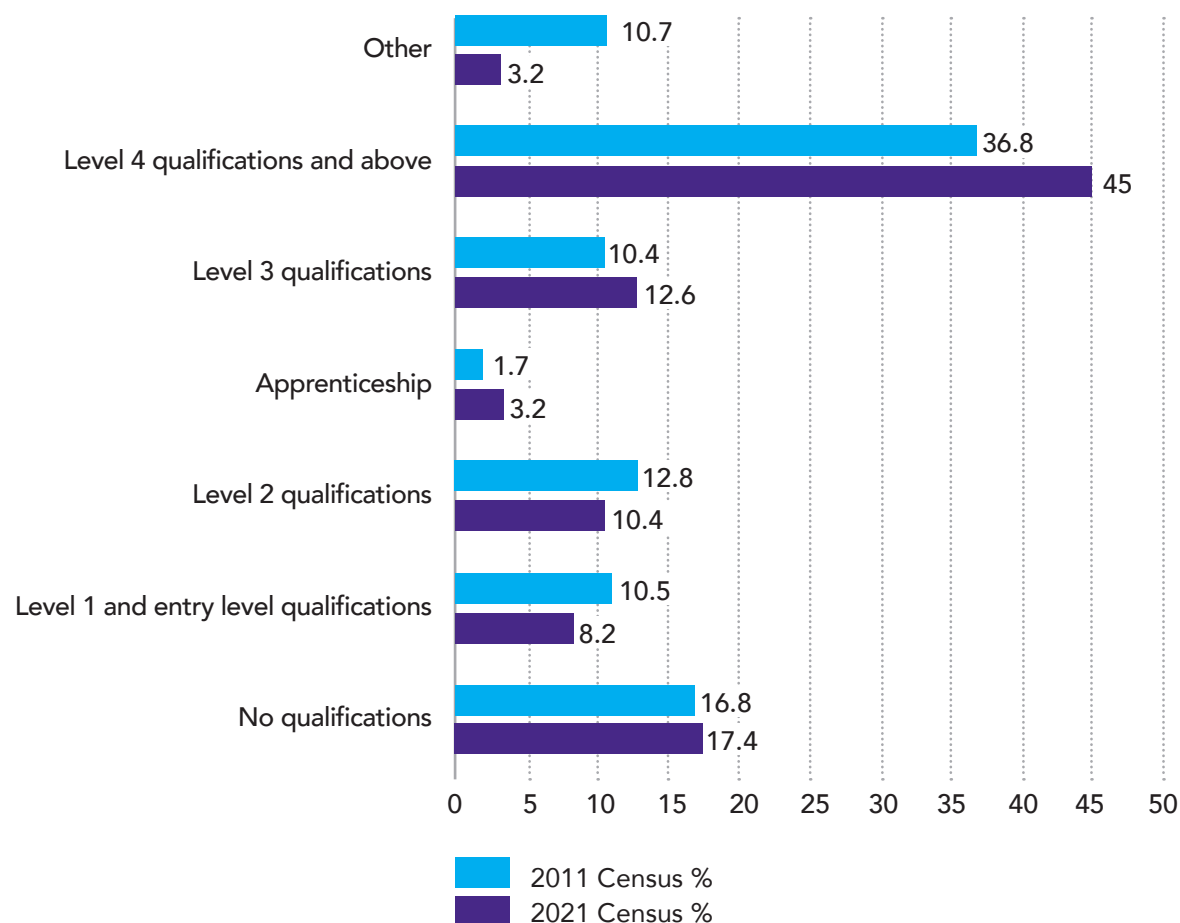
We will continue to work collaboratively with West London Alliance, to increase access to skills and support to deliver additional skills and employment support opportunities for residents. Harrow is also participating in driving the Local Skills Improvement Plan for West London. This partnership brings skills providers and employers together to ensure residents receive the right skills and training for the jobs that exist within our sub-region.

Highest level of qualification, usual residents aged 16 years and over: Harrow, London and England and Wales.

