



**HARLESDEN**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
**FORUM**  
shaping . planning . living

**Annual Report 2017 - 2018**



## Our Vision:

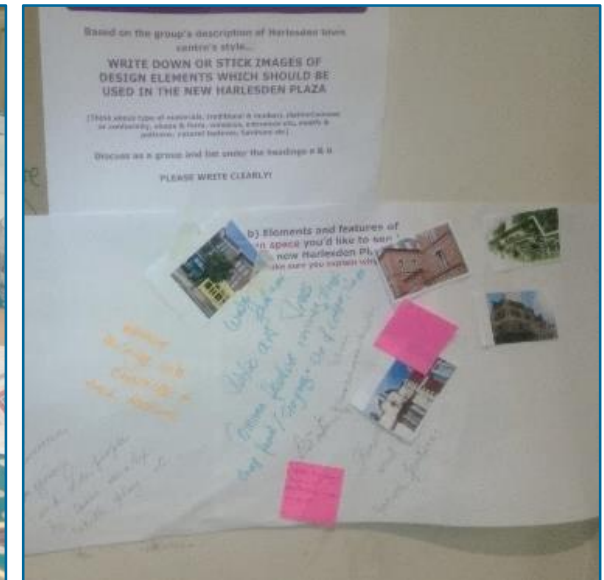
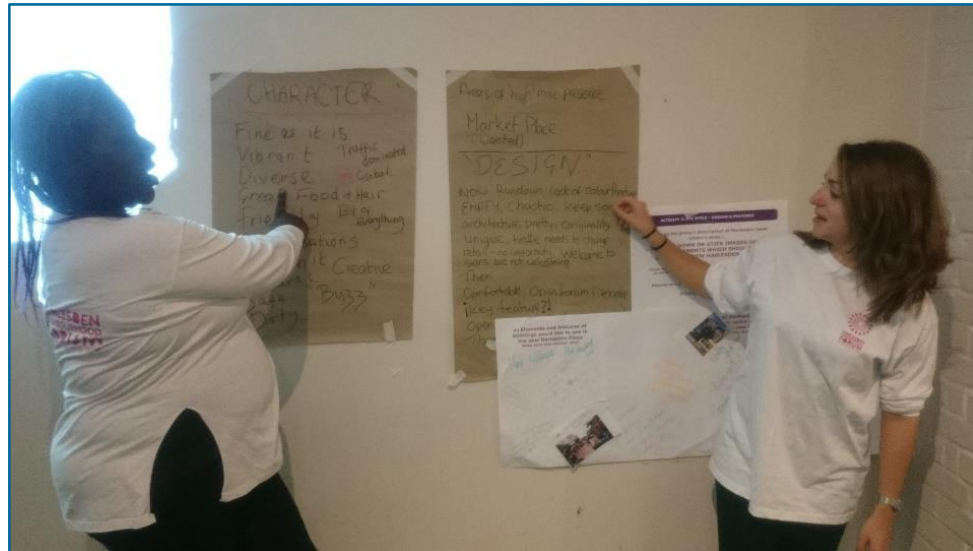
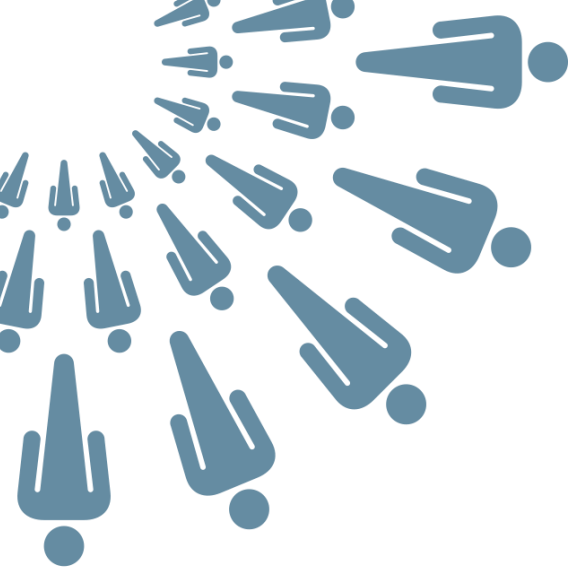
To Build a Better Harlesden by giving our community the opportunity to effect positive local change

## INTRODUCTION: HARLESDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM IN 2017-18

Harlesden Neighbourhood Planning Forum officially launched in April 2015. We now have a growing membership of 95, representing residents, businesses, voluntary and faith groups, with over 300 people receiving our regular email updates. This year HNPF has held four general meetings and one additional formal consultation workshop, each attracting on average 30 attendees. HNPF has also organised, and been in attendance at, many other local events and meetings.

