

2022-2026 Strategic Plan Report: Working Together for a Better Hackney



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1. INTRODUCTION - MAYOR CAROLINE WOODLEY

Hackney is London's best borough. That's why I made it my home many years ago, raised my son here, and in 2023 took up the huge honour of becoming Mayor of Hackney.

Over the course of two decades, Hackney has been on an incredible journey to become one of the top performing councils in the country. As an organisation, we've pioneered new approaches in areas from building high quality council homes to tackling the climate emergency. And for our residents, we've led the way with high-performing schools, beautifully-maintained green spaces, and top-of-the-range leisure facilities.

But I took office knowing there's more to do. I inherited an ambitious plan to work together for a better Hackney – one that is fairer and safer, greener and healthier, and works for every child. Since then, my mission has been to deliver on those promises, ensuring the strong groundwork set out in our strategic plan brings tangible benefits for people in our borough.

I also wanted to focus the Council's efforts to tackle the biggest challenges we face, head on. That means using every tool we have to continue fixing the housing crisis that denies too many people in Hackney a safe, secure and affordable home. It means striving to reverse the poverty and inequality that remains far too stark in our borough. And it means continuing to lead the way in future-proofing our borough against climate change.

We haven't solved these challenges overnight. But, we have achieved some major milestones – from building the UK's best new social housing to supporting the Mayor of London's rollout of free school meals across Hackney and launching a first-of-its-kind project putting solar panels on housing estates that directly provide residents with cheaper energy.

The Council has only been able to achieve as much as it has thanks to the collaborative spirit of our partners, vast networks of community organisations and our dedicated staff. Everyone who loves Hackney can be proud of the achievements set out in this report, which have both made a real difference to our communities and delivered on our promise to work together for a better Hackney.

Caroline Woodley
Mayor of Hackney

2. STRATEGIC PLAN - CHIEF EXECUTIVE

When we set out our commitment to working together for a better Hackney in our strategic plan four years ago, we did so knowing that delivering on it would be no easy task.

Hackney is an incredible borough with inspiring people, and I am so proud to lead an organisation where the innovation, commitment and hard work of our teams delivers day in, day out for our communities.

But we also face big challenges, from an ongoing cost of living crisis and entrenched poverty and inequality to a severe housing shortage and big shifts in our population.

Meanwhile, we are dealing with issues impacting all councils with ever growing demand and stretched budgets meaning that an increasing proportion of the money we have to spend is focused on a smaller number of statutory services where costs have continued to rise.

In that context, we are right to acknowledge and celebrate our strong record of delivery over the last four years, which has seen us make Hackney fairer, safer, greener and healthier in spite of these obstacles. That progress was acknowledged in the feedback from our corporate peer challenge last year, which recognised so much of what makes Hackney Council a strong, high-performing Council – our understanding of the communities we serve, our ambitions for addressing inequality and the positive outcomes we have delivered for residents.

But, just as importantly, we must highlight the changes that we have had to make as an organisation to ensure that happens, while meeting our legal obligation to balance our budget and protecting services for the most vulnerable.

While we have not been forced to seek additional financial support from the government or ask to raise Council Tax beyond standard levels, the last four years has seen finances becoming increasingly unsustainable and our reserves have been substantially reduced.

This has meant we've had to balance delivering for Hackney today, with setting ourselves up for success in the future. Our ambitious transformation is now fully underway and will not only ensure we are equipped to do more with less, but that the way we work puts first the needs of our residents who need us most.

Meanwhile, we have strengthened our systems, culture and leadership needed to embed equality, equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging across everything we do, making sure we are accountable in driving fairer outcomes for both staff and residents.

The last four years have seen us continue Hackney's remarkable journey of improvement, in spite of unprecedented challenges for local government. The groundwork we have put in place will mean that we can continue on the same trajectory in the years ahead.

Dawn Carter-McDonald
Chief Executive

3. DELIVERY UPDATE

Mayoral Priority: Housing and Homelessness

Hackney has secured a reputation for building exceptionally high quality council housing, nominated for and winning the highest RIBA awards for social housing and ensuring place-making is core to the council's approach. This has meant consideration of sustainable, energy efficient design as well as places developed with local community input and the quality of residents lives in mind - perhaps most notably Tower Court in Stamford Hill, which takes into account local need for family housing, faith practices and child friendly spaces, and Chowdhury Walk in Kings Park nominated for the coveted RIBA Stirling Prize for excellence in architecture and winning the Neave Brown award, which recognises the UK's best new affordable housing.

This reputation was hard won in a wider context of a severe housing crisis that has impacted the supply and management of affordable housing across the borough. Hackney is facing one of the most severe housing challenges/pressures in the country, driven by rising private landlord rents, a high demand for homes, and long-standing affordability gaps between household income and housing costs. Private sector rents in the borough continue to outpace wages, with median rents among the highest in England and increasing faster than inflation. The Local Housing Allowance remains far below actual market rents, in Hackney the gap between the average private sector rent and LHA rates often exceeds £500 per month, making most of the private rented sector unaffordable to low-income residents¹. House prices, now averaging around £600,000, remain well beyond the reach of most local households. These pressures continue to drive demand for social housing, shared ownership and living rent homes. The demand for homes is also compounded by the demand for temporary accommodation, particularly among families and single residents unable to secure stable, affordable homes.

National economic conditions have led to a 'crisis in construction' in London and this has further constrained the borough's ability to build new genuinely affordable homes. Construction costs have risen sharply since 2020 due to a number of factors that include inflation and the rising cost of construction materials, increased labour costs, supply chain disruption linked to Brexit, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. High interest rates have also impacted on the sector and we've rightly seen significant changes to building safety regulations following the devastating Grenfell fire². These factors combined have increased the cost of delivering new homes. Compounding this Hackney is a social landlord and owns over 32,000 homes and many of these are ageing and requiring significant capital investment, especially in addressing damp, mould and structural repairs.

The Council's response to the Housing Ombudsman's 2025 report³ recognised the scale of the Housing service challenges facing Hackney, that include the legacy of the 2020 criminal cyberattack and the demand led financial pressure on housing services budgets. However, it also highlighted the commitment of staff and the Council's progress in improving housing repairs complaint handling, speeding up the Council's response to damp and mould problems, and strengthening support for residents with additional needs. These service improvements sit alongside the major work that is now well underway to modernise and improve the performance

¹ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset?tag=hackney&topics=housing>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-building-safety-act>

³ <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/decisions/hackney-council-202000552/>

of the service whilst ensuring greater service transparency, accountability, and attention to the residents voice.

The homelessness crisis has deepened over the last four years, with the number of households in temporary accommodation rising from just over 3,300 at the end of 2021 to 3,749 by December 2025. Rising temporary accommodation placements, including increased use of expensive nightly-paid accommodation, reflect the difficulty residents face in securing homes in a shrinking and increasingly unaffordable private rented sector. Overcrowding remains widespread, and attempts to prevent homelessness are challenged by the limited availability of suitable, affordable housing options. Despite these pressures, services continue to work intensively to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to support residents into safe temporary accommodation when prevention is not achievable.

Hackney as a Social Landlord is responsible for 21,552 tenanted, 8,184 leasehold and 1,534 freehold homes. The scale of Housing Service operations is substantial, the repairs service completes around 80,000 repairs each year, supported by the in house Direct Labour Organisation that has grown to 192 operatives, now representing 30% of the total housing services workforce. The Council is delivering a major Housing Revenue Account financed long-term investment programme, with £550 million in capital works planned over the next decade to improve and renovate estates.

It's important to note that despite all the challenges, the Council has continued to deliver significant improvements, expand the supply of new homes, raise housing standards and strengthen support for residents.

Key delivery highlights (2022–2026)

- Delivery of genuinely affordable, secure new homes for local residents:
 - **Against a target of 1,000 and despite uniquely challenging times in the housebuilding industry, the Council currently has 972 new social rent homes in delivery.**
 - Within this total, **286 new social rent homes are currently under construction or have been purchased back into the Council's social housing stock**, Planning permission has been secured for a further 158, Planning applications submitted for another 194, and a further 293 social rent homes are currently being designed for Planning, with a final 41 homes currently in the process of being purchased back into the Council's housing stock.
 - Contributing to this total, **Hackney's newest generation of Council housing through the New Homes Programme (NHP), launched in December 2022, is on track to deliver** more than 400 new homes - 75% of them for social rent at Council rent levels.
 - On top of the 972 social rent homes currently in delivery, the Council currently has **more than 560 shared ownership homes** in delivery, for those unable to access outright home ownership, and demand remains very high - **the 50 new shared ownership homes released by the Council since 2022** were reserved by local buyers well ahead of the homes being finished.
 - Since 2022, the Council has completed several award-winning regeneration projects, delivering 154 new homes. **Chowdhury Walk received the overall RIBA**

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- Neave Brown award for social housing in 2024, and Tower Court won a London regional award in 2025.**
- **Construction is now nearing completion** at our **Wimbourne Street and Buckland Street projects in Hoxton West**, and the residential phases of the **Britannia masterplan in Shoreditch will complete next year**, bringing new social homes alongside the award winning leisure centre and school.
 - **Construction is also in full flow at the Colville Estate** in Hoxton, where the latest phase of 93 new homes, a new community hub and low carbon energy centre is scheduled to complete in early 2027.
 - **Woodberry Down continues to deliver large-scale housing-led regeneration**, including 584 new homes recently completed in phase 3 of the scheme (of which 243 were affordable housing - made up of 117 for social rent, and 126 for shared ownership sale), a new park, and new community and commercial space.
 - Through the **Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge**, housing associations delivered 107 social rent homes, 30 Hackney Living Rent homes and 20 shared ownership homes, supported by £17m in grant funding from the Council. In addition, the Kennaway Estate regeneration in Stoke Newington will replace outdated blocks with 61 new, energy-efficient homes (social rent, affordable rent, shared ownership, and private sales), including new townhouses. Construction began in 2021 and is scheduled for completion around May 2026.
 - Improved housing conditions and standards for tenants in the private rented sector
 - Introduced a borough-wide **Additional HMO Licensing Scheme** and **Selective Licensing Scheme** across 17 of the 21 wards in Hackney, addressing poor conditions across more than 76 percent of the private rented sector.
 - Evidence shows over 5,241 private rented homes contain at least one serious hazard, and 30 percent of HMOs contain Category 1 hazards, three times the national average.
 - Licensing introduces stronger requirements for property management, fire safety, energy efficiency and landlord accreditation.
 - Successfully lobbied the central government on better renting, including ending Section 21 "unfair" evictions, rent bidding and in-year uplifts.
 - Tenant awareness has been strengthened through education campaigns, quarterly landlord newsletters and improved signposting to support.
 - Safer, compliant Council homes delivered by strengthened social landlord and building safety systems:
 - Achieved **100 percent compliance across fire, asbestos and water safety**, and over 99.8 percent gas safety checks.
 - Lift compliance improved to 95–100 percent with consistent servicing.
 - A new **Health and Safety Board** and upgraded back office digital systems such as Shine and ServiceSoft providing stronger service oversight and improved reporting accuracy.
 - Targeted remediation has reduced overdue fire safety actions in line with new Building Safety Regulator requirements.