	No qualifications	Level 1 and entry level qualifications	Level 2 qualifications	Apprenticeship	Level 3 qualifications	Level 4 qualifications and above	Other
Harrow Total 2021	36,454	17,150	21,857	6,656	26,422	94,317	6,764
Harrow % 2021	17.4	8.2	10.4	3.2	12.6	45.0	3.2
London % 2021	15.7 (+1.7)	7.4 (+0.8)	9.8 (+0.6)	3.1 (+0.1)	13.1 (-0.5)	48.0 (-3.0)	3.0 (+0.2)
England & Wales % 2021	18.2 (-0.8)	9.6 (-1.4)	13.4 (-3.0)	5.3 (-2.1)	16.9 (-4.3)	33.8 (+11.2)	2.8 (+0.4)
Harrow % 2011	16.8 (+0.6)	10.9 (-2.7)	12.8 (-2.4)	1.7 (+1.5)	10.4 (+2.2)	36.8 (+8.2)	10.7 (-7.5)

Source: Census 2021

Qualifications levels of Harrow's residents aged 16 and over in 2011 and 2021



Source: Census 2021

Office for National Statistics (ONS) qualification categories definition:

- No qualifications
- **Level 1 and entry level qualifications:** 1 to 4 GCSEs grade A* to C, Any GCSEs at other grades, O levels or CSEs (any grades), 1 AS level, NVQ level 1, Foundation GNVQ, Basic or Essential Skills
- **Level 2 qualifications:** 5 or more GCSEs (A* to C or 9 to 4), O levels (passes), CSEs (grade 1), School Certification, 1 A level, 2 to 3 AS levels, VCEs, Intermediate or Higher Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma, NVQ level 2, Intermediate GNVQ, City and Guilds Craft, BTEC First or General Diploma, RSA Diploma
- **Apprenticeship**
- **Level 3 qualifications:** 2 or more A levels or VCEs, 4 or more AS levels, Higher School Certificate, Progression or Advanced Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Advance Diploma, NVQ level 3; Advanced GNVQ, City and Guilds Advanced Craft, ONC, OND, BTEC National, RSA Advanced Diploma
- **Level 4 qualifications and above:** degree (BA, BSc), higher degree (MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ level 4 to 5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, professional qualifications (for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy)
- **Other:** vocational or work-related qualifications, other qualifications achieved in England or Wales, qualifications achieved outside England or Wales (equivalent not stated or unknown)

Skills and Employability: Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

1. Support stakeholders, small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector to provide apprenticeships and training opportunities, utilising the apprenticeship levy to ensure take-up in key sectors. Utilise labour market data and support with business engagement.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, Traders Groups, HA1 BID, Voluntary Action Harrow Co-op and West London Business.

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2. Support residents to secure job opportunities created through our Harrow Strategic Development Partnership and construction programmes.

Key stakeholders: FE Colleges, Ignite Youth, Job Centre, Wates and Young Harrow Foundation.

What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Apprentices in the borough ¹⁷	Number of people completing an apprenticeship in the year	Harrow 310 London 412 (2021-22)	Match or exceed the London performance

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3. Develop job brokerage* with key growth sectors and micro-businesses to support residents to achieve their career aspirations.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, Federation of Small Businesses, HA1 BID, North West London Chamber of Commerce and Traders Groups.

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4. Secure external funding for skills and employment initiatives, that closely align with the needs of local employers and the local labour market. Aligning with the Local Skills Improvement Plan to secure investment into Harrow.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, FE Colleges, Federation of Small Businesses, HA1 BID, Ignite Youth, Job Centre, North West London Chamber of Commerce, Shaw Trust, Traders Groups, West London Business and Young Harrow Foundation

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¹⁷ Source: GOV.UK Explore education statistics Apprenticeships and traineeships. Advanced, Higher and Intermediate Apprenticeships
*Job brokerage refers to Xcite, the Council’s training and employment service.

5. Deliver courses in essential digital skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), GCSE English and GCSE Maths.

Key stakeholders: FE Colleges and Job Centre.

6. Address skills shortages by connecting local employers to post 16 training providers.

Key stakeholders: FE Colleges, Ignite Youth, Young Harrow Foundation, West London Careers Hub and Job Centre.

What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Young people in employment, education, or training ¹⁸	Percentage of young people (aged 16-17) not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	Harrow 1% London 1.6% 0.6% below London (June 2022)	Remain below the average for London
Qualifications at level 2 only ¹⁹	Percentage of the working age population with qualifications at level 2	Harrow 14.4% London 9.7% 4.7% above London (Jan to Dec 2021)	Remain above the London average
Qualifications at level 3 and above ²⁰	Percentage of the working age population with qualifications at NVQ level 3 and above.	Harrow 71.5% London 71.4% 0.1% above London (Jan to Dec 2021)	Remain above the average for London

Definition: Level 2 qualifications: 5 or more GCSEs (A to C or 9 to 4), O levels (passes), CSEs (grade 1), School Certification, 1 A level, 2 to 3 AS levels, VCEs, Intermediate or Higher Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma, NVQ level 2, Intermediate GNVQ, City and Guilds Craft, BTEC First or General Diploma, RSA Diploma.