The Forum focuses on key areas of interest that include the local economy, housing, transport, the environment & open spaces, and community facilities. This year the Forum has continued its work on developing a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects those key themes, but has also made steps towards becoming independent organisation, has continued essential community and stakeholder engagement work, established some early projects to deliver, and successfully obtained grant funding.





2017 meetings and events

# OUR WORK THIS YEAR

## ***Neighbourhood Planning***

Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum's primary task is to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Harlesden. The goal of this Plan is to influence planning policy through neighbourhood planning and give local people the opportunity to have a say in how their area develops. Like so many other London neighbourhoods, Harlesden is experiencing a great number of changes and we believe the local community should be able to make informed decisions to help shape Harlesden's future.

Since 2015 the Forum has held many workshops, conversations and sought expert advice to inform the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. During the past year, we have focused ensuring the content of the draft Plan is as strong as it can be, and represents the concerns and priorities of the local community as well as possible. We have done this by undertaking public consultations and regular local publicity, seeking further expert guidance and support, and engaging with key stakeholders. Following several months of meticulous checks and updates the draft Plan - which contains the Forum's proposals for how

Harlesden should develop over the next fifteen years - is now almost ready to be formally submitted to the Local Planning authorities – LB Brent and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC).

When submitted, Brent Council and OPDC will carry out final checks then run a further six-week period of consultation managed by the lead planning authority (Brent Council). Our hope is that by the end of 2018, following an independent examination of the Plan, we will be ready to seek the community's approval of the Plan via a local referendum. If approved, it will become the Neighbourhood Plan for the area. This will ensure that the community's voice on how Harlesden should develop, in an inclusive way that preserves the area's unique heritage, is used to determine future planning policy.



# OUR WORK THIS YEAR (cont.)



## ***Other projects***

In the UK, areas which have a neighbourhood forum can access 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) raised from new developments within the forum boundaries. This portion of the fund must be used to improve the infrastructure for, or mitigate the impact of development on, the area included within the Forum boundaries. The draft Harlesden Neighbourhood Plan, developed in consultation with local people and businesses, provides a list of potential uses or focus areas for the neighbourhood portion of CIL in Harlesden.

In May 2017 Forum representatives also conducted presentations and mini-consultations within two 6<sup>th</sup>-Form colleges in the area, and collected some early ideas for relevant CIL projects. In the second half of 2017, the Forum committee discussed the feedback and developed initial relevant project ideas. In December 2017 the Forum successfully applied for CIL funds to deliver two of these – a Youth Neighbourhood Forum with a focus on Economic Development, consisting of a series of speaker events, discussions and a final conference; and a wayfinding project consisting of artwork chosen by design competition being displayed on banners from Willesden Junction station through to the High Street via Station Road.

The Forum intends to work closely with the local Festive Lights Corporation, and the OPDC Great Places Scheme in the development and delivery of the latter. These projects will be initiated by mid-2018.

The Forum has also received Local Authority and DCLG (now MHCLG) support for pursuing research into community-led housing options in the local area, to identify if one such model could work in our context. A working group of committee members and local volunteers has begun this research.

There have been further successes in the way of bringing more green into Harlesden. A committee member and a local volunteer have worked with Principal Landscape Architect from Brent to spur on the planting of many new trees on a selection of streets most in need. The work will continue this year to fill in further greenery gaps in Harlesden and surrounding area.

This year the Forum committee have also met with several Forum members (who are also local residents) who came forward with ideas, projects or campaigns they felt fitted with the Forum's mission. The Forum hopes to continue building these connections over the next year.

# OUR WORK THIS YEAR (cont.)

## *Influencing*

In September 2017 the Forum's Chair, vice-Chair and Secretary - with the support of the Forum's planning consultant - met with the then Chief Executive of the OPDC, Victoria Hill, as well as key individuals from the Brent Planning department (feeding back to the Leader of the Council Cllr Muhammed Butt). The group conducted a walkabout of the area of Willesden Junction Station and Station Road, and discussed the Forum's concerns over the plans for this access point depicted in the OPDC's draft Local Plan, as well as wider concerns about the future of this important connection to Harlesden. Follow up discussions are on-going and the Forum is pushing for an adequate response and commitment from both parties.

