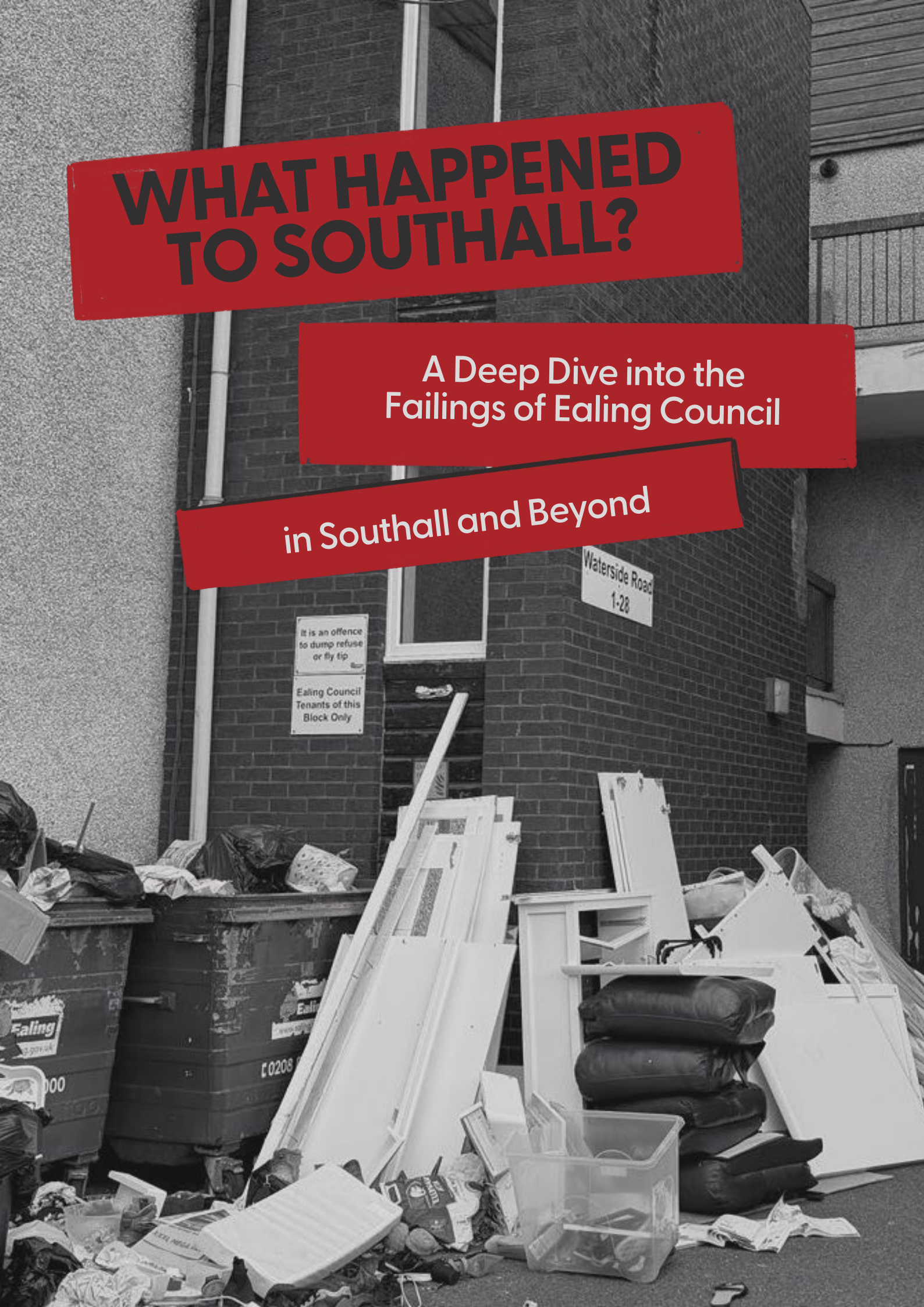


WHAT HAPPENED TO SOUTHALL?

A Deep Dive into the Failings of Ealing Council

in Southall and Beyond



From the community for the community.

This report is the result of an academic analysis of primary and secondary source material, and publicly available data.

It has been reviewed by a legal team to ensure research validity and ethical standards. Nothing in this report should be understood as an expression of personal opinion.

While we have made every effort to ensure all sources are included and cited for each section and endeavored to ensure accuracy in the content of this report, we would appreciate feedback on any inadvertent omissions.

Please contact us by email and we will aim to address all feedback in the digital version of this report hosted on our website.

communitypoweredreporting@proton.me

www.communitypoweredreporting.co.uk



You can also access the digital version of this report (with all cited references hyperlinked in the Endnotes), by scanning the QR code on the back cover.