- Faster, fairer and more reliable repairs services for Council tenants:
 - **Repairs backlog reduced by 68 percent since its October 2024 peak**, with only 89 repairs older than three months compared with 586 previously.
 - **86.7 percent of non-emergency repairs are now completed on time**, placing Hackney in the upper quartile of London councils.
 - **Damp and mould cases reduced by 61.4 percent**, with an average completion time of 30 days, well within the 56-day Awaab's Law requirement.
 - Expanded contractor capacity and an **in-house team of 192 repairs operatives** have improved reliability and speed.
 - **New policies on leaks, damp and mould, diagnostics and emergencies** have modernised the service and improved resident satisfaction.

- Better prevention of homelessness and improved management of temporary accommodation:
 - Strengthened multi-agency outcomes and partnership work, including **The Green House, an award-winning partnership model**.
 - The Council has approved purchase of two sites comprising 174 self contained dwellings to add to the Council's **supply of much needed Temporary Accommodation**.
 - The acquisition and **refurbishment of Ridley Villas Hostel (55 beds)** to expand good-quality temporary accommodation and reduce longer-term costs.
 - A major new acquisition opportunity (96 units) is currently under evaluation to increase capacity and **reduce reliance on costly nightly-paid provision**.
 - 418 inspections carried out across the TA estate have strengthened quality assurance.
 - Improvements in repairs, safety and estate maintenance have reduced placements arising from disrepair.
 - Hackney currently has only four long-term rough sleepers; we are actively working with partners to resolve these cases.
 - Hackney delivered **534 prevention and relief outcomes** between January and October 2025, up from 528 the previous year.
 - The Council has supported 191 households to secure PRS accommodation.
 - **Homelessness presentations fell by 9.4 percent** compared with the previous year, with fewer households presenting from Home Office-provided accommodation.

- Stronger regulation of the private rented sector to protect tenants:
 - A borough-wide consultation generated 671 responses and engagement with more than 44,000 residents.
 - 56 percent supported Additional HMO Licensing and 57 percent supported Selective Licensing.
 - **New licensing schemes will establish a network of responsible landlords**, enable proactive inspections, stronger enforcement against rogue landlords, and clearer tenancy protections supported by better data and robust management standards.

Mayoral Priority: Tackling Poverty and Inequality

Hackney remains a borough of sharp contrasts. Many residents have benefited from new job opportunities, improved transport, and continued regeneration, yet for a significant proportion of households the rising cost of living, especially housing, has eroded financial security. In 2023/24, around 25% of households lived on incomes below 60% of the national median after housing costs, while child poverty approached 45% on the same measure⁴. The 2025 Indices of Multiple Deprivation⁵ presented an even more severe picture, with 64% of children and 55% of older people in Hackney living in income-deprived households, placing the borough second highest in England for both groups⁶. Although Hackney's overall deprivation ranking has improved since 2010, inequality has widened. In 2025, 16% of neighbourhoods were among the most deprived 10% in England, up from 11% in 2019, even as other areas became more affluent.

Employment levels remain relatively strong, with 81.5% of working-age residents in work and unemployment below the London average. Yet work is not protecting many families from hardship. Around one-in-six workers earn below the London Living Wage, and claimant data shows that 6.5% of working-age residents rely on unemployment-related benefits⁷. This combination of low wages, high housing costs, and rising prices has driven demand for support services to record levels. Advice agencies, voluntary organisations and council-run services report sharp increases in requests for help with food, fuel, rent arrears, debt counselling, benefits, and early intervention for families.

The pressure on local services reflects widening inequality and deeper vulnerability. The IMD 2025 results show that Hackney remains the most deprived London borough by average score, and the third most deprived by rank, reinforcing the case for targeted mitigation and for placing equity at the centre of local financial decision-making. Deprivation is particularly concentrated among children, older people, disabled residents, and those in insecure or low-paid work.

In response, Hackney has strengthened its support system significantly over the four-year period. The Council's investment in income maximisation, early help, advice partnerships, emergency support and food programmes has helped residents weather the cost of living crisis, prevent homelessness, and improve financial stability.

In 2025 the Council adopted a new Economic Development Plan. This 10 year plan focuses on delivering and enabling economic growth which is more inclusive and benefits more of Hackney's people, places, and communities with the goal of reducing inequalities in the borough and ensuring that those most in need have the opportunity to benefit from Hackney, and London's, economic success. The plan is focused on four missions; *All residents are able to actively participate in the economy and society, Hackney's economy is climate resilient and sustainable, Hackney's economy is fairer and more inclusive and, Growth and investment benefit more of Hackney's places and communities*. The Plan is already being delivered and work to drive forward the objectives and initiatives set out in the Implementation Plan continues.

In 2022, the Council approved a Poverty Reduction Framework outlining measures to embed prevention and early help, particularly for services for children and young people; tackle low

⁴ <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/hackney-poverty-and-inequality-indicators/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025-statistical-release>

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/labourmarketlocal/E09000012>

wages and meet material needs arising from the Cost of Living Crisis. We also committed to changing the way we work by working closely and flexibly with frontline staff, sharing tools and information to help residents out of poverty.

Over this time, we've pulled together and built a wide range of support for people facing financial hardship. Running since 2022, our fortnightly Poverty Reduction Tools for Frontline Staff sessions have enabled frontline staff to learn about more than 173 offers of support for residents and to learn from each other and provide mutual support. The Here to Help team also supports residents who are facing financial struggles. Our System Convenors have better connected services and have helped develop drop-in sessions to enable residents to access a range of support in one place, including for families in temporary accommodation and for those facing food and fuel poverty. We've enabled better support for residents facing complex challenges by building escalation routes around Council Tax and Universal Credit, allowing community partners to advocate better and to secure the much needed breathing space for residents they support.

Lobbying successfully focused on early intervention and lifting the two child benefit cap, which stands to benefit in the region of 15,000 children in Hackney. Our Children's Services are now working to deliver up to 24 different services to meet the needs of families with young children from our Children and Family Hubs as part of the Government's Best Start and Families First initiative.

Our eight Primary Care Networks are working to deliver health and social care provision nearer to where residents live. This will benefit older and disabled residents who are at higher risk of poverty.

Key delivery highlights 2022-2026

- Residents have greater financial security and improved access to crisis support:
 - The **Here to Help** service delivered major financial relief since November 2022, including:
 - **£3.2m in Discretionary Housing Payments**
 - **£2.2m in Household Support Fund grants**
 - **£0.5m through the Hackney Discretionary Crisis Support Scheme**
 - **£0.2m via Council Tax Reduction discretionary hardship support**
 - Residents secured **£7m in unclaimed welfare benefits** through Council-supported advice services.
 - **Advice partnerships in GP practices, children's centres and VCS settings** generated £18m in financial gains for residents in 2024/25 alone.
 - GP-based advice (funded by Public Health) secured £1.3m in additional benefits and £247,000 in lump-sum payments in 2023/24.
 - Council-funded **VCS advice partnerships** delivered over **£18million in financial benefits** for more than 10,000 residents, including:
 - **£9.3m income maximised**
 - **£3.6m rent arrears managed**
 - **£1.5m debt written off**
 - **£199k charitable support, including £86k in vouchers**
 - **£2.5m from successful benefit challenges**
- Fewer residents experience homelessness, severe financial hardship or crisis:

- Advice-funded organisations **prevented over 650 homelessness cases** in 2024/25.
 - **224 home visits** provided to residents unable to travel for advice.
 - Over 450 residents supported with humanitarian protection and 900+ residents per year received careers and employability support to access secure fair paying employment through the Hackney Works, skills and employment service from 2022.
 - **1,400 residents have secured employment through the Council's Employment and Skills service**, including 1000 jobs, and 174 apprenticeships driven by social value from procurement and local regeneration.
 - **Council Tax Reduction (CTR) reduced bills by up to 90%** for low-income working-age households, with a new escalation route offering additional support for complex hardship cases.
- More residents access food, essentials and support to reduce cost-of-living pressures:
 - **2,130 households received personalised energy advice** and energy-saving devices (LED bulbs, air fryers, infrared heaters, draft excluders), saving £64,365 since Nov 2024.
 - Affordable food access expanded to **32 low-cost food shops**, including three new resident-led food co-ops on estates.
 - The Council funded a **Food Co-operative Organiser**, enabling residents to lower food bills through collective purchasing.
 - Continued investment in the **Hackney Food Network**, helping groups transition from emergency food banks to sustainable food access models.
 - Launched six new estate-based food growing projects at Kyverdale, Wyke, Kingsgate, Fields, Nightingale and Jack Dunning estates.
- Families, children and young people have improved access to nutritious food, early help and opportunity:
 - **Holiday food vouchers reached over 16,000 children annually.**
 - An **investment of £300,000** was made from the Council **to tackle food poverty** in education through the following initiatives:
 - Chef-led school food transformation **trained 30+ young chefs** and improved school food quality.
 - The **Hackney School of Food** Year 3 programme reached 2,500 pupils, teaching food growing and cooking skills.
 - **Six grants of £20,000** were made available to schools to deliver projects tackling food poverty in education. Schools who won the grants delivered projects around food growing, cooking with fresh ingredients, expanding their free food programme and cooking classes for parents.
 - In 2024/25, **Citizens Advice in Children's Centres** supported **221 people** in 329 appointments, including 123 families.
- More residents access employment, skills and opportunities for progression. **Hackney's Adult Learning service was rated 'Good' by Ofsted in 2024.** **Hackney Works** and **Hackney Adult Learning** support the following each year:
 - 400+ residents into employment
 - 170+ residents into apprenticeships, including 128 within the Council
 - 750+ residents trained for jobs in London's growth sectors