Note: the level 2 data does not measure the resident population with a full level 2 qualification which is the English and maths equivalent of GCSE grades A-C.

*Definition: Level 3 qualifications: 2 or more A levels or VCEs, 4 or more AS levels, Higher School Certificate, Progression or Advanced Diploma, Welsh Baccalaureate Advance Diploma, NVQ level 3; Advanced GNVQ, City and Guilds Advanced Craft, ONC, OND, BTEC National, RSA Advanced Diploma.

¹⁸ Source: Connexions NEET Levels by Academic age 16/17 (Yr12 & Yr13)

¹⁹ Source: ONS Qualifications of working age population (16-64)

²⁰ Source: ONS annual population survey



7. Conduct research, surveys and business engagement into growth sectors including new low carbon industries to develop routes into vocational qualifications and sustainable employment.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, HA1 BID, Federation of Small Businesses, North West London Chamber of Commerce, Traders Groups, West London Business and West London Green Skills Hub.

8. Ensure that support is given to residents that are most in need into educational pathways.

Key stakeholders: FE Colleges and Job Centre.

What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Unemployment rate ²¹	Percentage difference of Harrow and London's Claimant Count	Harrow 3.8% London 4.8% 1% below London (June 2022)	Remain below the London average

²¹ Source: ONS Claimant count by sex and age



Priority: Business growth
and job creation

Priority: Business growth and job creation

Harrow has a multi-faceted business profile; led by micro-businesses, the borough is not dependent on any one employer or sector to generate wealth.

There is a very high portion of small and medium sized enterprises and more than half of businesses in the borough operate within the following sectors²²:

- Retail
- Property
- Information and communication
- Business administration and support services

These are followed by a third of businesses in the following sectors:

- Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services
- Health
- Transport and storage

Working alongside the Harrow Town Centre BID our focus will be on growing traders' groups across the borough. To date, 14 groups have been established and provided with hands-on and specialist support. The entrepreneurial spirit and commitment of the business' owners and representatives along with their knowledge, passion and resilience are testament to the vital role that micro-sized businesses and local people play in Harrow.

Although small in number, Harrow's larger employers also make a valuable contribution to the local economy by providing local spend, jobs, skills development and training opportunities. In Harrow, there are 102 organisations who employ more than 100 people²³. The top twenty private sector employers with an address in Harrow collectively employ over 15,000 people, although it is important to note that the job itself may be located outside of the borough - this is particularly the case for multinational and global organisations with multiple office locations or sites.

Our goal is to support businesses of all sizes and sectors to achieve higher survival rates, increase turnover and create new jobs for residents. This will be achieved through the delivery of high-quality business advice services which will be made available through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and by linking into other resources and networks such as the Northwest London Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, West London Business, London Business Hub and the Skills and Employment Hub.

The business areas that saw the highest growth in the number of jobs between 2020 and 2021 were²⁴:

- Construction: 1,000 more jobs
- Business administration and support services: 1,000 more jobs
- Professional, scientific and technical: 1,000 more jobs
- Accommodation and food service: 500 more jobs
- Information and communication: 500 more jobs

²² Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

²³ Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register: September 2022

²⁴ Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

During the same period there was a loss of 1,000 employee jobs in the transport and storage and manufacturing sectors.

In 2021 63% of employee jobs in Harrow were in the Health, Education, Retail, Construction and Professional, scientific and technical sectors.

The labour market in Harrow has remained stable since 2015, the most notable change was a loss of 2,000 employee jobs in 2020 which was due to the pandemic. However, in 2021 with the recovery of the market, Harrow saw 3,000 more jobs representing a 1.4% overall increase in jobs between 2019 and 2021. This was almost three times above the London average of 0.5% increase for the same period²⁵.