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Foreword

This report is part of a conversation.

It's a conversation that many of us have been having for years.

It's a conversation that some of us are new to.

It's a conversation that we should be having together.

This report is a resident-led analysis examining Ealing Council's failures to meet Southall's needs. Our starting point, the question 'what happened to Southall?' led us from fly-tipping to half-built homes to the closure of children's centres. It led us to broken promises and dangerous practices through a thread that connects the local to the national and global.

There are many things that didn't make it into this report.

Throughout the five month period in which we were working on it, we were advised many times over to be cautious of the task we were taking on. It was advice we took seriously – directing our approach to research and methodology.

We would have preferred to have held a series of open forums throughout – for the research to have been a more collaborative process. We learnt quite quickly however that what we were uncovering required us to adapt so we can succeed in our aim.

What is our aim? Our aim is to empower our community with evidence, data, and analysis. To help us all understand the why – what has happened to Southall and why has it happened to Southall? This report doesn't claim to have all the answers and nor does it claim to represent every resident's experience of living here – that would be some task. What it does do however is look critically at the decisions made in our name and the decisions being made to govern us.

What are the decisions being made and importantly, who is making them? And what do the answers to these questions tell us about what has happened to Southall?

This report is about having this conversation.

1.0 Setting the Scene

Key findings:

- Southall's wards rank among the most deprived in Ealing and among the most deprived in West London. 35% of children in Ealing grow up in poverty after housing costs.
- Ealing has the third highest rate of rough sleeping in London.
- These conditions are not inevitable.
- Comparable boroughs facing similar pressures have made different choices.
- This is a political choice.

Arti is a disabled resident of Southall Green. In 2025, she described what it is like to try to move through her own neighbourhood. The pavements near her home are frequently blocked by fly-tipped rubbish, which means her mother must push her wheelchair into the road – into the path of speeding traffic – simply to get past. Arti has responded the only way she can: by going out less.¹

“It makes me anxious going out, and I’ve slowly, slowly cut down on going out due to this issue. It makes me really mentally unstable, and I feel trapped, because I can’t do anything about it. I’m trying my very best.”

– Arti, Southall Green resident, 2025. Supported to speak up for herself by local community group CASHCampaigners

This experience is not exceptional. It is not the result of bad luck or individual circumstance. For tens of thousands of people living in Southall, it is their experience and the texture of ordinary life – and it has been for years. This report is an attempt to explain why.

A Borough of Extremes



Southall is one of seven major towns in the London Borough of Ealing, home to approximately 70,000 people.² It is one of the most culturally distinctive communities in West London: shaped by more than seven decades of migration, anchored by large South Asian, Somali, and Eastern European communities, and defined by a density of languages, faiths, and histories that few places in Britain can match. It is also, by almost every measurable indicator, one of the most deprived.

Systemic failures resulting in poverty and poor health outcomes

According to the council's own Health of the Borough report, the highest areas of deprivation in Ealing are concentrated in and around Southall, Northolt and Acton. Ealing as a whole ranks among the most deprived West London boroughs, and sits in the most deprived 20-40% of all local authorities in England. But within the borough, the disparities are sharper still. The wards with the lowest household incomes – below the national median of £28,106 – include Southall Broadway, Southall Green, Dormers Wells, Norwood Green and Lady Margaret. These are Southall's wards.³