- 3200 learners enrolled in accredited and community adult learning programmes (IT, English, Maths, Health & Social Care, family learning)
 - **Connect to Work** Supported Employment Programme - Launched Autumn 2025, will provide 1500 residents with intense job coaching and employability support over 5 years, securing job starts for over 700 people who are experiencing complex barriers to secure employment.
 - **Youth Trailblazer** Programme supporting at least 50 care experienced young people into employment, education, and training in 2025.
 - Through the council's Employment Pathways programmes - 116 Year 11 and Sixth Form students gained work experience across a variety of key council directorates and services, at least 50 paid work placements are secured for residents participating in the Hackney 100 programme, and 18 of Hackney's young people have secured a supported internship.
 - **LIFT Futures** Programme designed around knowledge economy careers, and engaging over 1000 underrepresented residents in STEM, Creative, and Built Environment, employment and skills related activity.
- Hackney's **Economic Development** team worked in partnership with other Council teams, local businesses, partners, and local organisations to implement policies and initiatives aimed at delivering a more inclusive economy for our residents and supporting our businesses. The Council has:
 - Adopted the new **Hackney Economic Development Plan**, focused on reducing inequalities in the borough and maximising the benefits of economic growth, investment and regeneration for our people, places and communities.
 - Delivered the **Hackney Impact business support programme** for our local businesses, which has supported over 339 businesses, created over 115 jobs, and safeguarded over 65 existing jobs. A **new round of the Hackney Impact programme** has launched aimed at supporting 90 businesses in the borough via one-to-one support and business workshops, networking and coaching.
 - Launched the **Hackney Responsible Business Charter** aimed at encouraging and supporting Hackney businesses to deliver social value in the borough, by offering apprenticeships, work experience, and supported internships for Hackney residents. 32 businesses have signed up to the charter so far with over 180 pledges made.
 - Delivered the **£1m Affordable Workspace Fund**, providing grants to businesses in Hackney to create new affordable workspace and improve existing affordable workspace. Managed the **Hackney Affordable Workspace Provider List**, an accredited list of affordable workspace providers which businesses can use to find affordable workspace in the borough.
 - Refugees, migrants and people seeking sanctuary receive stronger support and inclusion:
 - The **Welcome Hackney** team launched in 2023 acts as a central pathway into housing, welfare, health, education, employability workshops and community support, enabling smoother settlement and improved wellbeing for new arrivals.
 - Since its launch, the Welcome Hub has **supported 1,049 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers**.
 - Around 20 residents attend each week, receiving early help in a trusted, non-stigmatising space.

- Hackney is on track to achieve **Borough of Sanctuary status in 2026**, embedding a culture of welcome and reducing inequality for anyone with experience of the immigration system.
- Hackney has supported over **450 Ukrainian guests since 2022** through Homes for Ukraine, and seven Afghan families through national resettlement schemes.
- Reduced homelessness and destitution among newly recognised refugees, with over **400 nights of rough sleeping avoided**, reducing crisis presentations. 285 newly recognised refugees were supported into accommodation, with 92% sustaining their tenancies for at least eight months, demonstrating the effectiveness and stability of the intervention.
- Since April 2024, partnership with **Migrants Organise** has provided information, legal navigation, wellbeing support and advocacy for residents in Home Office accommodation to over **1,200 people seeking asylum**.
- **124 households awarded the New Refugee Grant**, preventing destitution as residents transition from asylum support into mainstream systems.
- Community kitchens were funded to ensure residents in hotels without cooking facilities had access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food. **Community kitchens were used 675 times**, reducing hunger, isolation and poor nutrition.
- Stronger community infrastructure supports residents where they live:
 - A new **Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy** adopted in 2025. Through open and themed engagement sessions, partners explored how to build more effective, trust-based relationships, share risk more equitably, and move away from transactional funding towards longer-term collaboration. A key outcome is a shared commitment to a neighbourhoods model of working, recognising the critical role of VCS and faith organisations in prevention, early help and reaching residents least likely to engage with statutory services. The strategy provides a long-term framework for this reset, aligned with the Council's Transformation Strategy and Equalities Plan, with action plans supporting delivery at neighbourhood level. There are five pillars to the VCS Strategy:
 - The way we work: a system-wide pilot supporting families in Temporary Accommodation at *The Edge*.
 - Investment & funding: launch of the VCS Grants Programme with four new funding streams.
 - Premises and spaces: libraries working with Spacebank and the VCS Property Team to open underused spaces, including future lettings at CLR James Library.
 - Volunteering & social action: a pilot to maximise use of underused community halls, co-designed with residents and the *Shared Power* network.
 - VCS infrastructure: aligning Council–NHS plans to strengthen community engagement and local VCS infrastructure.

Mayoral Priority: Climate Action

The climate crisis is already affecting Hackney, through flooding, heatwaves, droughts and storms, putting pressure on our infrastructure, damaging services and property, and exacerbating

food insecurity. In response, Hackney has made climate action a core priority of its Strategic Plan, focusing on reducing emissions, improving air quality, lowering household costs, and creating greener, healthier neighbourhoods.

Our work is guided by the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Council Climate Implementation Plan 2023–2026 (IP). Together, they set out how the borough will deliver a 45% reduction in emissions by 2030 (against 2010 levels) and achieve net zero by 2040, while ensuring a just transition that reduces inequality, protects those most vulnerable to climate impacts, and shares the benefits of climate action fairly across communities, residents and businesses.

Climate, Sustainability and Environmental Services have delivered substantial progress over the last four years, often in the context of tight budgets, changing legislation and competing pressures on public services, prioritising measures that support affordability, health, access to opportunity and community resilience alongside carbon reduction.

Hackney continues to lead nationally on climate and environmental performance. We have maintained high standards for street cleanliness, reduced chemical use in our parks, streets and estate gardens, driven down nitrogen dioxide levels and expanded sustainable transport, recycling and reuse. Our work has been recognised in national assessments, including a top-five ranking in the CEUK climate scorecard for single-tier local authorities. We have facilitated energy efficiency through installation of renewable and cost effective energy systems, across schools, community and faith buildings, and residential properties.

Key Deliverables for 2022-2026

- Cutting emissions and delivering cleaner, cheaper energy:
 - Installed **4,000 solar panels** on **27 council housing blocks**, as part of a residential solar pilot scheme offering lower energy bills to around **800 tenants and leaseholders** and reducing emissions from council homes.
 - Upgraded **35 council buildings with heat pumps**, providing cleaner, more efficient heating to **1,300 homes** connected to the Colville Heat Network and cutting **2,635 tonnes of carbon emissions each year** once fully operational.
 - Delivered four rounds of the **Hackney Community Energy Fund (HCEF)**, which has supported community projects to reduce energy bills, generate renewable energy and back local organisations, including schools, faith buildings and community organisations, leading the transition.
 - Established the **Green Investment Programme** - raising **£1.1m** through its first two rounds to fund local climate projects, including solar panels on schools and council homes.
 - Hackney has installed an extensive **EV charging network**, now totaling over 1,000 charge points. This network includes 785 lamp column charge points and 345 fast charge points located on the carriageway.
 - Expanded **Lower Traffic Zones**, which restrict through-traffic while allowing access for emergency services, waste vehicles, mobility vehicles and, on selected routes, Blue Badge holders of motor vehicles. This has created **50 km of walkable and cycleable low-traffic roads**, including **6 km of protected cycle lanes** and **45 km of low-traffic streets**, supporting safer, cleaner and more sustainable local travel.

- Cleaner air and smarter, low-carbon travel:
 - Through a combination of monitoring, enforcement, and public engagement efforts, Hackney has achieved a significant 45% reduction in average NO₂ levels since 2017, leading to an improved quality of air for all residents.
 - Maintained high standards in street cleansing, outperforming London benchmarks while reducing chemical use by **72.8% in Glyphosate** since 2016 and expanding weedkiller-free zones.
 - Launched the **Zero Emissions Network** in 2024, helping businesses and residents across Hackney and neighbouring boroughs reduce emissions and save on transport costs.
 - Expanded secure cycle storage to **1,300 cycle hangars**, providing over **8,000 secure cycle spaces**, making secure cycle parking widely available, supporting everyday cycling and reducing reliance on private cars. Also converted around **70% of eligible roads** into lower-traffic streets.
 - Secured over **£22m** of external grant funding to deliver major regeneration improvement schemes in our town centres and high streets including in **Hackney Central**, **Dalston** and **Hoxton** that incorporate more sustainable travel and new and improved green spaces in our town centres, helping to drive footfall to our local businesses and high streets.
 - Provided **free cycle training** to **750 adults** and **4,230 children** through Bikeability, improving confidence and safety for riders of all ages. Increasing skills to cycle safely has empowered residents to take advantage of cycling infrastructure, leading to increased personal fitness and more sustainable travel choices.
 - Delivered new protected cycle lanes, such as the route along Lea Bridge Road, to create safer journeys between Lea Bridge and Dalston. In total, we rolled out **50 km of routes for active travel**, comprising **6 km of protected cycle lanes** and **45 km of low-traffic streets**, making walking and cycling easier and safer.
 - Installed **1,508 active electric vehicle charging points**, enabling residents to access discounted EV charging through **Hackney Light and Power**.
 - Extended the **School Streets** programme, with **7 new schemes since 2022**, taking coverage to **84% of schools** and supporting **88.5% of children** to travel by walking, cycling or public transport. Hackney's School Streets toolkit is now referenced in **DfT national guidance**.
 - Lower traffic zones have created calmer, safer streets with better air quality.
 - Significant work to improve air quality and decrease Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂) concentrations in the top 10 most polluted areas by April 2026.