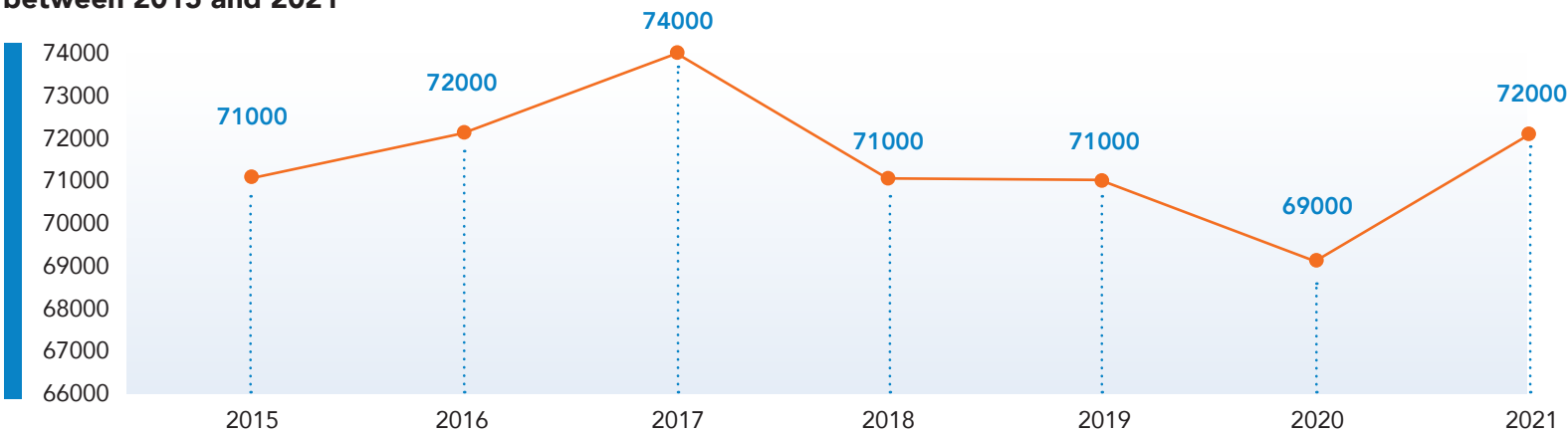
However, compared to other West London boroughs Harrow has one of the lowest job density ratios at only 0.50 jobs per resident of working age²⁶. The borough also has a fast-growing population of

children aged 0 to 15 years; therefore, it is vital that the local labour market builds in capacity to meet the future demand for jobs. This includes new emerging low carbon industries, such as renewable energy and those that support a circular economy that maximises limited natural resources and minimises waste (for example re-use, hire and repair businesses).

This can be achieved by delivering the objectives and meeting the targets that are set out in this section to help businesses to grow, create apprenticeships, jobs and upskill their workforce

The growth in the knowledge-based business sectors, which also play a key role supporting the transition to a low carbon economy, is seen as key to maintaining the competitiveness of the UK economy. It is generally agreed that the larger the proportion of knowledge-based businesses, the stronger and more resilient the economy.

Number of employee jobs in Harrow between 2015 and 2021



Source: ONS Business Register and Employment

²⁵ Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

²⁶ Source: ONS jobs density (2021)

Eurostat* defines the Knowledge-based economy as “trends in advanced economies towards greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors”.

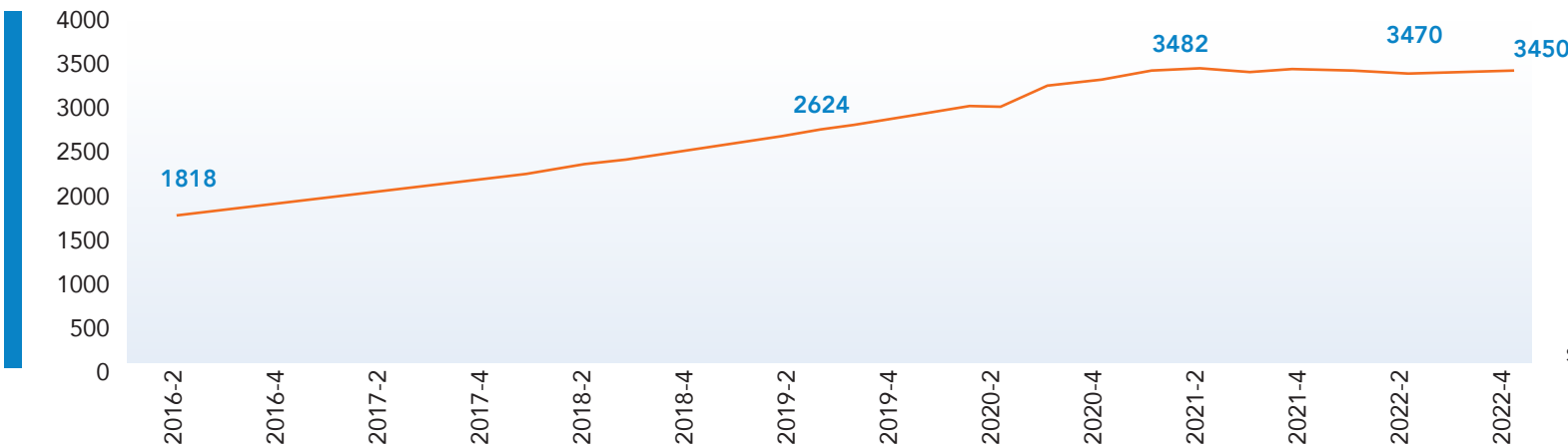
In 2018, approximately 43,300 jobs in Harrow fell within the Eurostat’s definition of Knowledge Economy, which equates to just over 61% of Harrow’s workforce²⁷. This is a relatively high proportion when compared with other West London boroughs, with Harrow having the third highest rate after Hammersmith & Fulham and Hounslow. London overall has a higher rate which is unsurprising given the high concentration of knowledge-intensive jobs located in central London.