Illustrative median household income by ward - Ealing borough

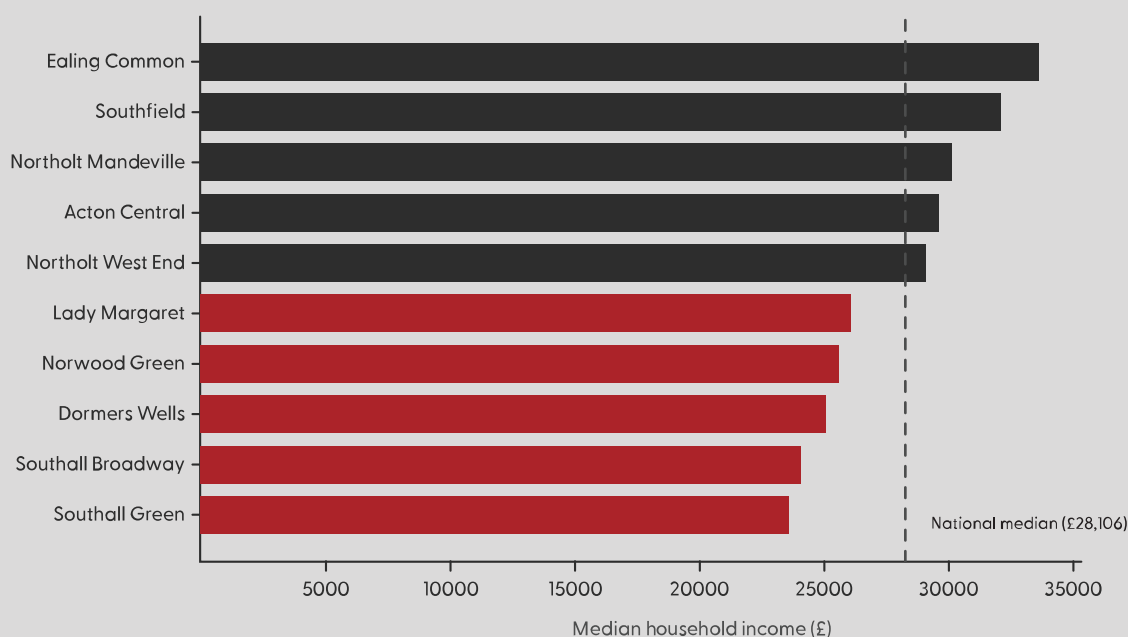


Fig 1: Intra-borough disparity

Source: Ealing Council 'Health of Borough' 2023-24

(https://www.ealing.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18981/health_of_the_borough_2023-2024.pdf)

Poverty

The numbers behind those wards tell a story that is difficult to look away from. In Ealing as a whole, 35% of children are growing up in poverty after housing costs⁴ – with overall poverty levels significantly above the London average, and among the highest rates of any English region.⁵ That figure rises sharply in Southall's most deprived areas. Across London, 723 people were

seen sleeping rough in Ealing in 2024/25 – the third highest figure in London, a statistic that surprises many, given that rough sleeping crises are usually associated with inner-city boroughs⁶ (Fig. 2). In Ealing, nearly one in five jobs pay below the London Living Wage.⁷ And in Ealing's state-funded schools, 27.5% of pupils are recorded as entitled to Free School Meals – more than one in four children.⁸ (Fig. 3)

Rough Sleeping Crisis

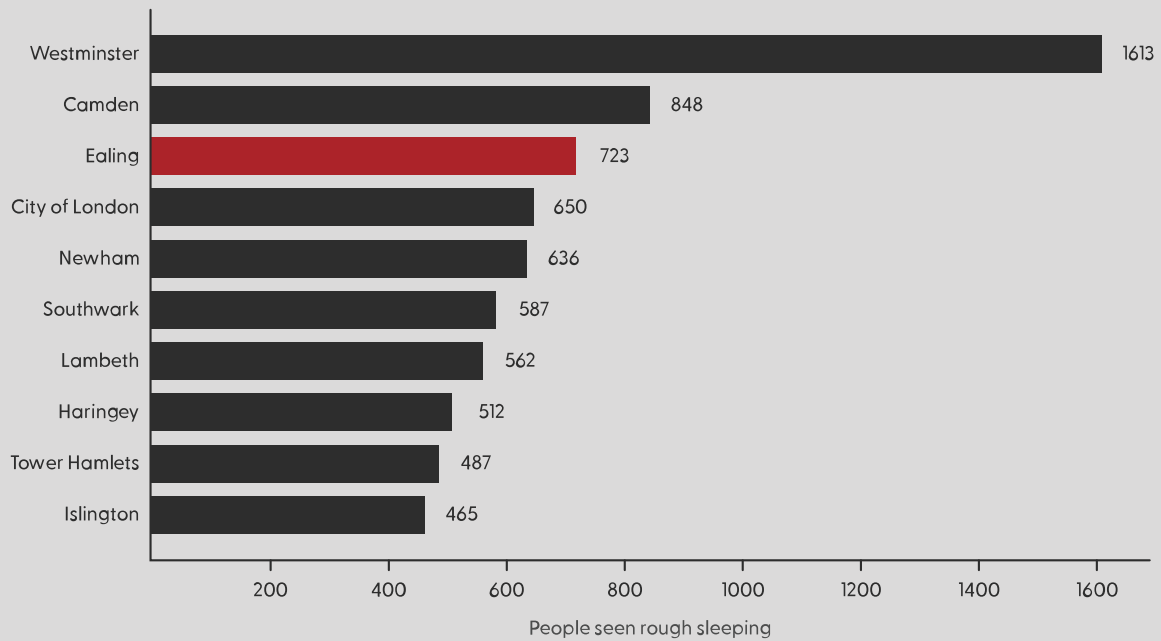


Fig 2: Rough Sleep Crisis

Source: Trust for London - "New interactive map: what poverty looks like in your borough" (2025)