- A circular economy that reduces waste and saves residents money:
 - Removed over **2.6 million single-use plastic items** from **markets**, including **600,000 plastic bags**, **800,000 sets of plastic cutlery** and **1.2 million cups**, supporting a permanent shift away from disposables.
 - **Zero Waste Hackney** now reuses nearly **500,000 items** and diverts around **1,000 tonnes of waste from disposal each year**. In 2024 alone, this meant **500,000 items reused**, **900 tonnes diverted**, **7,000 tCO₂e avoided** and **£400,000 in savings** for residents.
 - Opened the **Hackney Fixing Factory** in April 2025, providing a dedicated space for repairing electrical items and small appliances, cutting waste and building

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- repair skills.
 - Launched the **Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan**, with over **200 officers and dozens of service areas** engaged, which was approved at Cabinet in November 2025.
 - Established a **Circular Economy Zone** in Hackney Wick, delivering zero-waste events, supporting circular start-ups and running hands-on activities with businesses and schools.
 - Funded **8 organisations** to run **22 Repair Cafes** under the first Repair Cafe Grant Scheme.
 - Continued issuing **Real Nappy Vouchers worth £70**, with nearly **900 vouchers** issued since 2022 and work underway with North London Waste Authority (NLWA) on system-wide solutions for absorbent hygiene products.
 - The **Estates Recycling Programme** is improving waste facilities on **17 housing estates**, increasing recycling rates by **4.2%**, reducing fire risks and improving the look and safety of estates.
 - Introduced a charged garden waste service and delivered improvements noted in the GLA's approval of Hackney's Reduction & Recycling Plan, despite wider financial pressures.
 - Greener, healthier parks and public spaces:
 - Secured **33 Green Flag Awards** for parks and green spaces - the highest number in London - with **90.8% of residents** satisfied or very satisfied, and a ranking of **2nd in the Good Parks for London report**.
 - Planted 5,000 new street trees, one of the largest urban tree planting programmes in the country, resulting in on-street tree canopy coverage set to increase from 20% to 30%, helping to sequester carbon, filter air, mitigate local flooding by improving drainage, and cool streets during the hot weather that is becoming more prevalent as a result of climate change.
 - Delivered major improvements at **Shoreditch Park and Daubeney Fields**, including outdoor gyms, paths, a new skate park, and resurfaced paths and tennis courts in **Millfields Park**.
 - Refurbished play areas at **Clapton Common, Hackney Downs, Stonebridge Common and Well Street Common**, improving access to safe play for children across the borough.
 - Maintained and expanded London's largest network of drinking water fountains, with **11 new or refurbished fountains and bottle fillers** between 2023 and 2025.
 - Supported physical activity and community participation through events such as the **Hackney Moves Festival, Half Marathon Weekend, Shoreditch 10K** and participation in the **London Youth Games**.
 - Delivered local nature recovery projects and continued biodiversity improvements across sites, including work to improve **Haggerston Park's artificial turf pitch** and progress on the **West Reservoir Improvement Project**.
 - **Kings Hall Leisure Centre** refurbishment won the **Future Reuse Award**, and work is now underway to improve access, create temporary gym facilities and develop a new depot.
 - Street trees and greening efforts have increased urban canopy cover. This is vital for reducing urban heat, providing shade, improving air quality, and boosting biodiversity, particularly in dense, heat-vulnerable areas.

- The installation of **rain gardens and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)** across numerous streets helps manage surface water. These systems reduce pressure on the sewer network, lower flood risk during heavy rainfall, and enhance the streetscape with new planting and visual amenity.
- Linear parks, green corridors, and pocket parks have been created and improved as part of wider transport and public realm initiatives. These spaces connect communities, encourage walking and cycling, offer cooling relief, and support mental and physical wellbeing, demonstrating that climate adaptation measures significantly enhance the everyday quality of life.
- Building skills, jobs and a green local economy:
 - Launched the **Green Skills Hub** at Build East in March 2025, funded with **£60,000** from Hackney, to train residents in retrofitting and sustainable construction and prepare them for future low-carbon jobs.
 - Climate and circular economy work is helping support local business resilience, reduce operating costs and create new opportunities in reuse, repair and community energy.
 - Expanded the Eco Schools Programme resulting in **41 Green Awarded Hackney Eco-Schools**.
 - **Climate ambassador scheme launched with UCL** to support 5 federations (20 schools) in developing climate action plans. Supported the Education Team with the development of a climate action curriculum. Worked with 8 additional schools to join the Pupil's Profit Refill scheme.
 - Published information on the Council website on how people can **reduce, reuse and repair** before resorting to recycling and disposal. **In 2024 Zero Waste Hackney saw 500,000 items reused, 900 tonnes diverted waste, 7,000 tCO2e avoided and £400,000 savings for residents.**
 - Produced a **Circular Economy Toolkit** to support businesses to adopt more sustainable practices.
 - We supported local businesses to become greener via business grants we distributed via the **£1m Affordable Workspace Fund**, the **Hackney Impact Green Energy Fund** and **£2.5m business recovery fund**.

Equality in action – our commitment across the strategic plan

Tackling inequality sits at the heart of everything the Council does. Over the 2022–2026 period, this commitment has shaped how services work with residents, how decisions are made, and how staff are supported to lead change. The approval of [Hackney's Equality Plan](#) and supporting frameworks in 2024 strengthened this approach, setting clear objectives for the organisation to:

1. Eradicate inequality at every life stage by taking protective, preventative positive action.
2. Build opportunity and wellbeing.
3. Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value the contribution they make.
4. Embed equality into service plans and practice across the council and the borough.
5. Change as an institution to ensure internal and systemic change.

These frameworks have guided both our internal transformation and our external delivery. Internally, they have driven changes to culture, leadership and staff experience, supporting a

more inclusive workforce and stronger organisational capability to deliver fair outcomes. Externally, they have shaped front-line services, regeneration, community safety, employment support, youth justice, culture and sanctuary work, ensuring that every priority in the Strategic Plan contributes to reducing inequalities for residents.

Together, this work shows how equality is not a single project but a core principle shaping the Council's long-term vision, its day-to-day practice and the improvements delivered for communities over the past four years.

3.1 FOR A FAIRER, SAFER HACKNEY

As well as working towards the Equality Objectives outlined above, the Strategic Plan is working towards the following outcomes to become a Fairer, Safer borough:

Fairer, Safer
Outcomes
Residents receive comprehensive and caring support against poverty and inequality.
Everyone has access to safe and stable homes.
Communities feel safe and welcomed, providing support for each other and growing stronger together.
Enhanced trust in the Council and state, through collaborative efforts with the Police, Council, and community.
Residents and workers can learn new skills to keep up with changing job trends and work with businesses and schools to create good-paying jobs in new industries.
Local businesses supported through local and national help to expand the local green economy.
Vibrant, thriving places that align with local priorities as expressed by both residents and businesses.

Making Hackney Safer

The Hackney Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) has delivered a measurable impact on public safety over the rolling 12 months ending December 2025. Through a data-led approach and enhanced inter-agency cooperation, the borough has achieved a 3.5% reduction in overall crime. This progress is anchored by the targeted efforts of the Anti-Knife, Anti-Robbery (AKAR) initiative, which was specifically designed to disrupt the cycles of violence that impacted the borough in previous years. These collective efforts have successfully stabilised Hackney's safety landscape, reversing the upward trends seen during the challenging spike of youth-led robbery incidents in 2024.

Central to this year's success is the significant downturn in high-harm offences, particularly those involving bladed weapons. Our strategic focus has resulted in a 16.7% decrease in total knife crime and a substantial 24.8% reduction in personal knife-enabled robberies. Furthermore, the borough has seen a major breakthrough in tackling the most lethal forms of violence, with gun crime reducing by 22.6%. By focusing resources on known hotspots and leveraging the expertise

of the AKAR initiative, the Partnership has effectively reduced the prevalence of weapons on our streets, making Hackney a safer environment for residents and visitors alike.

Beyond the raw data, the human impact of these interventions is most visible in the protection of Hackney's younger population. Over the last 12 months, knife injury victims under the age of 25 have dropped by 14.3%, a critical indicator of the success of our preventative and youth-focused strategies. This sits alongside a 7.5% decrease in broader violence with injury across all demographics. These figures represent more than just statistical improvements; they reflect a tangible reduction in physical harm and a commitment to ensuring that Hackney's young people can navigate their neighbourhoods without fear.