More recent data shows that there are over 3,450 businesses within the Knowledge Economy in Harrow. The graph below shows the trend between 2016 to 2022.

The highest proportion of businesses within Harrow’s Knowledge Economy provide the following services:

- Mobile apps
- Analytics, insight, tools
- Business and professional services for businesses
- Technology/IP-based businesses
- Insurance services
- Advertising and branding services
- Pharmaceuticals
- Distribution

Number of active Harrow companies in the Knowledge Economy



Source: Beauhurst Harrow businesses data

²⁷ Source: Harrow Local Economic Assessment 2019-20

*Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union (EU), situated in Luxembourg. Its task is to provide the EU with statistics at a European level that enable comparisons between countries and regions.

Business growth and job creation: Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

1. Support a forum of traders associations.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, HA1 BID, Federation of Small Businesses, North West London Chamber of Commerce, Traders Groups and West London Business.

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2. Maintain the business forum and develop a business roundtable.

Key stakeholders: Federation of Small Businesses, HA1 BID, North West London Chamber of Commerce, Traders Groups and West London Business.

.....

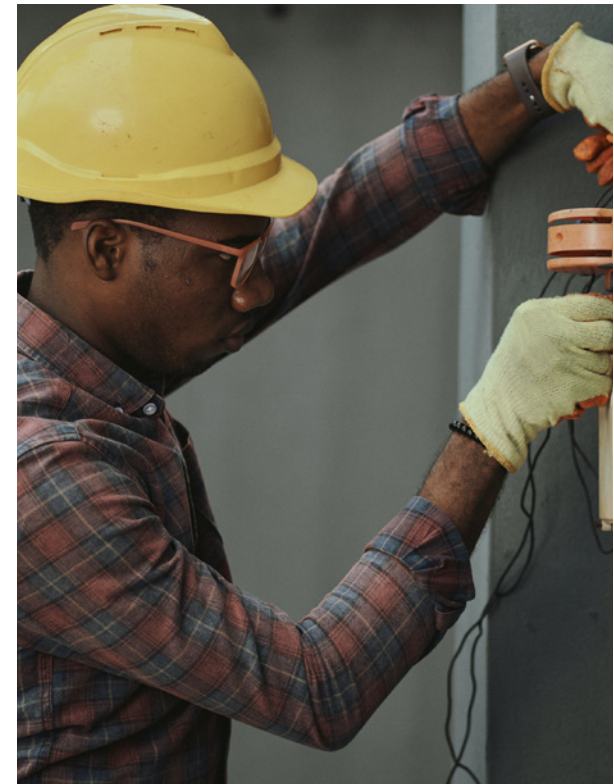
3. Investigate the establishment of a larger employers' network.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, HA1 BID, Federation of Small Businesses, North West London Chamber of Commerce and West London Business.

.....

4. Encourage business start-up and growth through providing outreach, business support, access to new equipment and networking events through the delivery of the UKSPF and linking into other business engagement services. As far as possible the business support offer will be differentiated to meet the needs of businesses' varied ambitions and points in their growth cycle.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, Better Futures +, Federation of Small Businesses, London & Partners, North West London Chamber of Commerce and West London Business.



