

FAST FORWARD TO 2010

OUR PROGRESS IN 2008/09

A year of improvement - A modern well-managed council delivering excellent services

Welcome to Fast Forward to 2010 - A year of improvement, which gives residents an update on the progress we made in the last 12 months, delivering excellent services for our residents.

With a clear strategy of 'putting residents first', 2008 was a year to be proud of for Hillingdon.

Hillingdon leading the way

Hillingdon continues to innovate to enhance the quality of life for our residents. Hillingdon was the first council in the country to offer council tax discounts for pensioners, preferential car parking for the elderly, a first time buyers initiative to help local young people get onto the property ladder and resident friendly weekly waste and recycling collections. Other councils are now following our lead and developing their own schemes.

Our unique Street Champions scheme, using the eyes and ears of more than 4,800 local people to report environmental issues to the council, has received national and international acclaim and our 'Streets Ahead' programme keep us closely in touch with what residents want at a local level.

We have empowered our residents through public cabinet question time sessions, which give residents the chance to talk to Cabinet members at public events held at different locations in the borough. We have extended our popular petition process, which allows residents to petition cabinet members to now include e-petitioning. Our Older People's Assembly has been recognised as giving hard to reach groups a voice and our connecting communities forum brings together key representatives from the range of communities that make up the London Borough of Hillingdon. These have all been welcomed by residents and are being replicated by other councils.

Strong financial position

Strong financial management has meant that despite the very difficult economic climate, the council has till been able to deliver a zero rate council tax increase over the next two years, whilst continuing to invest in new and improved services.

As one of 127 councils and other public and charity organisations that has money frozen in Icelandic banks, the council is well placed to be able to deal with this and there will be no effect on service delivery.

Successful lobbying of central government has generated £4m for the support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) that would otherwise have burdened local taxpayers, releasing money for local initiatives. The council is continuing to press government so that we receive the full amount we need to support these vulnerable young people. The council does not believe that local people should have to pay for what is a national issue and that this should be funded by national government.

Hillingdon Improvement Programme (HIP)

HIP remains the key improvement driver for Hillingdon. During 2008, there was a major focus on improving the *internal* organisation. All parts of the business were subject to a fundamental service review process – delivering £13m of efficiency savings and improved working practices.

As well as a focus on efficiency, HIP is also delivering a range of improvements for residents. In the coming year, we will deliver three new youth centres for our young people and as part of the council's response to the economic downturn and with strong support from residents, in 2009 we will be introducing a residents' card offering preferential access to council services and discounts with local shops and businesses.

Conclusion

In 2008-2009, the London Borough of Hillingdon has demonstrated a range of achievements. Clearly responding to the needs and concerns of our residents, we have delivered high quality services whilst at the same time maintaining value for money.

Our improvements have been recognised and we are winning national awards for everything from our parks and open spaces to our award-winning contact centre. Last year the council collected 20 awards for a range of achievements.

The range of innovative projects that have been developed in Hillingdon and since emulated by others shows that although an outer London borough, we are on the leading edge of service development and delivery.

Leader's Statement

An Introduction by Cllr Ray Puddifoot, Leader of the Council

In the last year, The London Borough of Hillingdon made outstanding progress in improving the services we deliver for residents and we have enjoyed a year to be proud of with residents and customers remaining firmly at the heart of everything we do.

This annual report, setting out what we achieved in 2008-09 gives many examples of us delivering the things that we set out in **Fast Forward to 2010** - our three-year plan. We have reviewed every area of our business – looking at how we can improve and be more efficient – and our ambitious programme of service improvements has been delivered whilst also producing £13M of efficiency savings.

As I have consistently said, we put our residents at the heart of everything we do and so the real test of how well we do is what you say about us. Our latest residents' survey shows record satisfaction levels with services.

At the same time as improving services, we were also able to honour our commitment to freeze council tax for all Hillingdon residents.