Key delivery highlights 2022-2026

- Safer public spaces through visible patrols, joint policing activity and targeted enforcement in hotspots:
 - **Summer Park Patrols** expanded annually, increasing visible presence and helping reduce antisocial behaviour in busy parks.
 - Joint operations such as **Operation Nightingale** targeted violent-crime hotspots, combining Council enforcement with **Safer Neighbourhood Teams**.
 - Enforcement officers provided reassurance patrols in areas with rising youth robberies, responding directly to local concerns.
- Reduced exposure to serious nuisance and antisocial behaviour through enforcement and multi-agency action:
 - **10 Closure Orders** secured at Magistrates' Court to shut down properties linked to serious ASB, crime and persistent nuisance.
 - Enforcement teams issued thousands of notices and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) across the four-year period, including 758 FPNs in 2024/25 relating to safety, waste, compliance and public protection.
 - Coordinated activity with Housing, Registered Social Landlords and Police improved case management for residents affected by repeat ASB.
- Improved safety for young people through targeted response to youth violence and robbery trends:
 - Multi-agency gang prevention work delivered three major projects:
 - Mandeville & Surrounding Streets Project – reduced youth violence and improving community safety.
 - E9 Project – addressed ASB and gang-related harm in neighbourhood hotspots.
 - Project AKAR (Anti-Knife & Anti-Robbery) – Phase 1 delivered, focused specifically on reducing knife injuries and robberies against young people.
 - The first Anti-Knife Crime Summit (2025) brought together schools, Police and community leaders to drive a coordinated prevention approach.
 - Project M16 - This was focused on the areas of Manor House and Stoke Newington linked to gang violence and youth exploitation, including high levels of robbery.
 - Project Reckoning: A "Week of Action" was undertaken between 24th April and 7th May 2025, specifically targeting the reduction of smartphone robberies and snatches in Haggerston and Woodberry Down.

- A major initiative in June 2025 brought together 20 partners at the Redmond Centre, Woodberry Down, resulting in 100 interactions with residents and the successful marking of 45 mobile phones for tracking and identification.
- Greater confidence and wellbeing at night through Hackney Nights and the Night-Time Economy Strategy:
 - 374 staff trained in Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) and conflict management.
 - 51 accredited venues meeting new safety standards.
 - 98 medic interventions, 333 venue visits, and 147 licensing advice sessions, directly improving safety for residents on nights out.
 - Digital Safety Map developed to help residents navigate safe routes and facilities at night.
 - Hackney Community Safety Partnership intensified its focus on the safety of women and girls through the "Good Evening Hackney" plan and the Hackney Nights initiative. By training over 2,500 nighttime economy staff in vulnerability awareness and bystander intervention, the borough has created a more secure environment for those visiting our social hubs. Our commitment is further evidenced by the **16 Days of Activism campaign**, which integrated public "Walk Alongs" and professional training to combat harassment. Key deliverables include: **16 Days of Activism against gender based violence**: Delivering borough-wide events and "Tech Abuse" training to address digital and physical safety.
 - Providing a 30% Late Night Levy discount to venues that implement rigorous safety and anti-harassment protocols.
 - Establishing safe haven at the McDonalds and DNA Cafe in collaboration with St Mungos that provides immediate support and safety advice to the people.
- A partnership approach to tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Some key delivery highlights of the Domestic Abuse and Intervention Service (DAIS) include:
 - Launch of the Council's Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-2029 in November 2025, which set out the partnership's achievements and the ongoing work over four years on the following 4 priority areas of the strategy: Raising awareness and developing professional practice; Preventing VAWG and tackling misogyny; Supporting victims /survivors of VAWG; Holding perpetrators to account and reducing harm.
 - Delivery of the Council's annual 16 days campaign against gender-based violence which has been a high-point of local partnership cooperation. 2025's campaign involved 684 participants from agencies across the Hackney partnership in events and activities and achieved 96,700 campaign impressions across social media and email marketing.
 - Delivered information sessions throughout the year about issues such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Faith-Based Abuse, so-called 'Honour'-Based Abuse which has led to informed approaches to women's safety.
 - Lack of homicide of high-risk victim/survivor referred to DAIS or discussed at Hackney's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), demonstrating the effectiveness of Hackney's pioneering, whole-system, assertive safeguarding approach, which is now a model for other areas.

- Since 2023, the Council's Domestic Abuse Training and Consultation Service has trained professionals in Hackney and the City on topics including coercive control, bystander interventions, FGM, and domestic homicide prevention. In 2024/25, 1,653 professionals were trained (a 23% increase from 2023/24). Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- A robust preventative and early intervention approach evidenced by increased number of contact in 2024/25 (1,799) compared to 2023/24 yet a reduced number of 'high risk' MARAC referrals.
- Online feedback completed by clients gathered since 2022, shows victims/survivors' positive experiences of the service. Respondents are happy with the service provided to them and the majority of respondents feel safer following DAIS involvement.
- Since 2022, Hackney's Intergenerational Domestic Abuse Panel has used a multi-agency approach to sanction, disrupt, and engage those causing harm in complex family situations. Building on the UK's only *Intergenerational Domestic Abuse Protocol* (2021), the Panel has significantly helped over 100 mothers abused by their adult sons.
- Achieved accreditation in 2024 from Respect (a national body specialising in perpetrator work) for both its Domestic Abuse Prevention Programme and the Intensive Case Management approach to support victims of intergenerational domestic abuse. Hackney is the only Local Authority in the UK to have achieved dual accreditation for these interventions.
- In 2023/2024 DAIS created and further developed the *Hackney Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment*, the UK's only risk assessment that contains prompts to help practitioners consider Anti-Racist Practice, Intergenerational Abuse, Extra-Familial Harm and Exploitation, Disability and LGBTQ+ Status.
- In 2023 the Council and its partners created and launched the *Hackney Social Landlords Domestic Abuse Protocol*, the first of its kind in the UK; which improves how landlords identify and respond to domestic abuse.
- In 2022 DAIS created and launched the *Hackney Young Person Gender-based Attitude and Behaviours Screening and Intervention Tools*, which help practitioners address concerns and facilitate conversations with young people to identify inappropriate and/or illegal behaviours.
- Created and launched Hackney's Young People Domestic Abuse Prevention Programme in 2025, to enable practitioners to address with young people use of violence within intimate relationships
- In 2024 DAIS and colleagues in the Children and Families Service launched the *Hackney Extra Familial Risk/Harm and Domestic Abuse Pathway*. This strengthens the partnership's early intervention/harm prevention approach and is the UK's only dedicated pathway to require and support agencies to identify and respond jointly to risks faced/posed by young people.
- In 2024, created and launched a new *City and Hackney Female Genital Mutilation Protocol* - the UK's only local protocol to build on statutory guidance and add prompts about systemic racism, protective factors that can indicate reduced risk of FGM and considerations for managers about practitioner trauma.
- In 2024, created and launched the *Hackney Trauma-Informed multi-agency guidance: responding to child victims of domestic abuse*, the UK's first local guidance focused on trauma caused by domestic abuse.

- In 2024, launched Hackney's Sexual Exploitation Meeting - a proactive multi-agency approach to safeguarding those at risk and disrupting those causing harm
- A partnership approach and anti-racist vision for children who are engaged with, or at risk of entering the Youth Justice System underpinned by the Strategic Youth Justice Partnership Plan 2025-2028. It emphasises safeguarding, prevention, early intervention, and responding to local needs. It highlights commitment to a "child first" and strength-based approach which is aligned with our Hackney STAR-R model (Systemic, Trauma Informed, Anti Racist and Restorative).
 - Collaborated with Youth Justice Police colleagues to successfully support a pilot for the Deferred Prosecution Scheme that seeks to offer out of court dispersals to children who commit low level offences, addressing disparities in outcomes for children from Black and Global Majority backgrounds. This pilot has since been rolled out pan-London.
 - Continued to co-design and contribute to the London Accommodation Pathfinder (LAP) project; an accommodation and support-based service designed for boys aged 16 and 17 who would otherwise be placed in institutions, or held in custody unnecessarily due to a lack of suitable alternatives. This initiative actively addresses the disproportionate outcomes currently experienced by Black and Global Majority children known to the Youth Justice Service. The LAP aims to reduce custody and remand for children post-court, improving outcomes and reducing re-offending via intensive, psychologically informed support integrated with local authority services.
 - Established a series of Parenting Forums that provide information and support for parents of children who are known to the service. Also participated in a pilot programme *Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities*. As an outcome of the pilot, one carer has since gone on to become a trainer for this programme and the service will continue the Race Equality Foundation on a parenting programme funded by the Youth Endowment Fund.
 - The service's Speech and Language Team (SaLT) is creating a neuro-affirmative service. In 2025, the team provided training and support to professionals working with children in the Court setting, including defence solicitors, prosecutors, Magistrates and District Judges. The team has received national recognition for this initiative which has helped colleagues to adapt the way they speak with children based on their communication needs.
 - Developed an integrated health service that responds to the needs of young people and effectively reduces offending. Circa 70% of the youth justice cohort have speech language and communication needs. The team comprises specialist workers on substance misuse, speech and language therapists, clinical therapists, a health nurse and education representative to assess children's needs at the outset of their involvement in the youth justice system.
 - Current data for prevention and diversion has been tracked forward over 18 months into 2025 and shows that 82% of children who received a Triage out of court disposal between April 2023 and March 2024 did not go on to commit another offence. This is consistent with outcomes achieved over the last 10 years.
 - As a partnership between the Prevention and Diversion Team, Metropolitan Police Service, Mouth That Roars and young people we have developed a 'know your

rights' QR code and video for use with children when they are stopped and searched by police. The project aims to increase transparency of decision-making by police around their use of stop and search powers; empower young people to seek support and/or make complaints if they have experienced stop and search negatively in Hackney; and to signpost young people to further support.

- Delivered positive diversionary activity during carnival weekend (August 2025) which saw no arrests of children on open orders to the Youth Justice Service.

Building Trust, Confidence and Community Cohesion

Hackney's approach to community cohesion is rooted in fairness, mutual respect, and confronting inequality head-on. The Council continues to invest in building strong, inclusive communities and tackling the structural barriers that fuel division or exclusion.