HNPF committee have continued to represent the interests of Harlesden in relation to the OPDC development as part of the Grand Union Alliance (GUA) group and also have responded to key planning application concerns within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

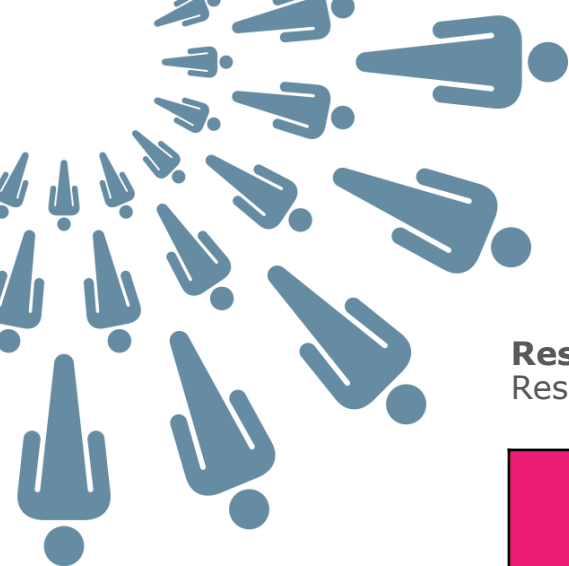
These relationships continue and are part of the efforts of the Forum to influence the local planning authorities in shaping the future of the area.

## *Meetings*

The Neighbourhood Forum's constitution commits the Neighbourhood Forum committee to hold at least three general Forum meetings and six committee meetings per year and to work towards delivering a Neighbourhood Plan for Harlesden. In 2017-18 we held four general Forum meetings (and an additional workshop), six committee meetings and, as outlined above, have delivered a draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The general meetings dealt with a variety of important issues facing our community and were opportunities to raise your concerns. Attending representatives from Brent Council and the OPDC, Locality - who support neighbourhood planning and community-led housing projects, as well as local organisations such as Clean Air for Brent and Harlesden Town Garden - have all provided a platform for engaging the community about what is happening in the area. The Forum understands the importance of local organisations supporting each other, and this year Forum meetings have also included refreshments (and in the Winter meeting, a raffle) with items donated by or purchased from local retailers and independent establishments.

The Forum is grateful for the invaluable support from a group of community researchers, recruited via local charity Crisis Brent. These volunteers have helped run meetings, designed engagement activities, reached out to local businesses and organisations and carried out surveys with local residents and Forum members. Many thanks for their creativity, hard work and dedication.



**Responses from our informal end-of year mini-survey, December 2017.**

Responses are to be fed into 2018-19 strategy planning.

Please describe one success or achievement of HNF to date	Please describe one area where HNF could be doing more/ better
The local neighbourhood plan	There doesn't seem to be much connection between all the different groups in Harlesden/the Harlesden end of Kensal Green. The HNF is the best organised one of the lot (!) and so it would be great if the others could combine into yours! Alternatively, planning across all the different meetings so that they are spread out and don't all happen within two weeks of each other would be useful (sometimes that happens).
The local plan is very impressive!	I think the marketing of HNF and its meetings could be improved. Many local people do not use the internet (I have spoken about your meetings to a few neighbours who do not go online). They are also very reticent as Brent has never shown it cares about Harlesden - that's an ongoing theme - I think posters in local shops, handing out of leaflets, and a physical presence on the streets would garner more interest... but it is a tall order and takes an inordinate amount of time...
Meetings and structure - plan is the biggest also the consultation	you're doing fine - may be try to reach more people but it is not easy
Planting trees in my street, Neighbourhood draft plan	Lack of a Community centre; dealing with anti social behaviour; a dog friendly environment i.e. Making Tubbs Road Park "dog friendly":  Finding a solution to the traffic on Nightingale Road and Tubbs Road, including pedestrian lights at the junction with Station Road.
	It would be nice to encourage nice weekly farmers markets, flea markets, crafts markets into the roundwood park area(where the skate area is) - up market the cultural offer - see Queenspark/Kensal rise

## FUTURE WORK

As we approach the completion of the Forum's main task (i.e. the production of the Neighbourhood Plan) the Forum and its Committee will need to adapt to a new phase in terms of scrutinising the implementation of the Plan, negotiating with the two local planning authorities that relate to the Forum area, and leveraging the political influence the HNF has gained through organising the local community.