The past 12 months have seen tremendous improvements throughout the council and in the services we deliver to residents. In the most recent residents' survey, you have told us that we are improving across a range of services and in particular, in those areas that matter most to our residents. Hillingdon's 'residents first' approach means we are now leading the way on a range of initiatives. As well as having a highly rated waste collection service (93%%) and doorstep recycling facilities (83%), residents also like our newly refurbished libraries, with more people using them than ever before. We have made improvements in our customer services, with 76% of residents satisfied when they contact the council, 77% saying that our staff are helpful and 75% of residents feeling well informed about the council and the services we deliver.

Despite the difficult financial climate that we are all facing, the council's finances are strong and with good political and managerial leadership in place, we are well positioned to weather the storm of the global economic downturn.

On behalf of our residents, we have also continued to tackle difficult issues. The council will continue to fight to oppose the Third Runway at Heathrow Airport and we are once again putting pressure on the government to fully fund the costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seekers that we support who come into the borough through the airport.

Hillingdon continues to innovate, with initiatives that enhance the quality of life for our residents. Hillingdon was the first council in the country to offer council tax

discounts for pensioners, preferential car parking for the elderly, a first time buyers initiative to help young people get onto the property ladder and resident friendly weekly waste and recycling collections.

Later this year, we will be introducing our residents' card - Hillingdon First – which will offer all residents privileged rates on council services such as parking charges and discounts at local shops and businesses. This will further help to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Hillingdon and continue to put them first in everything we do.

Cllr Ray Puddifoot

Leader of the Council

2008-09 – a year to be proud of

The London Borough of Hillingdon has enjoyed a year to be proud of and residents and customers remain firmly at the heart of everything we do.

The past 12 months have seen tremendous improvements throughout the council and in the services we deliver to residents.

Achieving more than £13m efficiency savings, our financial balances are strong and robust political/managerial leadership is in place, ensuring we are well positioned to weather the storm of the global economic downturn and to support our residents and local businesses.

Hillingdon has developed a range of initiatives, which have included delivering a number of national firsts. We were the first council in the country to freeze council tax for the borough's over 65s and this freeze has now been extended to all residents for the next two years.

Our recent residents and staff surveys have generated outstanding results, well above local government benchmarks. 76% of residents are satisfied when they contact the council, with 77% saying staff are helpful.

The number of residents who feel well informed about council services has dramatically increased to 75% and campaigns such as the 'No Third Runway at Heathrow' campaign captured residents' concerns with more than 17,000 responding to the government consultation – the highest return from **any** council. Our fight to recover money for unaccompanied asylum seeking children has resulted in more money for local initiatives.

Many other organisations are following our innovation and good practice and in 2008, we won many awards ranging from green flags for our parks to 'Council of the Year', 'Best Contact Centre' and 'Best Public Relations Team' in the Good Communications Awards 2008.

The council's cabinet is responsible for the delivery of the council's vision and by working together across service areas, they are able to successfully deliver the priorities of our residents

A clean and attractive borough where the environment is protected, transport links improved and our heritage preserved

A clean and attractive borough

Our residents consider a clean and attractive borough to be the most important priority for the council. Our parks have won the second highest number of green flags in London and we have established innovative schemes, such as Street Champions, to engage directly with our residents to tackle the issues that really matter to them. We have started on programmes to improve the street scene in our smaller town centres.

We have impressive recycling rates by encouraging (not penalising) our residents to recycle waste. We are now offering recycling facilities to private flats and we issued more than 4300 compost bins to our residents, free-of-charge.

What we said we would do

- Make Hillingdon a cleaner greener borough
- Improve the street scene with local residents fully engaged in setting and monitoring performance standards
- Improve access and transport and relieve traffic congestion.
- Improve planning and developments and resist inappropriate development
- Continue our Chrysalis environmental programme to help improve the image of the borough.
- Strengthen the council's Planning Enforcement Service
- Ensure the heritage and natural environment, especially the green belt, are both protected and enhanced.