Key delivery highlights 2022-2026

- Stronger social cohesion and community trust through targeted engagement and public-safety campaigns:
 - Supported cultural and religious events throughout the year, ensuring safe, inclusive and well-managed celebrations.
 - Delivered borough-wide campaigns such as “**Look Up, Look Out**” to reduce mobile-phone theft.
 - During **National Hate Crime Awareness Week**, six community outreach events and professional training sessions were delivered, strengthening community awareness and resilience.
 - Delivered **Prevent, Active Bystander, Stop Hate UK and Heart Stones** training to over 200 teachers, professionals and community partners, deepening understanding of hate crime and extremism.
- Increased protection from exploitation and harm for vulnerable adults and community members:
 - Specialist safeguarding work supported people with complex needs in hotspot areas, including rough sleepers and residents at risk of exploitation.
 - Partnership with **SWIM Enterprises** strengthened culturally competent safeguarding support for Black residents and those facing multiple vulnerabilities.
 - Non-compliant **business inspections and enforcement activity** resulted in over £20,000 worth of illicit tobacco and vapes seized, reducing health and safety risks.
 - High Visibility Patrols to **prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)** by targeting hotspot areas, especially around transport hubs and parks in the evenings. This has increased the sense of safety and deterred offenders, demonstrating the council's commitment to tackling VAWG and fostering a culture of respect.
- Hackney's cultural identity has been strengthened through external funding, major public artworks, community-led programmes and local investment in celebrating Black history and the diverse heritage of local people:
 - Through nationally recognised public art, including the UK's first permanent Windrush artworks, attracting high footfall and widespread acclaim.
 - Cultural programmes engaged over 30,000 residents each year, with Black History 365, PRIDE365, Cultural Hackney Fund and Discover Young Hackney reaching thousands of young people, artists and community groups.

- The Windrush Programme alone engaged around 2,000 residents annually, with new grants supporting emerging Black artists and community-led cultural expression. It partnered with high-profile institutions at East Bank, V&A East and Arriva Rail.
- Cultural grants funded 59 community projects, with 50% awarded to groups new to Council funding, expanding participation and supporting 580 paid artists across 55 cultural venues.
- Libraries, Museums and Archives Transforming Access, Learning and Inclusion:
 - Hackney's libraries now welcome 750,000+ visits per year, deliver 584,000 loans, and maintain 99% customer satisfaction, demonstrating their central role in learning and inclusion.
 - Digital access has significantly expanded, with a 38% rise in computer use, 250 public PCs, and 461 residents supported through Digital Buddies.
 - Libraries deliver extensive learning and cultural activity, including 2,173 adult events and 27,646 children's sessions, alongside 120 councillor surgeries, 55 Housing surgeries and the borough's Welcome Hub, which has supported 1,000+ migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
 - Hackney Museum engaged 101,000+ people, reached 11,747 children through schools programmes, and secured £2.5m in National Lottery funding for its full transformation, co-designed with 13,972 residents.
 - Hackney Archives achieved national accreditation in 2025, expanded community collections (including the Sir Collins and An Viet Archives with British Council support), and delivered inclusive heritage programming shaped by diverse communities.
- Resilient Cultural Infrastructure Supporting Creativity, Enterprise and Community Life:
 - Over £1.5 million in capital investment has improved libraries, cultural spaces and creative infrastructure, including major upgrades to Hackney Central Library, Stamford Hill Library and cultural venues across the borough.
 - £4.5 million in capital investment at Stoke Newington Library, funding ongoing improvement works to completely replace the roof and weather-proof the outside of the building.
 - Hackney Carnival was a major cultural anchor, with past events drawing up to 88,000 people, supporting 1,200 performers, and securing £100,000 in funding toward its transition to an independent delivery model.
 - Discover Young Hackney supported youth participation in the creative sector, including 61 participants with special educational needs and disabilities, building pathways into culture, learning and employment.
 - Set Ready - a programme that supports residents from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds to gain skills and employment opportunities in the film industry, bolstered by Hackney's position as one of the most filmed boroughs in London. 3 Set Ready courses have been delivered, in 2025 they resulted in training for 46 residents and 36 paid work placements on film or high end TV projects.

Good Growth: Economic Development and Regeneration

Hackney is home to London's most diverse and dynamic businesses, spanning financial services and ICT, creative industries, culture, social enterprises, and the night-time economy. Our

economic areas from Shoreditch to the Olympic Park, creative neighbourhoods such as Hoxton, London Fields, and Hackney Wick, our vibrant town centres with successful markets, cultural venues and evening economies such as Dalston, Hackney Central and Stoke Newington, as well as more local high streets and town centres, support our residents and businesses as well as attract new businesses to invest in Hackney and attract visitors to the borough from across the UK and beyond.

Approximately 99.8% of businesses in Hackney are micro (0-9 employees) or small (less than 50 employees). Since 2018 there has been a 25% increase in the number of businesses in the borough (currently 176,000 jobs in Hackney and 25,730 businesses) with the biggest growth sectors being Information and Communications (ICT), Media, Creative, and Financial and Professional services.

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of jobs in Hackney increased by 39% (compared to 9% in London overall). Job growth over the 2019-41 period is estimated to be over 30% in Hackney. The GLA predicts that the City of London and the boroughs to its south and east (Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Greenwich and Southwark) will together account for over half (427,000) of the 842,000 new jobs projected in London in the period from 2019-2041. In 2025, Hackney was identified as the **best place to start a business in the UK**.

The economic success of the borough, the increase in businesses and jobs that this has delivered, and the diversity this creates in our town centres, high streets and neighbourhoods is one of our greatest assets. We want to use this economic success to create even more opportunities for our residents and businesses to thrive and succeed. Our new **Economic Development Plan** provides the framework to continue our work in this area, supporting business to invest in and give back to Hackney, helping our existing businesses to thrive, maximising the jobs and other employment and skills opportunities our businesses provide for our residents most in need, working to ensure regeneration and development is locally led, based on local community priorities, and maximises the benefits to our people and places.

The Council's approach to regeneration in Hackney is focused on the principle of inclusive growth. Community participation and engagement is embedded throughout the development and delivery of regeneration, focused on growth that reflects the priorities of our local residents, businesses, and communities, ensuring that regeneration and development maximises opportunities for our residents and businesses, town centres and high streets, communities and neighbourhoods. We work in partnership, using our levers to lead, steer and influence regeneration and development, working alongside our residents, businesses, community groups, landowners, developers, and other stakeholders.

Our area based regeneration programmes in Dalston, Hackney Central, Hackney Wick, Hoxton, Shoreditch, and Woodberry Down highlight the successful delivery of high quality new homes and affordable workspace, community facilities, shops and services, town centre and high street improvements, business support, transport improvements, high-quality public spaces, improvement to heritage buildings and spaces, improvements to cultural infrastructure, and inclusive growth.

Key delivery highlights 2022-2026

- The regeneration programmes in the priority regeneration areas of **Dalston, Hackney Central, Hackney Wick, Hoxton, Shoreditch** and **Woodberry Down** continue at pace, focused on delivering priorities and initiatives identified by local residents and businesses, supporting our town centres, high streets and local economy to thrive, and inclusive growth.
- The **Hackney Central Town Centre Strategy** was adopted in 2023 following extensive community engagement and input. The ten-year plan focuses on improving the town centre via investment in public spaces, community facilities, culture and heritage, improving resident wellbeing, transport and air quality, and delivering new homes and commercial space on opportunity sites. The town centre strategy supported a successful funding bid, **securing £21m from the Government Local Regeneration Fund** to make the town centre more attractive, safer and greener with major changes to streets and spaces including Amhurst Road, **Pembury Circus**, Hackney Downs Station, Marvin Street, Mare Street and Graham Road, an **upgrade to Hackney Central library and Town Hall Square**, and new town centre signage. This adds to a series of initiatives already completed in the town centre including the **new entrance to Hackney Central station** and the town centre business support programme, the **Hackney Central Impact and Ideas Fund**.
- The **Dalston Plan**, a new planning and regeneration framework for Dalston town centre, was adopted in 2025 with a focus on protecting the much-loved character of Dalston, supporting local businesses, creating a greener town centre, and delivering new homes and workspace. Delivering on the plan, **Dalston Streets and Spaces** has seen investment into the town centre including **over £1m investment in Ridley Road and Ridley Road market**, an upgrade to **Dalston Square** including new seating, children's playspace, cultural features and new trees and plans are underway to upgrade **Gillett Square**. The Council has worked closely with local businesses to create new and safeguard affordable and creative workspace in Dalston at **Bradbury Works, Ridley Road Shopping Village, and Ashwin Street**.
- The **Hoxton Regeneration Framework** helped to secure £3m in investment from the GLA Civic Partnership Programme to deliver the **Connecting Hoxton programme**. The programme is focused on neighbourhood improvements co-designed with local residents, businesses and community groups and will focus on improving Hoxton Street and Hoxton Street market, new and improved public realm, 100 new trees, and upgrades to key community buildings including the Arden Estate Hall and Hoxton Hall. The Peer Ambassador Programme gave young residents the opportunity to co-create the **At Home mural on Hoxton Street**. We published an impact report showcasing the work of the **Shoreditch and Hoxton Art Fund** in 2023 and we delivered a new affordable workspace in **Plexal, Shoreditch**.
- In Hackney Wick, work has continued to **safeguard affordable space for artists and the creative community** as set out in the **Hackney Wick Central Masterplan** and the **Hackney Wick and Wick Island Creative Enterprise Zone**. The Masterplan also enabled the delivery of **109 new affordable homes** around Hackney Wick station at **Hackney Yards**. We are investing in **Prince Edward Road** to support local businesses, with greening, play on the way, and improved seating as set out in the **Hackney Wick and Fish Island Public Realm Framework**, a community led document highlighting future priorities for area improvements. We continue to work with the London Legacy Development Corporation and other partners, businesses and organisations on the Queen

Elizabeth Olympic Park to drive opportunities for inclusive growth and in 2024 **we secured the return of planning powers from the LLDC back to Hackney.**