In the immediate future we will continue with our community engagement relating to neighbourhood planning issues, as well as starting to explore and deliver (or support others with the delivery of) the local community development projects mentioned above.

The 2018-19 period will also see HNF pursue opportunities and support (including financial) to build capacity and sustainability and enable it to become more established in the local area by looking strategically at governance and funding options.

As we continue to develop the draft Neighbourhood Plan to reach referendum stage and beyond, we hope that together we will help to build a shared vision for Harlesden and its community.

*Viva Harlesden!*

## THANK YOU!

First we offer a big thank you to you, the Harlesden community. The Forum would not exist if not for your support and valuable feedback on how to improve what we do.

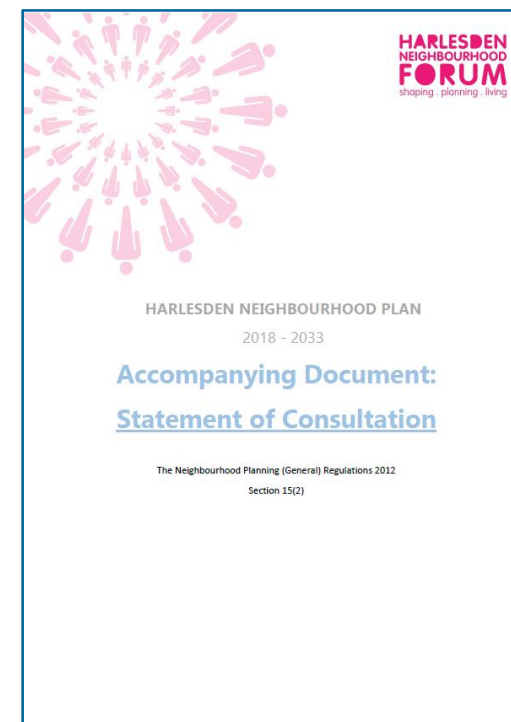
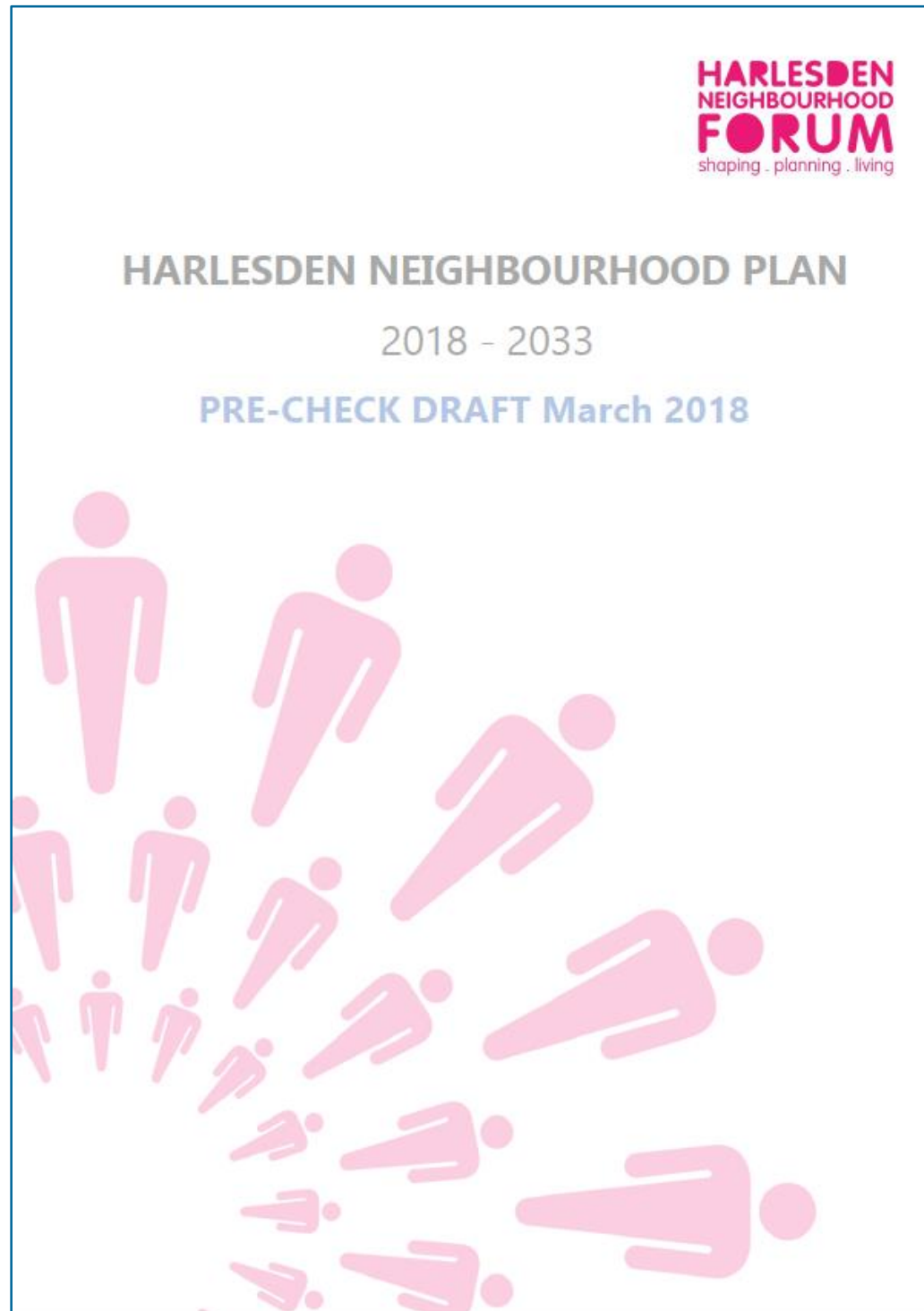
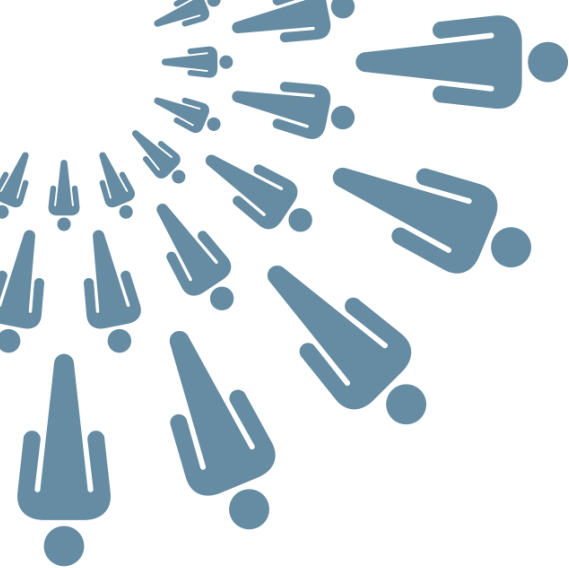
A big thank you also to Crisis Brent. At the start of the Neighbourhood Forum's journey, Crisis Brent (formerly the local homelessness charity Lift People) offered leadership and secretarial support to HNF. Crisis Brent has continued to offer steady support to the Forum and to the community.

And finally, a big thank you to the elected Committee for their dedication to the tasks entrusted to them and for bringing the Neighbourhood Plan to its current stage.

This AGM marks the end their service. Elections will re-appoint members of the Committee and/or appoint new Committee members.







**Current Draft Plan and accompanying documents** - available online via [www.harlesdenneighbourhoodforum.com](http://www.harlesdenneighbourhoodforum.com) and 'The Neighbourhood Plan'



## ACCOUNTS 2017-18

Please note that as the Neighbourhood Forum is not an incorporated organisation Crisis Brent has applied for a grant within the national Neighbourhood Planning Grant Programme and held these funds on behalf of the forum.

	<b>2017- 2018</b>
<b>Neighbourhood Planning Grant</b>	£3,300
<b>Total income for 2016-17</b>	£3,300

	<b>2017 - 2018*</b>
<b>Planning consultancy</b>	£2,700
<b>Marketing and consultation materials (printing, website, Email etc)</b>	£117.08
<b>Engagement event expenses (meetings etc)</b>	£286.70
<b>Total expenditure for 2017-18</b>	£3103.78
<b>Total funds at end of year (underspend due to delays)**</b>	£196.22

\* The grant was received in May 2017 and the funding period was up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018

\*\* The Neighbourhood Forum has secured it's final funding grant from the national Neighbourhood Planning Grant scheme for the forthcoming year 2018-19. Including last year's underspend, this is £2896.22. The total Grant amount is £15,000 for 4 years.