How well we did

- The most recent residents' survey shows that 93% of residents are satisfied with our waste collection services and 83% of residents are satisfied with the council's doorstep recycling
- Opened the internationally renowned Manor Farm Complex, jointly funded by the council and the Heritage Lottery Fund
- Launched our civic pride initiative, starting with refurbishment of Hillingdon's war memorials. We also offered support for our local war veteran's who wanted to attend the 65th anniversary of the D-day landings.
- Increased the number of Hillingdon's parks that now have Green Flags, a national award for excellent parks and green spaces from seven to 10.
- Through our local campaign to oppose the third runway at Heathrow Airport, to help protect our villages and the quality of life of our residents, we submitted nearly 17,000 responses from residents opposing the plans
- Launched the Streets Ahead scheme, and held 10 Streets Ahead action days across the borough
- Opened the new children's water play feature at Ruislip Lido

- Started work on the next phase of the town centre improvement initiative in Northwood
- We now have more than 4800 street champions across the borough
- Continue environmental improvements suggested by residents as part of our Chrysalis Programme
- With the help of our residents, more than a third of Hillingdon's waste is reduced or composted, making Hillingdon one of London's top recycling boroughs
- Dealt with nearly 9,000 cases of graffiti within an average of two days
- Hillingdon has been rated as the best council in London for removal of abandoned vehicles - Reducing the number of abandoned vehicles in Hillingdon by 70% in the last two years.
- Extended the conservation areas in Ruislip and Ickenham Village and Northwood Hills Area of Special Local Character was undertaken
- Following public consultation, we are about to adopt new guidance which will help to make sure new developments achieve appropriate environmental standards
- The council continues to argue against inappropriate development, in particular in the Green Belt – The recently refused, high profile planning application for housing at Pikes End, Eastcote is an example of this.
- The council has worked with a number of developers to raise the standard of building design, both visual impact and through increased use of renewable energy.
- The council led an award- winning publicity campaign to oppose third runway at Heathrow

What we are doing next

- Continue to enhance the borough through the council's civic pride initiative.
- Introduce recycling initiatives to help achieve our recycling target of 40% by 2010
- Continue to improve the quality of the borough's roads, our parks and open spaces, and improve town centres and the street scene.
- Launch a new locality initiative scheme building upon the success of the street champions and streets ahead schemes.
- Investing in improving street lighting
- We will invest £1m a year on environmental Improvements as part of the Chrysalis Programme, which uses council money for innovative local environmental initiatives suggested by residents
- Lead initiatives to tackle climate change, such as waste to energy and alternative forms of power for council buildings and new developments in the borough such as the RAF Uxbridge site
- Ensure Hillingdon is a place where people enjoy living, by balancing the need for jobs, homes and the environment by opposing inappropriate

- development and strongly influence the developments on our ex-military sites in the borough.
- Continue with our programme to designate more areas in the borough as 'conservation' areas.
 - Continue to review the borough's buildings of local, historic and architectural interest
 - Invest in our cultural facilities to develop learning and culture
 - Increase entries to external planning and design awards and to create the Council's own award scheme

A Safe Borough

Where crime and fear of crime is falling, policing is visible and our community is safer

Keeping people safe on our streets, when travelling and in their own homes is one of our top priorities.

By working closely with our partners, particularly the police and with local people in their own neighbourhoods, we are tackling crime in the borough and in particular those crimes such as anti-social behaviour and graffiti that impact most on our residents.

In the latest fear of crime survey for 2007, 74% of residents feel safe in their neighbourhood

What we said we would do

- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Create a safe environment – making Hillingdon amongst the safest boroughs in London
- Reduce burglary, vehicle, assault and hate crime
- Continue our programme of road safety initiatives and pedestrian crossings and school travel plans.
- Ensure maximum publicity for those people convicted of anti-social behaviour.