- In **Woodberry Down** 2,901 new homes have been built to date across Phases 1 to 3, as well as new community facilities including the **Redmond Centre, the Woodberry Down Children and Family Hub, Woodberry Wetlands**, new parks and green spaces, shops and amenities. Section 106 funding from Woodberry Down regeneration is part funding the **West Reservoir and West Reservoir Centre improvement works**, opening up the space to the whole community with improved accessibility and facilities. Phase 3 of Woodberry Down was completed in 2025 and delivered 584 new homes, including 243 affordable homes, together with a new park, commercial and community space and a new energy centre. Planning consent for Phase 4 was granted in July 2024 for 511 homes, including 222 affordable homes and this will start construction in 2026. A revised masterplan for Phases 5-8 was approved in September 2025. The masterplan provides the outline scheme designs for each phase of the development. In total around 6495 new homes will be delivered on Woodberry Down across all phases, including 41% affordable homes.
- We have worked closely with businesses, business associations, other Councils, and partnership bodies in other town centres and high streets such as with the **Stoke Newington Business Association** and the **Finsbury Park Tri-Borough Accord** with a focus on supporting businesses, residents and the local economy.
- Alongside Council led regeneration, we continue to steer and input into major developments and planning applications in the borough, working closely with the Planning service to maximise the benefits of growth and development from schemes in development such as **Bishopsgate Goodyard** and **Kingsland Shopping Centre**.
- Adopted the new **Hackney Economic Development Plan** aimed at reducing inequalities in the borough and maximising the benefits of economic growth, investment and regeneration for our people, places and communities,
- Launched the **Local Area Activation Fund**, for businesses to deliver activities in our town centres and high streets aimed at improving the economy and boosting high street footfall.
- Delivered a **£2.5 business grants programme** which supported business to recover after the pandemic. The grants benefitted 330 Hackney businesses, made businesses greener, more inclusive and more resilient. The **grant funded initiatives** reached 237,000 people, helped bring in more than £2m in further external investment to Hackney, and saw over £500,000 spent locally, businesses received over 3,000 hours of targeted business development and training support, helping local enterprises start-up, grow, or improve their resilience.
- Continued to support local businesses to start up, grow and thrive in the borough by offering business support via the **Hackney Business Network** and the **Love Hackney, Shop Local Campaign**.
- Delivered new affordable workspace in the borough via our planning process and via our regeneration work, helping small businesses find affordable workspace. Locations include **Plexal Shoreditch, HCD at Gillet Square** and **The Trowbridge Centre**.
- Entrepreneurs from under-represented groups have stronger pathways into business, following targeted outreach and support for Bengali, Charedi, Kurdish, LGBTQIA+ and youth-led enterprises via the **Hackney Impact** business support programme.
- 66 energy audits were completed for local businesses and VCS organisations, exceeding the 50-audit target. From this group, 28 applied for a grant to fund changes outlined in their energy audits and seven organisations were awarded between £5,000 and £10,000.

This has helped fund energy efficient lighting and heating system upgrades in these premises to help cut business running costs. The project has also created a pipeline for future green business grants.

- Implemented a sustainable procurement strategy that looks to maximise the contract with local businesses, social enterprises and co-op's. Building on our procurement work which sees 25% of contracts with local businesses. Through the Hackney Impact business support programme, and other interventions, we are looking to make it easier to contract with local businesses.
- Through our diverse and successful Hackney Markets which support our businesses, town centres and high streets, there were 4,789 people employed in relation to Hackney's markets in 2024/25, there has been an increase of 1,572 (365%) businesses licensed to trade in Hackney's markets since 2018/19, 3,880 job opportunities created since 2018/19, 2,490 more local people in jobs since 2018/19.

3.2 FOR A GREENER, HEALTHIER HACKNEY

In addition to making Hackney fairer and safer, we have been working to make the borough greener and healthier:

Greener, Healthier
Outcomes
Fair climate action for residents and businesses (as identified in the Climate Action Plan)
Residents have improved health outcomes by accessing inclusive healthcare services
Supported individuals and communities that adopt healthy behaviours
Transform adult social care, tackle physical and mental health inequalities and continue to support, value, and give voice to our older and disabled residents
Environments that enhance wellbeing, providing clean and safe spaces

Health Outcomes

Hackney continues to face deep and persistent health inequalities. The 2025 Indices of Multiple Deprivation ranked the borough 43rd most deprived for health and 32nd for average health outcomes, with inequities closely linked to income, housing and wider social determinants. Black and Global Majority communities and lower-income households remain disproportionately affected by preventable illness, long-term conditions and poorer access to care.

Despite this context, Hackney has delivered significant improvements in prevention, access to services, community wellbeing and targeted support over the past four years. Through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022–2026), the borough has strengthened mental health provision, expanded physical activity, reduced smoking, addressed obesity, tackled substance misuse and made major progress in HIV prevention. These achievements reflect strong partnership working across the NHS, VCS, communities and the Council.

Key Delivery Highlights 2022-2026

- Better access to primary and community health services:

- Two new GP surgeries opened: **Lower Clapton Group Practice** and **Spring Hill Practice**, expanding capacity and improving access for residents.
- Increased access to mental health services for underrepresented groups including African-Caribbean and other Heritage (ACH) communities, LGBTQIA+ residents, refugees and carers.
- The Better Mental Health programme delivered community-based support post-pandemic and trained **450+ frontline staff annually** in mental health awareness.
- Stronger mental health, trauma-informed and anti-racist practice:
 - **Hackney Thinking Spaces**, designed to address the impacts of racism and marginalisation, delivered **20 therapeutic group sessions** for Black and Global Majority residents, supported by a Community Advisory Board shaping system-change actions.
 - **Nearly 100% of participants** reported the groups were supportive, safe and relevant.
 - Personalised support models expanded, offering whole-person interventions and more effective pathways into mental health services.
- Reducing isolation and strengthening social connection:
 - The **City and Hackney Social Connections Group**, established in 2023, brought partners together to tackle loneliness and social isolation – major drivers of poor health.
 - Quarterly collaboration strengthened practice, shared evidence, and showcased impactful local projects at a major 2025 event.
- Increasing physical activity and enabling healthier lifestyles:
 - Collaborative programmes across the Council supported thousands of residents to be more active daily.
 - **Healthier Hackney Grants** reached **12,000+ recipients**, supported by **185 volunteers**.
 - **Healthier Together Hackney** helped **6,000 adults with long-term conditions**, with **75% achieving** the recommended 150 minutes of weekly activity.
 - **20+ primary schools** implemented the Daily Mile annually.
 - The **Small Steps campaign** reached **160,000+ people**, boosting engagement with local activity groups.
 - Physical Activity MECC training launched in 2025, with **12 Community Health Champions** trained.
- Major progress toward a Smokefree Hackney:
 - Over **25,000 people** were supported to quit smoking (2022–2025) with a **51% quit rate**, surpassing the national best-practice target of 35%.
 - Adult smoking prevalence reduced from **20%** a decade ago to **11.8%**.
 - Enforcement seized **£150,000 of illegal tobacco** and **£220,000 of illegal vapes** through dedicated Trading Standards activity.
 - Tobacco Control Alliance (relaunched in 2024) driving forward eight partnership priorities under the Smokefree 2030 ambition.
- Tackling obesity and promoting healthy weight:
 - Published a borough-wide Healthy Weight Needs Assessment and refreshed the Hackney Healthy Weight whole-system plan.
 - **100+ food businesses** joined the Hackney Healthier Catering Commitment.
 - **Six takeaway planning applications refused**, reducing clustering of hot-food

- outlets.
- **500+ children and families** supported to improve diet and activity habits.
- **3,000 adults** supported through local weight-management programmes.
- The Council's climate action objectives, which promote active travel, increased cycling, and walking, concurrently contribute to addressing obesity and fostering a healthy weight.
- Improving support for substance misuse and addiction:
 - Launched a **LGBTQ+ Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction Programme** with Love Tank, now delivering mobiliser training and undergoing formal evaluation.
 - Introduced the **Integrated Substance Use and Mental Health Service**, providing coordinated specialist support.
 - Established a **Gambling Community of Practice** to tackle gambling harms, ahead of new national levy funding. Adopted a Public Health Approach for our Gambling Policy and have joined the Coalition to End Gambling Ads.
 - Adopted NICE guidelines for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) scoping assessments which was commended at the **Municipal Journal (MJ) awards** for innovation in reducing health inequalities through work on FASD.
 - Continued community outreach through mobile operations vans and the Community Wellbeing Team.
 - Partnership with City & Hackney Recovery Service achieved **micro-elimination of Hepatitis C**.
- Leading progress toward zero new HIV infections by 2030:
 - Adopted the **City & Hackney Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (2024–2029)**, with a major focus on eliminating new HIV infections.
 - Expanded HIV testing:
 - **5,000+ additional tests** via NHS Health Checks
 - testing increased from **32,805 (2022)** to **38,568 (2024)** (2nd highest rate in England)
 - New infections reduced from **71 (2023)** to **45 (2024)**.
 - Hackney has the **4th highest PrEP uptake in England**, increasing from **2,289 (2021)** to **3,363 (2024)**.
 - Launched **DigiPrEP** in Feb 2025, providing PrEP to **481 residents**, 46% new users.
 - Youth condom distribution: **1,000 young people** signing up annually, with widespread outreach across pharmacies, bars and venues.
 - Hackney Council and Homerton Healthcare committed to becoming **HIV Confident Organisations in 2026**, helping reduce stigma and discrimination.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care in Hackney has faced the same national pressures affecting local authorities across the country: rising demand, increasing complexity of need, escalating care costs and workforce shortages. These pressures have intensified over the last four years, while budgets and staffing levels have remained constrained. Despite this, Hackney has delivered significant improvements, strengthened prevention and independence, and modernised services to ensure

long-term sustainability. Nevertheless, resource pressures are intensifying and a cross-departmental Adult Social Care Improvement Board has been established to continue driving improvements and address any issues that arise from the recent Care Quality Commission inspection.

In 2023 the Council launched a three-year Adult Social Care Plan, co-designed with residents, carers and staff. The plan sets out a clear ambition: to promote independence, improve outcomes and deliver a financially sustainable care system grounded in dignity, choice and equity. Through the Transforming Outcomes Programme, Hackney has introduced new models of support, modernised pathways, invested in early intervention and strengthened its workforce and quality assurance framework. Together these reforms have delivered measurable improvements in resident experience, safety, independence and system efficiency.