<https://trustforlondon.org.uk/news/new-interactive-map-what-poverty-looks-like-in-your-borough/>

Economic Pressures: Ealing vs London Averages

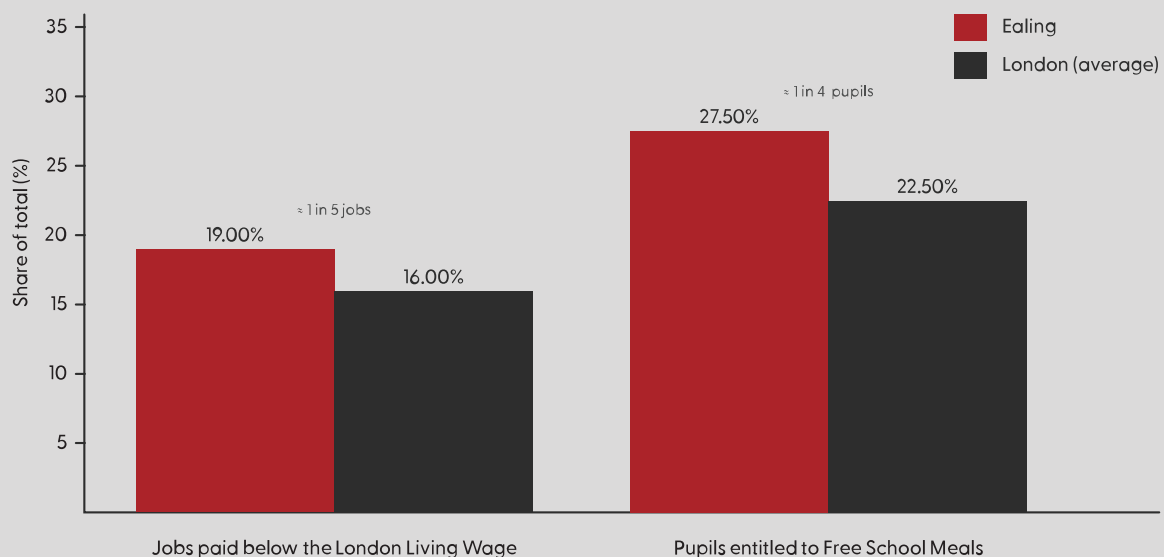


Fig 3: Ealing vs London Averages

Sources: GLA Economics - London's Living Wage annual estimates (Nov 2023) <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/living-wage-annual-estimates-derived-from-ashe/>; DfE-Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Jan 2023) <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/>



Health

The picture on health follows the same geography – and it is far sharper than the headline deprivation figures suggest. In Ealing, the absolute gap in male life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas stands at 3.5 years; for women, 2.6 years. Male healthy life expectancy across the borough is 62.7 years – below the London average of 63.5. That means men in Ealing’s most deprived areas spend a significant portion of their lives in poor health before reaching what most people would consider middle age.⁹

The Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) measures death rates against a national baseline of 100.¹⁰ (Fig. 4)

- In Southall Broadway, the SMR for circulatory diseases in the under-75 population is 220.3 – more than double the national average.
- In Dormers Wells, it is 165.2;
- in Southall Green, 150.5;
- in Lady Margaret, 138.9.
- Norwood Green records an SMR of 131.6 for all respiratory diseases.