What we did

- Crime reduced more than 15% since 2004
- Worked with the Probation Service to engage people doing supervised community payback on various schemes in the borough including Southlands Arts Centre and the canal in Hayes.
- Business crime reduced by 25%.
- 74% of residents feel safe in their neighbourhood
- Specialist Domestic Violence Court established

- 20 Alley gating schemes delivered, helping reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- 150 free burglar alarms fitted for older residents, helping them to feel safer
- Strengthened how different agencies work together in Hillingdon to keep vulnerable adults safe from harm. This included establishing a dedicated safeguarding team.
- Worked with the police on a major initiative to successfully tackle crime in Hayes town centre and put in place initiatives to ensure it remains a safe area
- Achieved our road safety targets for reducing accidents on our roads ahead of 2010 targets.
- Improved road safety by ensuring the majority of schools have plans in place to encourage pupils to travel to school by walking, cycling or using public transport.
- Installed 10 new pedestrian crossings and a number of traffic improvement schemes.

What we are doing next

- All major developments will meet the Metropolitan Police designing out crime standard, to help make areas safer
- Continue to increase the numbers of local residents who feel secure – improving the safety and well being of older people and vulnerable people and their feeling of security.
- Continue to make improvements to keep vulnerable adults safe from harm.
- Fund measures to improve local safety around alleyways, public open spaces and shopping areas
- Continue to deliver our road safety programme and traffic improvement schemes.
- Investigate all road safety concerns identified by residents and, where possible, introduce measures to alleviate them.
- Continue to invest extra money to reduce traffic congestion and improve CCTV services in the borough.
- Continue to support police safer neighbourhood teams and ensure that they get easy access to the council services to help make local areas safer
- Work closely with our partners, including registered social landlords and other landlords to tackle anti-social behaviour in social housing.
- Continue to implement safer routes to school as part of the School Travel Plan programme and develop further initiatives such as the Walking Bus and school cycle routes.
- Continue to fit free burglar alarms for our older residents

A borough of learning and culture; Where residents can develop and broaden their knowledge and embrace new leisure pursuits

We continued to deliver our programme to refurbish and improve all of our libraries and our exam results are improving all the time.

Year on year, our educational attainment results continue to improve. At key stage 4 in 2008 we achieved 64% of at least 5 grade A*-C passes in GCSEs, (up from 58% in 2007) the biggest single year improvement we have recorded.

What we said we would do

- Improve the quality of our libraries and encourage more people to use them
- Develop sports centres for the future with excellent facilities, available to all our residents.
- Develop and improve education in our schools
- Launch our new sports strategy, working with residents and local sports clubs to make sure we provide the right facilities and events.
- Launch our culture and arts strategy, working with participants to make sure it provides the right facilities and events.

How well we did

- Secondary school exam results (5 or more A*- C passes at GCSE) increased by 6%
- Five secondary schools are now judged to be outstanding by OFSTED
- 55% of pupils achieve good level of development at Foundation Stage
- 73% of nurseries inspected judged good or better
- Secondary school absenteeism is below the national average
- 5.6% of 16-18 year olds in Hillingdon are not in education, employment or training, well below the national average
- Our library service is bucking the national trend for usage, with 100,000 residents now registered to borrow from our libraries. 77% of residents are satisfied with our libraries
- Continued our blue plaque scheme with one marking the pioneering work of Alexander Fleming, to recognise people who have helped to make Hillingdon great and to celebrate our history and culture
- Opened the borough's first Christmas ice rink
- Continued to deliver our modernisation programmes for adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs – this includes opening a new resource centre for adult with a learning disability (called 'Perfect Start') to increase access to employment, leisure, education and training
- Adult learners have extended opportunities to gain full level 2 and 3 qualifications, skills for work and access to higher education programmes