What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Business births and deaths ²⁸	The survival rates of businesses relative to the London average	5-year survival rate 2016-21: Harrow 40.4% London 38.8% 1.6% above London (November 2022)	Remain above the London average
Number of jobs ²⁹	Number of total jobs in Harrow	Harrow 72,000 (+3k jobs/+4.3% compared to 2020) London 5,342,000 (+222k jobs/+4.3% compared to 2020) (2021)	Increase in the number of total jobs in proportion to the London average

5. Strengthen the Council's sustainable procurement activities and develop local supply chains to stimulate growth in the green and circular economy.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, HA1 BID, Federation of Small Businesses, North West London Chamber of Commerce, ReLondon and London Councils' One World Living and Building the Green Economy programmes.



²⁸ Source: ONS Business Demography (Enterprise Births, Deaths and Survivals)

²⁹ Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

6. Promotion and delivery of meet the buyer events. Including potential provision of business-to-business mentoring from tier 1 and tier 2 providers to SMEs.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, Federation of Small Businesses, HA1 BID, North West London Chamber of Commerce and Wates.

What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Local spend in the supply chain ³⁰	Percentage of 3rd party spend in local supply chain	14% (2022-23)	14.7% 2023-24 15.2% 2024-25 15.9% 2025-26

7. Ensure Council housing and new developments in the borough have access to full fibre broadband.

Key stakeholders: Developers and Telecoms providers.

8. Support telecoms providers to provide full fibre infrastructure in Harrow so that residents and businesses have access to full fibre broadband and 5G.

Key stakeholders: Businesses, Residents and Telecoms providers.

What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
Borough wide full fibre availability ³¹	Percentage of full fibre coverage across the borough	Harrow 16.9% London 39.4% 22.5% below London (May 2022)	Reduce the differential with the London average

³⁰ Source: London Borough of Harrow Procurement Division

³¹ Source: Ofcom via GLA

9. Develop investment profiles for the town and district centres. Promote Harrow as a business location. Work with national, regional and sub regional bodies (Greater London Authority ((GLA)), Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and West London Alliance) to secure funding into the borough.

Key stakeholders: Capital West London, Developers, Commercial agents, GLA, London & Partners, Opportunity London and West London Business.

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10. Support business retention and long-term sustainable growth through the development of a new Local Plan.

Key stakeholders: Developers, Commercial agents and GLA.

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11. Support the delivery of new workspaces that also cater to small businesses.

Key stakeholders: Developers, Commercial agents and GLA.

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12. Engage with the voluntary sector through Harrow Together and Harrow Giving to support the delivery of business support programmes to social enterprises and SMEs.

Key stakeholders: Business Forum, Citizens Advice, Federation of Small Businesses, Ignite Youth, North West London Chamber of Commerce, Voluntary Action Harrow Co-op, Traders Groups, West London Business and Young Harrow Foundation.





Priority: High Streets

Priority: High Streets

Harrow has a good network of town centres, high streets and high-quality open spaces, along with its historical assets and excellent transport links to central London.

Harrow Town Centre is classified as a Metropolitan centre³² and is one of only 14 such centres across London as designated in the London Plan. Established in 2014, the Harrow Business Improvement District (HA1 BID) invests money in the local area to improve the look and feel of the town centre and actively engages with the Council on key initiatives and schemes to support the local economy.

In addition, the borough's network of town centres comprises: one Major centre, nine District centres and five Local centres. Together, they provide a significant number of jobs for residents as well as providing for social and community needs.

The Edgware Major Centre is predominantly located in the London Borough of Barnet, with some secondary frontage and tertiary components extending into Harrow's boundary. The London Borough of Harrow is supporting Barnet Council with its plans to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) which should benefit Harrow businesses and boost the high street in Edgware.

District centres provide convenience goods, services and social infrastructure for more local communities that are easily accessible by public transport. Burnt Oak, Kenton and Kingsbury are district centres which share boundaries with neighbouring London

Boroughs of Barnet and Brent. South Harrow, Rayners Lane, North Harrow, Pinner, Stanmore and Wealdstone District centres are all wholly contained within Harrow.

Local centres serve a localised catchment and provide mainly convenience goods and other services. Sudbury Hill Local Centre straddles the boundary with the London Borough of Ealing. Hatch End, Harrow Weald, Queensbury and Belmont local centres are all wholly contained within Harrow.

Each of these centres and high streets are represented by a local trader group who work collaboratively with the Council to deliver localised action plans to renew and reshape the public realm and local offer in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability.