Standardised Mortality Rate (SMR) in Southall Wards

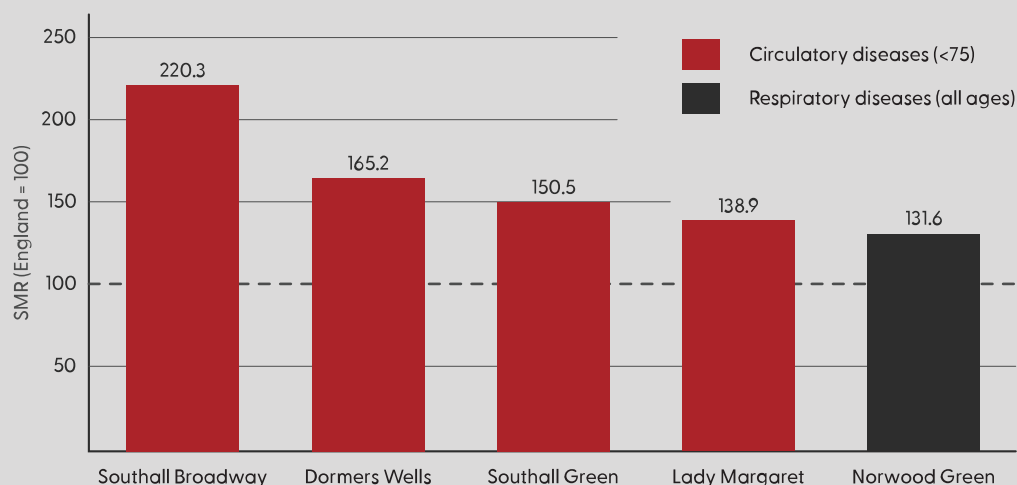


Fig 4: SMR

Sources: PHE Local Health Profiles (2021) and ONS Mortality Data (2015-19), Ealing JSNA & Public Health Report; SMR for Southall wards

These are not marginal variances. They represent premature death, concentrated in communities that have been systematically under-resourced for decades. Southall's fuel poverty rate stands at 16%, against a London average of 12.6%. Diabetes prevalence among adults in North Southall's primary care network runs at approximately 15.2% – more than double the England average of 7.1%.

In specific Southall wards, childhood obesity at Year 6 reaches 41.2%, against a national figure of 25.5%.¹¹

These are not statistics about lifestyle choices. They are the measurable outcome of decades of inadequate housing, fuel poverty, environmental stress, and underinvestment in the infrastructure of daily life.

Ealing in Context: This Is Not the Norm

These conditions exist within one of the wealthiest cities in the world, in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, under a council that has been continuously controlled by the same political party for sixteen years. That is not a coincidence. It is context.

Ealing's poverty levels are not simply a reflection of London-wide pressures. London's overall poverty rate, driven heavily by housing costs, means that poverty is widespread across the capital – but the distribution is not uniform, and neither are the policy responses.

The Trust for London identifies Ealing as having poverty rates significantly above both the London average and the England average.¹² Councils facing similar demographic and economic pressures have made different choices: about housing delivery, about investment in children's services, about community infrastructure, about how and where regeneration happens.

Ealing Council's record with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provides one measurable picture of how the council responds when things go wrong. In 2024–2025, the LGSCO handled 166 complaints regarding Ealing Council. Of the 22 that progressed to a full investigation, 16 were upheld – a 73% uphold rate. But the more telling figure is the resolution rate: only 6% of upheld cases were resolved by the council before reaching the Ombudsman, half the average for comparable authorities.¹³ (Fig. 5)

**How Ealing Council handles complaints:
Ombudsman findings 2024-2025**

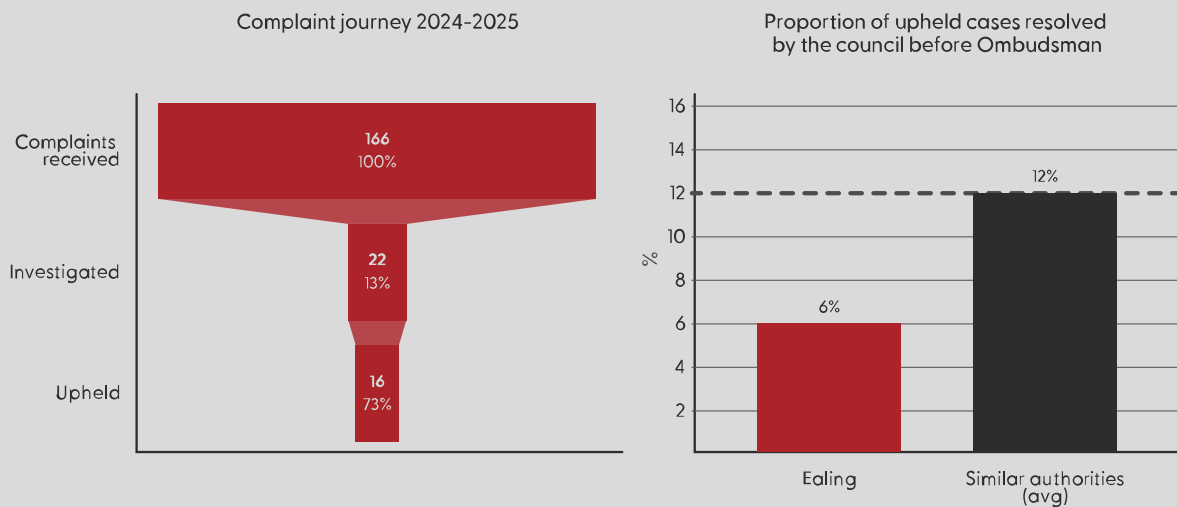


Fig 5: Ombudsman finding. The graphic highlights that while most investigations against Ealing are upheld, very few are resolved proactively, indicating scope for stronger internal complaint-handling

Residents are routinely having to escalate to an independent body before their council acts.