- 1,719 adults have achieved a nationally accredited qualification
- Work in supported employment programme has been developed for adults with difficulties and disabilities
- A wide programme of opportunities for families learning together has been successfully delivered through extended schools and stand alone programmes
- Opened the three newly refurbished libraries – Manor Farm, West Drayton and Harefield. We also opened the historic Manor Farm refurbished heritage site and library.
- Following the opening of the Manor Farm Heritage Site, we have developed a program of community and school based activities. These are aimed at bringing a wide range of people to the site
- Extensive outreach at libraries, involving schools and the community around each library
- 87.47% of leisure centre customers surveyed were satisfied with their visit to Sport and Leisure facilities.
- Successfully tendered a new 5-a-side football centre and opened a new health and fitness facility 'Active Lifestyles Gym' at the Minet site in Hayes
- Retendered a new Golf contract for the management of Uxbridge, Haste Hill and Ruislip courses, ensuring investment is provided to improve our golf courses.
- Successfully achieved London Development Agency funding to extend Bigfest to two locations, Hayes and Uxbridge
- Launched a sports bursary for talented local athletes to support elite performance and excellence
- Launched the KICKZ football programme delivered in partnership with Watford FC, QPR FC, the Football Foundation and Metropolitan Police with 120 young people involved three days a week
- Launched the West London Cultural Offer for 2012 through the first West London Story forum at the Compass Theatre
- Greatly increased the amount of breaks in the Arts for Carers project by establishing formal partnerships with Brunel University, Adult Education and focussing on the legacy of the project
- Continued the arts development programme through ongoing support of all creatives via a range of artist networking opportunities and young people programmes
- Developed and established monthly tea dances for older people
- Increased the number of volunteers in the arts service to more than 100
- Completed work to improve disabled access at the Compass Theatre providing full backstage access to performers and visitors

What we are doing next

- We will continue to refurbish the borough's libraries
- Continue to develop and improve education in our schools and raise exam results

- Continue to extend our blue plaque scheme and maintain our local heritage
- Extend opportunities for older people and adults with disabilities to participate in leisure, recreation and cultural activities
- Increase the range of vocational courses at GCSE and post 16.
- Work to extend community based sports development programmes offering new activities and opportunities to residents.
- Increase take up and satisfaction of customers in our libraries
- Deliver outstanding skills and personal learning opportunities for Hillingdon's community
- Enable our communities to engage with the arts through the provision of a comprehensive programme of events and services
- Develop a four year sports and cultural programme that will enable Hillingdon to engage residents with the opportunities offered by London 2012
- Complete work on the new Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre and Botwell Green Leisure Centre and Library in Hayes
- Actively seek to engage with a national team to use new facilities at Hillingdon Sport and Leisure Centre for the 2012 Olympic Games
- Develop a new specialist gymnastics facility at Botwell Green Leisure Centre with a full programme of recreational pre-school gymnastics through to school and club level performance
- Launch new programmes for sport and leisure activities at the two new leisure centres and Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre and Botwell Green Leisure Centre
- Work through the arts to create lively public spaces that enhance the environment and help to develop a sense of well-being
- Use the arts to raise the confidence of the older and more vulnerable and to engage young people in positive activity

A borough where children and young people are healthy, safe and supported

Where our young people are valued, properly educated and given the opportunity to thrive

A project lead by the Deputy Leader of the council has delivered a range of projects for young people, empowering them to follow through on projects generated from their own ideas of where they would like the money to be spent.

What we said we would do

- Ensure all children in need and at risk continue to be protected and have the services they need

- Encourage the take up of sporting, leisure, and cultural activities by children and young people
- Improve the performance of Hillingdon children at all stages of education
- Provide three more youth centres for youth activities in Hillingdon
- Extend and improve the quality of early years and childcare provision.
- Support our children to be healthy
- Improve the quality of life for all of our children and young people, including those in the council's care

How well we did

- The council spent £476,000, supporting 77 projects, benefiting 20,000 young people in Hillingdon
- Opened 11 new children's centres, to provide services for the under 5s under one roof
- We launched a new integrated children's trust in Hillingdon which, working with our partners, is delivering better and more joined up services for children and young people
- Provided a grant of £1,000 to every scout group in the borough
- Reduced numbers of children looked after by the council.
- A successful campaign to promote fostering has increased number of young people placed with families
- Supported around 1,000 unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Our children's safeguarding arrangements have been judged as outstanding by Ofsted, with Hillingdon being one of only 17 councils nationally judged as outstanding
- In partnership with local schools, we delivered new sports opportunities for children and young people.

What we are doing next

- We will progress the delivery of three new youth centres.
- Protect children and young people from crime and accidents
- Improve the educational prospects of looked after children
- Improve the services on offer to young people in our libraries, arts and culture and sports facilities.
- Strengthen the links between the school travel plan programme and students in years 7-13, with health promotion initiatives in our leisure centres as part of the national Change for Life campaign

A borough with improving health, housing and social care

Together with our partners to strive to provide or arrange value for money, quality care services and decent affordable housing in both the public and private sectors.

We have continued to deliver innovative solution to the housing needs of our residents. Despite difficult economic conditions, residents took advantage of our first time buyers scheme and in what is believed to be another 'first', we are also working with the forces to identify initiatives for housing ex-service personnel.

Our relationship with the local health service in Hillingdon has continued to improve, helping us to deliver improving healthcare to our residents.

What we said we would do

- Protect local health services for our residents
- Improve the quality of life, independence, choice and improve access to good quality health, housing and social care
- Work with the primary care trust to minimise the effect on local services caused by their budget deficit
- Increase the provision of key worker and affordable homes in Hillingdon

How well we did

- During 2008/09 we continued to provide support under our low-cost home ownership scheme for our first-time buyers, helping 24 households get onto the property ladder.
- Hillingdon's performance to minimise any delays experienced by people leaving hospital continues to be excellent
- The 'Home Handyperson Scheme' has helped hundreds of residents to remain independent in their own homes by providing essential changes to their home that help with day to day living.
- Continued to deliver our modernisation programmes for adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs – this includes opening a new service providing twelve extra supported housing places for adults with a learning disability (Yew Tree Lodge)
- Improved access to adult social care services by launching Hillingdon Social Care Direct, giving residents a single point of contact and ensuring a consistent and timely response to all enquiries
- Improved more than 160 heating systems for older people through the Warm Zones schemes
- Delivered more than 500 home energy insulation measures in the private sector, mainly for older people
- Agreed arrangements to increase choice for people receiving social care services and ensure that services are personalised to their needs

- Strengthened customer engagement to further improve services to meet the needs of customers
- Continued to work successfully in partnership with registered social landlords and other partners to reduce homelessness. Hillingdon is leading in London and has recently showcased innovative programmes to avoid homelessness. The council is on track to reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by March 2010. Hillingdon is also a pilot area for fast track mortgage rescue.
- The council has more than 600 affordable housing units under construction.
- Colleagues from the health service in Hillingdon moved into the Civic Centre, helping to better join up health services and reduce costs

What we are doing next

- Helping people to receive the care and support they need to live independently in the community by:
 - Developing extra care housing.
 - Delivering assistive technology services
 - Continuing the modernisation programmes for adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs
 - Developing and improving services to enable adults and older people to remain living in the community
 - Maintaining and developing support to carers
 - Improving and promoting the health and well-being of adults and older people.
- Helping people to live in safe, warm, affordable homes by:
 - Continuing to improve arrangements to safeguard vulnerable adults from harm
 - Continue to support first-time buyers through our first time buyers deposit scheme for borough residents.
 - Work in partnership to reduce homelessness, including reducing the number of people in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010.
 - Increasing the number of new houses provided by the council
 - Maintain an excellent housing/council tax benefit service and housing service, demonstrating value for money and increase benefit take up and improve the speed and accuracy of benefit applications
- To maximise the choice that customers have over services by delivering transformation in adult social care to give people who use adult social care services more choice and personalisation.
- To actively involve customers in the planning and delivery of services
- Continue to implement our affordable housing planning guidance for all new residential developments
- Continue to install burglar alarms, free-of-charge in the homes of our older residents, helping them to feel safe

- To increase the provision of affordable homes from 155 units to 199 units a year.

A prosperous borough

Where enterprise is encouraged, business supported and new jobs created for local people

The council aims to have a thriving vibrant economy for Hillingdon, where local people have the skills to take advantage of the jobs that are available. We will work with partners to increase the number of job opportunities in Hillingdon and to improve pathways to employment for local people.

The council has also responded to the difficult economic climate with a range of measures to support residents and local businesses.

What we said we would do

- Make it easier for small local companies to provide services to the council, so that where it is financially expedient to do so, we buy services from them
- Improve skills training and employability of local people
- Consult the business community and other organisations, recognising the role of business in delivering regeneration
- Work collaboratively at regional and sub-regional level with a range of partners and possible funders to secure investment, improving skills and employment opportunities
- Ensure key employment sites are retained.

How well we did

- We froze council tax for the over 65s and committed to freezing council tax for all residents for the next two years.
- We saved £13m in running costs for the council, providing our residents with even better value for money from their council
- Secured funding for “Workmates” a job retention pilot programme in partnership with A2 Dominion Housing.
- Launched the new young achievers in construction scheme.
- The council secured £1.5m for 10 new start-up studios at Hayes Community Campus to support local small businesses.
- Delivered tailored business start-up advice to 41 residents through Women in Business programme.
- We supported some 1100 businesses, which benefited from receiving the Small Business Rate Relief amounting to £760k.
- Worked with our partners to provide a business start-up support service, increasing the number of business by 350 (our target was 85)

- Developed an accessible Access to higher education programme for teaching, early years and healthcare professionals
- Worked in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions to increase benefit take-up for those people who are entitled – approximately £5m for 3,500 residents during 2008/09.

What we are doing next

- Increase the number of adults with disabilities accessing education, employment and training opportunities
- Our housing policy will help people access affordable housing including key workers and economically active residents, helping to support our local labour market.
- We will introduce a construction apprentices scheme.
- Support Brunel University in delivering an enterprising attitudes programme.
- Engage with business to encourage their support for our outcomes and increase their corporate social responsibility.
- Open up opportunities for local businesses to benefit from the contracts associated with London 2012
- Prepare a planning document to guide the redevelopment of the RAF Uxbridge site to ensure that it revitalises the local area and provides benefits for people across the borough
- We will work with major local businesses to encourage investment in the borough, which will help to bring more training, skills and jobs into Hillingdon for local people to access.

A borough where opportunities are open to all where communities are closer and stronger and local people are listened to and excellent services provided for all

The council is committed to opportunities for all where communities are closer and stronger and feel they are listened to, we have sought to ensure that “residents first” is reflected in everything we do.

What we said we would do

- Support older and disabled people
- Improve access to services and employment for the elderly, disabled and minority groups
- Maintain our policy of the best person for the job regardless of sex, age, race, sexual orientation or other factors
- Encourage community development, engagement and social cohesion in the knowledge that services are provided fairly and based solely on need.

How well we did

- Froze Council Tax for the over 65s (extended to all council tax payers for the next two years)
- One of first London councils to self assess at level 4 of the new Equality Standard for Local Government following an external accreditation at level 3.
- Hillingdon's contact centre won an award for best council contact centre and came top for performance in London as part of a mystery shopping exercise of contact centres
- Hillingdon was the first local authority to pilot a new initiative to scan and validate planning applications.
- The council held three Question Time events, attended by hundreds of residents, giving them the chance to put questions to the council's Cabinet
- Sought and attained approved Apple accreditation training courses
- Entered into a new contract with the police to provide 11 additional police officers who can tackle issues in the areas of greatest need
- Achieved national accreditation for the specialist domestic violence court at Uxbridge (one of only five in London)

What we are doing next

- Freezing council tax for all Hillingdon residents for two years
- Increase the number of adults with disabilities accessing education, employment and training opportunities
- Ensure the council and its partners respond to neighbourhood needs and improved service delivery for all residents
- Promote community cohesion across all of the borough's communities so that people feel that communities get on well
- Continue the Leader's Initiative to support our older residents
- Support partner organisations to extend opportunities for staff to engage in volunteering activities
- Increase benefit take-up for those people who are entitled through joint working with the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Provide free swimming for older residents. All people aged 60 and over will be able to swim for free at Hillingdon leisure centres from April 2009. To launch the scheme, additional free swimming lessons will be available during 2009/10
- Deliver community based sport and physical activity projects in partnership with DASH, MIND and Age Concern to improve knowledge and range of activities for residents to maintain healthy, active lifestyles.

What our residents, staff and partners say about us

“I would like to congratulate the council for holding council tax unchanged this year. It is most appreciated”

Ickenham resident

I am writing to applaud the diligence and efforts of the men who managed to collect our bins despite the bad weather that resulted in the country coming to a standstill. It is indeed a privilege to live in this borough.....Thank you for the great work that the borough has been doing for us and we look forward to the continued excellent service.”

Ruislip resident

“I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the council for the measures you have adopted to alleviate the concerns of the majority of pensioners.”

West Drayton resident

“Being a street champion makes you feel included in how things get done ... when you see work done that you’ve requested, it makes you feel you’re achieving something worthwhile.”

Street Champion in Hayes

“I write to congratulate the council on what an excellent publication Hillingdon people is. Also, in the last few years, we have found the online services particularly useful and informative and we are not surprised that the website has been found to be the best in London”

Hillingdon resident

“In my particular part of Hillingdon I notice the roads are kept clean and in good repair. The graffiti is under control. The restoration of the Manor Farm site is excellent.”

Ruislip resident

“I am grateful to live in an authority that values its libraries. “

Ickenham resident

"I am writing to say how much we both enjoyed the evening (Council Question Time event) and the open questions gave people a chance to ask things that affected them."

Hillingdon residents

"I came out feeling uplifted and proud"

Toni (staff member, staff roadshows, 2008)

"Hillingdon council is crucial to the PCT and we see our partnership growing as we drive forward our commitments in the Sustainable Community Strategy and act on the findings of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment"

Professor Yi Mien Koh, Chief Executive Hillingdon Primary Care Trust

"I welcome the memorandum of understanding which has brought in extra resources and enabled more effective local tasking"

Carl Bussey, Hillingdon Borough Commander

"HAVS is looking forward to developing the already positive partnership working as we move to a more sustainable vibrant voluntary and community sector."

Ted Hill, Chief Executive, Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services

Hillingdon Council Awards 2008/09

- Young Local Authority of the Year
- Local Authority of the Year (LG comms awards 2008)
- Local Authority PR team of the Year (LG comms awards 2008)
- Contact Centre training award (LG comms awards 2008)
- Contact Centre team of the year (LG Comms awards 2008)
- Council Worker of the Year – Luke Turner
- Young Communicator of the Year – Emma Marsh
- A Green Heritage Award - Ruislip woods
- Excellence Award - Highways Maintenance Department
- London Warm Zone Achievement Award
- Greater London Training Award – Adult Education Service with the School Improvement Service
- Silver Gilt award in the large city category in the London in Bloom Awards
- Two RSPCA awards for the Animal Welfare Team.
- Hillingdon's Health and Safety Training Service - Charter Mark Best Use of Novell Solutions by the Service Desk (Annual Global Customer Awards 2007)
- Quest Status trademark for Highgrove Pool
- Built Environment and Architectural Heritage Award – Ruislip High School

- Lexcel award – Legal Services
- Local Hero Awards – Luke Turner and Maggie Ditchburn
- National Youth Agency Quality Mark – Youth and Connexions Service