Thriving local centres and high streets directly support healthier and more environmentally sustainable urban living. Promotion of approaches, where amenities and essential services are within easy reach of residents builds stronger local communities, encourages active travel, improves air quality and leads to better public health outcomes locally.

Following the pandemic Harrow's town, district and local centres have maintained their viability and have relatively low vacancy rates. The rates in Harrow Town Centre have previously remained steady but in 2020-21 there was a significant increase because of the closures of Debenhams, Frankie & Benny's, Halfords and Argos.

³² Source: AMR Report Town Centres and Retail Development 2020-21

In 2020-21 the average vacancy rate was 4.95%, with three centres having no vacancies, Kingsbury, Queensbury and Sudbury Hill. The overall reduction in vacancy rates can in part be attributed to the improving economy³³.

It does not appear that the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced vacancy rates in Harrow, although many shops were not permitted to open during the lockdowns. The graph to the right shows the vacancy rates across all centres from 2019 to 2022.

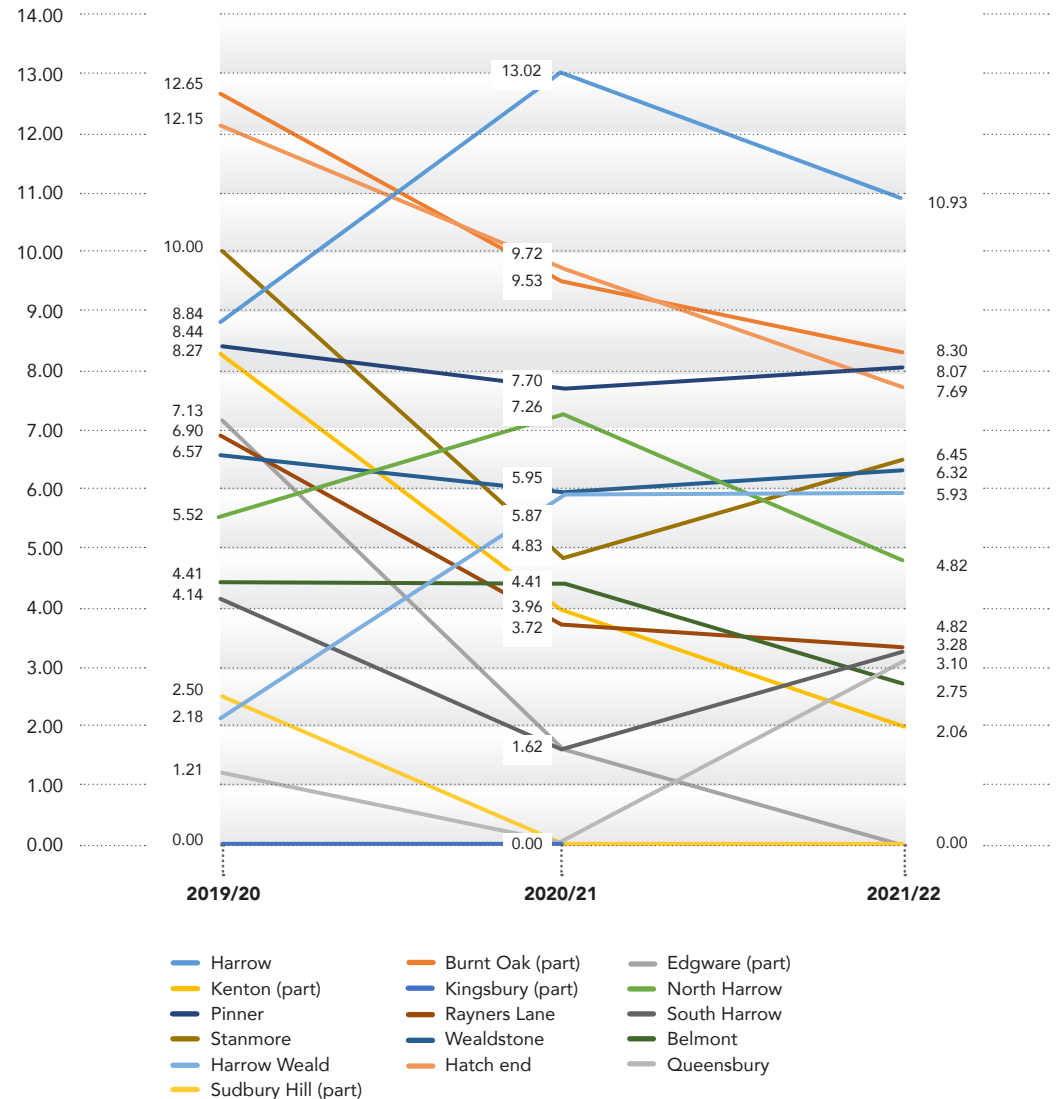
Harrow's high streets have the potential to accommodate further development and transformation to meet local business and resident needs, provide future jobs and promote economic and social wellbeing.