Key delivery highlights 2022-2026

- Residents experience greater independence, stability and choice:
 - Phase one of the Transforming Outcomes Programme improved pathways that promote independence and reduce reliance on long-term care.
 - Hospital discharge reforms avoided 12,500 hours of homecare in 2024/25, with a projected 63,000-hour reduction by March 2026.
 - Post-discharge reviews increased by 65%, ensuring people receive timely adjustments and support at home.
 - In long-term care:
 - 42% fewer residential placements than expected
 - 14% more independent homecare packages
 - In Learning Disabilities:
 - 46% reduction in package increases following reviews
 - 51% lower-than-expected support packages for young people transitioning to adulthood
 - Overall the programme delivered £330k cost avoidance in 2024/25, with planned savings of £2.8m in 2025/26 and £4.7m in 2026/27, reinvesting resources into prevention and community-based support.
- Improved resident experience, wellbeing and confidence in Adult Social Care. The reinstated Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework survey (2024/25) shows clear year-on-year improvements:
 - Satisfaction with services increased to 61.4% (from 58.5%).
 - Ease of finding information increased to 66.2% (from 62.5%).
 - Feeling safe remains high at 87.8%.
 - A greater proportion feel in control of daily life (74.3%, up from 69.5%).
 - Measured quality of life improved from 18.1 to 18.8.
 - Over 90% of residents reported that staff listen, understand their needs and treat them with dignity and respect.

These results reflect reforms to first contact, assessment, case management, and improved neighbourhood-based working with NHS and community partners.

- Modern, integrated and more responsive services:
 - Launched phase 2 of the Transforming Outcomes Programme (2025), focusing on digital improvements, reablement redesign and preparing for adulthood.
 - Streamlined Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) processes and insourced the Home

- Improvement Agency to speed up adaptations, responding to a 28% annual increase in requests since 2021.
- Updated care charging procedures and conducted extensive engagement through 16 community events and 270 survey responses, supporting a fairer and more transparent charging system.
 - Introduced a new Dynamic Purchasing System for day opportunities, with 28 approved providers supporting learning-disabled and autistic residents more flexibly.
 - Improved case management systems help practitioners identify goals, assess eligibility and plan support more efficiently.
 - Stronger support for unpaid carers:
 - Launched a new Adult Carers Strategy (2024–2027), co-produced with partners and 160+ carers, ensuring carers’ needs, rights and wellbeing shape local support. Recommissioned carers’ services, with more than 250 carers registered since April 2025.
 - Developed clearer pathways to advice, wellbeing support and respite, recognising carers as essential partners in the ASC system.
 - A more inclusive, confident and skilled workforce:
 - Workforce Development Strategy embeds social work and OT apprenticeships and strengthens recruitment pathways aligned with Equality, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EEDIB).
 - Refreshed Practice Framework emphasises trauma-informed and anti-racist practice.
 - Quality Assurance Framework updated to ensure consistent high standards and continuous service improvement.
 - Workforce Race Equality Standard Action Plan implemented, including anti-racist supervision tools, culturally sensitive training and psychologically safe spaces for staff.
 - Improved neighbourhood-based care and partnerships:
 - Adult Social Care staff now work in eight neighbourhood teams, strengthening relationships with primary care, district nursing, mental health teams and community organisations.
 - Neighbourhood Multi-Disciplinary Meetings support more coordinated interventions and address health inequalities.
 - Over 8,000 residents have used the improved ‘request for support’ form since its launch, strengthening first contact and early-help outcomes.
 - Better long-term planning for accommodation and support:
 - Completed a boroughwide accommodation needs assessment for ASC services, shaping a long-term plan for supported housing.
 - Work underway to build new supported accommodation and review existing provision to ensure capacity meets future demand.

3.3 FOR EVERY CHILD IN HACKNEY

As well as creating a greener and healthier borough, the Strategic Plan focused on working towards the following outcomes for every child:

Every Child

Outcomes
Every child's needs are identified and responded to early
Every child is healthy
Every child fulfils their potential
Every child is safe
Every child is equipped for adulthood and has choice over their future

Over the past four years, Hackney has delivered strong and consistent outcomes for children, young people and families despite unprecedented financial pressures, increasing need and significant operational challenges. National crises including COVID-19, the cost of living emergency and rising placement costs, alongside local pressures such as workforce shortages, falling school rolls, the legacy of the cyberattack and growing complexity of needs, have placed sustained pressure on children's services.

Despite this, the borough has maintained high performance, strengthened practice and delivered major system improvements. Our focus on prevention, partnership and high-quality practice has ensured that children continue to receive timely support, earlier intervention and better outcomes. Hackney has also continued to invest in the conditions for long-term success: a stable and skilled workforce, a strong early-help offer, improved SEND pathways and a more inclusive, trauma-informed and anti-racist system.

The new Hackney Education Strategic Plan (2025–2028) sets out a collective response to falling pupil numbers, supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), managing school financial stability, inclusion and mental health. Co-designed with schools, parents, carers, young people and partners, the plan defines five shared priorities and forms the foundation for educational improvement across the borough.

Over the last four years, Hackney has seen a sustained increase in the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), reflecting both rising levels of need and improved identification and assessment. The number of Hackney residents with an EHCP increased from **3,243 in 2023 to 3,473 in 2024**, and further to **3,681 in 2025**. This equates to **4.31% of 0–24 year olds**, placing Hackney among the **highest quartile of local authorities in England** and the **highest among statistical neighbours**, highlighting the scale of SEND within the borough.

The launch of the Graduated Response for SEND – Right Support, Right Time has strengthened early identification and improved access to appropriate support, making the system more integrated, needs-led and equitable. Alongside this, Children and Family Hubs now provide a coordinated front door to services, offering families earlier help across health, education, employment, housing, mental health and parenting support. The model is improving access to early help, strengthening family resilience and supporting improved child development.

Targeted support for vulnerable children has expanded, including new preventative programmes such as the Super Youth Hub and integrated mental-health pathways through CAMHS, with initiatives like Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) now reaching 90 percent of schools. This has strengthened early intervention, reduced escalation and improved pupils' emotional wellbeing.

Hackney continues to lead national practice through its Systemic, Trauma-Informed, Anti-Racist (STAR) approach. The development of anti-racist supervision, practice standards and the Council's first Anti-Racist Practice Strategic Lead have strengthened cultural competence and helped address inequalities in experience and outcomes. The Children's Workforce Strategy (2025–2028) reinforces this approach by embedding EEDIB principles, professional development and wellbeing across the workforce. Addressing disproportionality has been a core focus of this work, with Hackney's anti-racist commitment embedded through the STAR approach to drive changes in policy, practice and decision-making, reducing unequal experiences and outcomes for Black and Global Majority children, young people and families.

Youth justice and prevention services have been nationally recognised, with Hackney YJS rated Good by Ofsted and the Prevention & Diversion Team winning a Children & Young People Now Youth Justice Award. Innovative practice, including the use of trained local youth volunteers on Out-of-Court Disposal Panels, has been highlighted in national research for improving youth voice and reducing racial disparity.

Through the DfE Families First Transformation Programme, Hackney is helping shape national reform by shifting the system further towards prevention, family support and early help. New local protocols and redesigned assessment pathways will be rolled out from 2026.

Investment in in-borough provision is expanding capacity and improving placement stability. Two new Council-owned children's homes have received planning permission and will provide up to six places for young people with complex needs from 2026. Young Hackney services are being reconfigured to strengthen local support and improve the experience and outcomes of adolescents. A new Care Leavers Hub has opened, offering young people access to advice, guidance and a safe, supportive space.

Key Delivery Highlights 2022-2026

- Improved educational outcomes and strong school performance:
 - 98% of schools and 100% of children's centres rated *Good* or better, sustaining performance among the best nationally.
 - Over 300 additional SEND places were created, strengthening in-borough support.
 - 76% of Year 6 pupils met the expected standard in 2025 (above the national 62%).
 - 70% achieved a standard GCSE pass and 49% achieved a strong pass in 2025.

- Stronger early-help and family support through Children & Family Hubs:
 - 13,338 individuals and 6,351 families supported between 2022–2025; 84% from the most deprived areas, meeting Family First equity goals.
 - Breastfeeding initiation increased from 91% to 98%, with mixed feeding rising from 77% to 84%, demonstrating strong Start for Life outcomes.
 - 1,000 fathers engaged in co-produced work on mental health, involvement and perinatal needs.
 - PEEP early years programme reached 144 participants, with high engagement and strong improvements for children from areas of deprivation.

- Greater access to enrichment, inclusion and opportunity:
 - The 10x10 programme reached thousands of families, including:

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- 14,000 Journey booklets distributed
 - 2,100 reception pupils receiving library cards
 - 30 schools signing the 10x10 pledge
 - 102 children participating in Debate Mate finals
 - 384 children have learnt to swim with Sports England lessons at Better Leisure Centre pools
 - 56 children attending funded residentials
 - 477 children supported through drama and performing arts workshops
 - 30 pupils with SEND accessing inclusive theatre workshops
- A more sustainable, inclusive childcare and early-years system:
 - The Commission on Affordable Childcare delivered recommendations in 2024 and established a new cross-council delivery group.
 - Improved links between early years, employment, housing and regeneration are strengthening the sustainability of local childcare settings and supporting parental access to work.
 - High-performing youth justice, prevention and adolescent services:
 - Hackney Youth Justice Service rated Good (2023).
 - The Prevention & Diversion Team won a Youth Justice Award for child-centred, anti-racist practice.
 - National recognition (Revolving Doors Report, 2024) for innovative youth-led Out-of-Court Disposal Panels and strong youth and parent voice.
 - Reform and investment to strengthen long-term care and SEND support
 - Two new in-borough children's homes approved and due to open in 2026, creating six specialist places.
 - New Care Leavers Hub opened, improving access to practical support and safe social space.
 - Families First Transformation Programme progressing, with redesigned assessment pathways due from 2026.