Severe maladministration findings have included a homeless mother ignored across more than 50 emails, a leaseholder left with extreme mould for six years, and an autistic child who missed nearly a full year of mandated speech and language therapy.¹⁴

These are not isolated incidents. These are systemic failures.

When residents raise concerns about housing, waste, children’s services, or planning decisions, they are frequently told that cuts, national policy, or external pressures are to blame. Some of that is true. Austerity has been real and damaging. But austerity applies across all councils. National policy applies across all councils. What varies is how local leadership responds – whose interests are prioritised, where money is directed, and who is heard.

This Is a Political Choice

The central argument of this report is straightforward: what people experience in Southall is real, and it is the result of decisions made by the people responsible for making them. It is not inevitable. It is not simply the product of national policy or global economic forces. It is, in significant part, a political choice – made and remade over sixteen years by a council leadership that has had the power to act differently.

That argument requires evidence, and this report provides it, across four areas of concern –

- waste and environmental failure
- housing
- community assets
- and health

We trace a consistent pattern: decisions that have concentrated disadvantage in Southall's most deprived communities, redirected resources toward developers and away from residents, and dismantled the democratic infrastructure through which people might otherwise have held their council to account.

We also examine the governance architecture that has made this possible: a council leadership model that concentrates power in the hands of one person, a pattern of consultations that generate the appearance of participation without its substance, and – as this report's final section reveals – a web of institutional connections that extends from local planning decisions all the way to international pension fund investment.

None of this is secret. The evidence is in the council's own documents, its planning decisions, its Freedom of Information (FOI) responses, its committee minutes, and its public statements. The purpose of this report is to bring that evidence together, to show how it connects, and to put it in front of the people it affects most: the residents of Ealing, and specifically those in Southall who have been waiting longest for a council that works for them.

Sixteen years is a long time. Local elections take place in May 2026. The window for change is open.

2.1 Waste

Key Findings

- Fly-tipping in Ealing doubled in the year the council switched to fortnightly waste collections in 2016, at a cost – clearance plus enforcement – that now runs to nearly £5 million annually, against a claimed saving of £1.7–2.3 million.
- Returning to weekly collections is estimated to save £929,000–£1.6 million per year, but has not been formally considered. The council’s public framing blames resident behaviour. The government’s own data blames the policy.



“It’s happening everywhere, absolutely everywhere, and the amount of it happening is going up. The amount of rubbish being dumped at one time is extraordinary... normally you’d see the odd mattress, but this is next level what’s happening, and it’s all in what you’d consider the ‘neglected’ side of Southall.”¹⁵

- Resident of Old Southall

The four areas examined in this part (Part Two) – waste, housing, community assets, and health – are not separate failures. They are connected expressions of the same underlying pattern: decisions made over sixteen years that have concentrated disadvantage in Southall’s most deprived communities, redirected resources away from residents, and left the infrastructure of daily life in a state of managed decline. Each area leads directly into the next.

Ealing decisions resulting in fly-tipping

In June 2016, over 7,000 residents formally objected to Ealing Council’s plan to replace weekly black bag collections with fortnightly wheelie bin collections.¹⁶ The council proceeded. Cabinet Member Bassam Mahfouz promised the change would save £1.7 million annually and ‘keep our streets cleaner.’ What happened next is recorded in official government statistics.

In the year of the change, fly-tipping across the borough doubled.

Year	Incidents	Per 1,000 residents	Change vs 2012–13
2012–13	6,352	18.9	Baseline
2015–16	7,032	20.7	+9%
2016–17	14,270	42.0	+122%
2023–24	16,828	44.8	+137%
2024–25	25,394	~66	+245%

Fortnightly wheelie bin collections introduced June 2016. Source: Defra fly-tipping statistics for England¹⁷; ONS mid-year population estimates.¹⁸

For data analysts, this pattern is known as a ‘structural break’: a sudden, permanent shift in the baseline that points to a specific policy change rather than gradual social trends. Population growth is already accounted for in the per-resident figures. Demographic change is gradual – it does not produce a one-year, borough-wide doubling. The timing is unambiguous: four years of stability, then a 122% per-resident spike in the exact year collections were halved, followed by a permanent plateau at the new higher level.

The council has never published a formal evaluation of the 2016 policy change and its long-term impact on fly-tipping. In the Southall Broadway Ward Forum notes from 12 July 2016 – weeks after the switch – residents reported overflowing bins, increased fly-tipping, more foxes and rats, and the feeling they were being ‘made to live in slums.’ The recorded official response was: ‘Introduction of the alternate weekly collection service should help reduce this.’¹⁹

Residents reported overflowing bins, increased fly-tipping, more foxes and rats, and the feeling they were being ‘made to live in slums.’

By 2024–25, Ealing recorded approximately 25,394 fly-tipping incidents – placing it among England’s top ten worst-affected boroughs,²⁰ and representing a 245% increase on the pre-2016 baseline. Ealing’s Council Plan Performance Report Q2 2025/26 acknowledges fly-tipping has ‘increased by around 50% year on year since 2022/23.’²¹ The national annual increase over the same period is approximately 9%. Ealing’s rate of deterioration is roughly five times the national average.

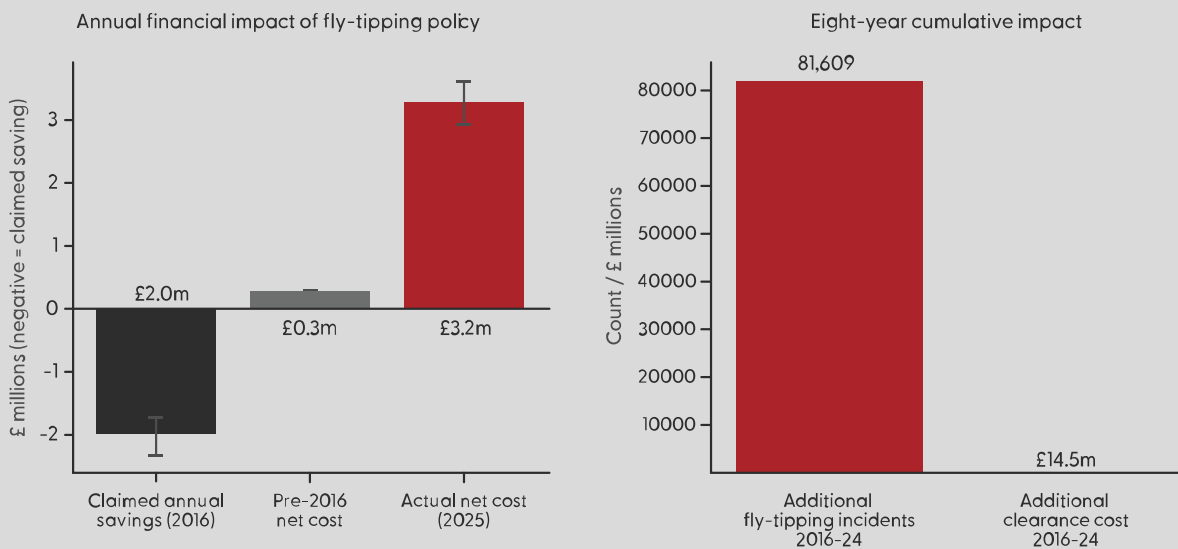
“If it was nipped in the bud by the council then places wouldn’t become a known dump spot.”²²



The False Economy

The council claimed the switch would save £1.7–2.3 million per year. In 2025, it confirmed fly-tipping clearance costs the borough £3 million annually.²³ Its 2026–27 enforcement budget is £1.91 million.²⁴ Fine income from 3,328 enforcement actions – at a recovery rate of 11% of 30,000 reported incidents – partially offsets this, but the net cost to taxpayers is £2.9–3.6 million per year. Against a pre-2016 net cost of approximately £281,000 annually, the claimed savings have been reversed many times over. Over the eight years from 2016–17 to 2023–24, Defra data records 81,609 additional fly-tipping incidents compared to pre-2016 rates – representing approximately £14.5 million in additional clearance costs alone. (Fig 1)

Ealing fly-tipping policy: claimed savings vs actual cost



Sources: Around Ealing (Jun 2025 & Feb 2026). Ealing Council reporting; DEFRA fly-tipping statistics

The council's own analysis suggests that returning to weekly collections would cost approximately £1.7 million more than fortnightly, but would save the £3 million clearance bill and most of the £1.91 million enforcement budget – a net saving of £929,000 – £1.6 million per year. Addressing the cause would be 4.6 times more cost-effective than managing the symptoms. That option has not been formally considered.²⁵

Addressing the cause would be 4.6 times more cost-effective than managing the symptoms.