There are several programmes of works that will focus on making improvements to the metropolitan town centre and surrounding areas, this will bring more commercial space, better use of public space and easier pedestrian access for people that live nearby or are traveling into the town centre.

To support our business community, we want to ensure that our town centre and high streets have good digital infrastructure such as full fibre broadband and fast mobile reception. Commercial and retail hubs with the poorest connectivity will be treated as a priority to ensure these sites are fully connected.

Our ambition is to restore pride in Harrow, increase footfall, dwell time, vibrancy and spend within the local economy, the high streets will be a central part of this.

Percentage of vacant retail shop frontage in town and district centres 2019 to 2022



Source: London Borough of Harrow Inclusive Economy (Research) July 2022

³³ Source: London Borough of Harrow Inclusive Economy (Research) July 2022

High Streets: Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

1. Create a cleaner, safer and more sustainable district centres and high streets. We will encourage more sustainable shopping, install electric vehicle charging points and improve green infrastructure.

Key stakeholders: Businesses and GLA.

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2. Make public realm improvements in district centres and high streets creating a cleaner, safer and more sustainable environment.

Key stakeholders: Businesses, Residents and Traders Groups.

.....

3. Work with partners to develop high street action plans including trader groups, community groups, faith groups, police and residents to increase footfall and spend. Make Harrow a place where people want to spend their time and money creating a thriving local economy.

Key stakeholders: Businesses, Residents, HA1 BID and Traders Groups.

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4. Support town centre businesses to diversify and grow in our high streets through business-friendly licencing. Enhance the use of community assets.

Key stakeholders: Businesses, Residents and Traders Groups.

.....

5. Build on the arts and culture infrastructure. Facilitate the delivery of more cultural events in partnerships with stakeholders to animate public spaces and increase dwell time.

Key stakeholders: Cultural Forum, District Centre Partnerships and HA1 BID.



What we will measure	Indicator	Baseline	Target to 2026
High street vacancy rate in Harrow town and district centres ³⁴	Percentage of vacant premises (based on shop frontage)	4.57% (2021-22)	4% or lower vacancy rate
Footfall in the metropolitan town centre (BID area) ³⁵	Total footfall by month	1,722,825 (June 2022)	Increase footfall into the town centre



³⁴ Source: London Borough of Harrow Economic Development Division. This data includes all town centres, Metropolitan, Major, District and Local centres

³⁵ Source: Springboard Monthly Footfall Report for Harrow BID

Working in partnership

- putting residents and businesses first



Working in partnership - putting residents and businesses first

We are committed to working with our partners to deliver targeted interventions to grow and attract businesses into Harrow.

The involvement of educational institutions, the voluntary and community sector, our strategic development partner, local businesses and neighbouring boroughs across north-west London is vital to achieving the objectives and targets set out in this strategy.

We will also work with the Greater London Authority, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Department for Works and Pensions and the West London Alliance to ensure Harrow's businesses and residents can access other programmes. This will enable business growth, safeguard and create new jobs, grow the skills of our residents and support residents to enter new or better paid employment.

In delivering our priorities, we will continue to build on and strengthen our partnership groups. Some of the local strategic groups that are facilitated by the Council include:

Group Name	Economic Priority
Economic Strategy Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and employability • Business growth and job creation • High Streets
Harrow Education and Jobs subgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and employability • Business growth and job creation • High Streets
Business Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business growth and job creation • High Streets
Borough Wide Trader Groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belmont Circle Traders Association 2. Burnt Oak Traders Association 3. Edgware Traders Association 4. Hatch End Traders Association 5. Kenton Area Traders Association 6. North Harrow Traders Association 7. Pinner Business Club 8. Pinner Road West Chamber 9. Rayners Lane Traders Association 10. South Harrow Traders Association 11. Stanmore Chamber 12. Station Road Traders Association 13. Sudbury Hill Traders Association 14. Wealdstone Traders Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and employability • Business growth and job creation • High Streets
Wealdstone Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Streets
Learn Harrow Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and employability



Harrow Economic Strategy

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LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW