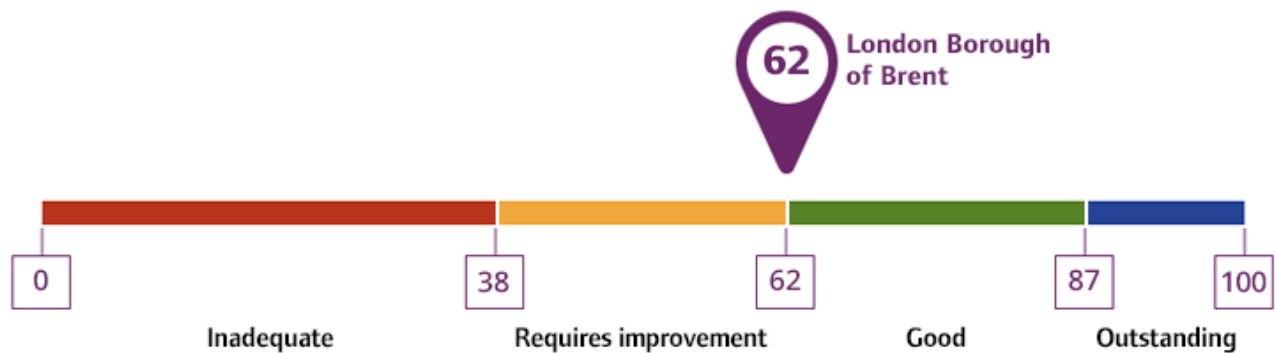


Overall summary

Local authority rating and score

London Borough of Brent

Requires improvement



Quality statement scores

Assessing needs

Score: 2

Supporting people to lead healthier lives

Score: 2

Equity in experience and outcomes

Score: 2

Care provision, integration and continuity

Score: 2

Partnerships and communities

Score: 2

Safe pathways, systems and transitions

Score: 3

Safeguarding

Score: 3

Governance, management and sustainability

Score: 3

Learning, improvement and innovation

Score: 3

Summary of people's experiences

People and carers gave us mixed feedback about their experiences of assessment, care planning and reviews. Some described a positive assessment process and subsequent care, during which staff had supported people's preferences. Others told us there could be improvements in communication, and there was an inconsistency in the information they had received. Also contacting the local authority social work staff for information and advice was not always easy, as staff changed frequently.

There were mixed experiences in relation to support with advocacy, however positive feedback about individual staff approaches and skills. Having a named allocated worker was seen as positive and some people talked about assessments supporting their strengths and promoting their independence. Direct payments gave people autonomy and flexibility, empowering people to use them how they wanted to help them achieve their goals.

The majority of feedback from unpaid carers was negative. This related to delays and lack of communication following carers assessments and staff not always coming back to them. Carers did not always feel they had been assessed holistically along with their family, and some had not been offered a carers assessment at all. Feedback was some carers felt like they were carrying the burden of caring alone and did not always feel listened to.

People using services and their carers told us while there were services in the community to support people with mental health needs, there was a need for more. Staff had not always discussed plans for the future or managing unplanned situations with people using services and their carers so these plans were in place.

Summary of strengths, areas for development and next steps

There were processes in place for trained staff to carry out strength-based assessments and support people and carers with care planning, however practice was not consistent. Carer needs in particular was an area where improvements were needed. Reviews of people's care were not always carried out in a timely manner; however, action was being taken to improve waiting lists. Staff were aware of how to support people in relation to advocacy, but this had not always been available where needed.

More work was needed in relation to the prevention of people's needs. This work had started but there was more to do. People could not always easily access information and advice on their rights under the Care Act and ways to meet their care and support needs. Challenges around accessing equipment impacted people's independence and wellbeing. There was positive feedback about reablement services.

There was some understanding of the needs of people in Brent and the impact of inequalities. However, this could be enhanced by more consistent engagement with local communities to better understand the needs of different groups and people with protected characteristics. Inclusion and accessibility arrangements needed to improve. There was a focus on promoting independence for people by supporting them in extra care and supported living settings rather than more traditional models of care provision. Staff worked closely with care providers and partners to ensure quality of services. Partnerships in some areas were strong but could be developed in others such as closer working with voluntary sector partners and other local authorities.

Safeguarding was an area which was working effectively. Systems to improve learning and development from Safeguarding Adults Reviews were being improved. Management of DoLS was positive. Transitions of people for example coming out of hospital were working well, supported by additional services including reablement and wrap around services.

Senior leadership at the local authority was strong and had improved, however further work was needed in some areas for example, culture, and recruitment and retention was a continuing focus. There was strong oversight of the council politically, and scrutiny of services provided. Staff had good opportunities for learning, development and career progression however it was recognised further learning from complaints and feedback could be enhanced.

The local authority was going through a period of transformation of services which was being further implemented in June 2024. There was acknowledgment of areas that needed to improve, some were at the beginning of the improvement journey and others already underway. Areas of focus included improvement of co-production, working better to support carers, improving waiting times, especially for reviews and better joint working with partners in the local community to drive forward identified areas of work.