Instead, the council has doubled down on enforcement. In January 2026, the Council Leader appeared on BBC Politics London to announce a 55% reduction in fly-tipping in target areas, attributing success to CCTV, fixed penalty notices, and a behaviour-change campaign.²⁶ That same election period, council literature circulated in Southall claimed a 54% reduction in fly-tipping across the area – a figure that cannot be reconciled with published Defra statistics or the council’s own performance reporting. No baseline year or dataset was cited.

The communities bearing the greatest burden from this policy are Southall’s most deprived. Overcrowded terraced housing, high-density HMOs, and multi-occupancy dwellings – the predominant housing types across Southall – are least well-suited to fortnightly collection cycles. Residents with limited storage space, no garden, or shared access face the greatest practical difficulty. They are also most exposed to enforcement. The policy concentrates both the problem and its punishment in the places with the fewest alternatives.





2.2 Housing

Key findings

- Of approximately £100 million awarded to Ealing to build 1,138 affordable homes, just 180 were completed by 2026 – a 16% delivery rate.
- The housing waiting list rose from 9,000 to above 12,000 before being reduced by administrative removal of the lowest-priority applicants.
- Ealing demolished more social homes than any other London borough in the decade to 2023.
- Over five years, Southall generated £13.1 million in Section 106 developer contributions and received £4.9 million back in local spending.
- The South Road bridge widening – a legal planning obligation secured in 2010 on the Gasworks development – was abandoned in 2022. The housing proceeded. The infrastructure did not.
- A professionally qualified town planner held the Housing and Planning cabinet portfolio throughout.
- The expertise was present. The political will to prioritise residents over developers was not.

Housing is where the gap between Ealing Labour's rhetoric and its record is most sharply and most painfully visible.

For sixteen years, residents have been told that genuinely affordable homes are the council's priority. The evidence shows a systematic pattern of missed targets, inflated figures, failed contracts, demolished homes, and a growing waiting list – combined with an approach to development that has consistently served the interests of private developers over those of the people on the waiting list.

Peter Mason served as Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Transformation from 2018, and is a professionally qualified town planner with an MSc in Urban Regeneration from the Bartlett School of Planning. He had both the expertise and the executive responsibility. The housing record documented below is substantially his.

Ealing Council's Failures in Housing – The 16% Delivery Rate

In 2018, Ealing was awarded approximately £100 million in Greater London Authority funding to deliver 1,138 genuinely affordable homes. By early 2026, according to investigative research by Conal Urquhart of The View From W5 – corroborated by Freedom of Information responses – just 180 of those homes had been completed. That is 16% of the target. £71.9 million had already been spent. Construction had started on 836 homes, but only 180 families had moved in.²⁷

The same period saw the council set and promote a series of broader affordable housing targets. In 2018, the manifesto promised 2,500 genuinely affordable homes by 2022.²⁸ A Freedom of Information response confirmed that by the actual deadline, approximately 1,217 had been completed and occupied – fewer than half.²⁹ The council's own internal performance dashboard marked the target RED.³⁰ Rather than account for the shortfall, the 2022 manifesto raised the target to 4,000 homes.³¹ By 2025, a scrutiny report confirmed that even this larger target was off track, with around 3,000 starts projected – 75% of the commitment, and with no clear timeline for completion.³²

Throughout this period, the publicly stated figures fluctuated in ways that made accountability almost impossible. Between 2019 and 2022, Mason and the council made claims ranging from 723 to 2,700 ‘genuinely affordable homes delivered.’ The variation was not explained. In some cases, the figures included homes that were merely on site – construction started but not completed. In others, homes counted as ‘delivered’ were not due for occupation until 2024 or 2025. A ‘new home’ in the council’s accounting, at times, meant a hole in the ground with foundations poured. Unfinished building sites were presented to the public as homes available for families on the waiting list.³³

Failed Contracts and Half-Built Homes

The gap between stated and actual delivery is partly explained by catastrophic contract failures. Construction companies, awarded contracts for at least two significant Southall sites – Norwood Road in Southall Green and the Southall Market Car Park development – collapsed before completing either. Both sites have been left partially built, exposed to the elements, and face possible demolition and reconstruction at significant additional public cost.³⁴



What makes this more than misfortune is one of those construction company's prior record. Investigative reporting by Conal Urquhart documented that the Henry Construction's controlling figures had prior insolvency collapses, that a £10 million dividend had been extracted shortly before one such collapse, and that similar projects had previously failed. This information was publicly available at the time the contracts were awarded. The council has not published an explanation of what due diligence was conducted, or who signed off on the risk.³⁵

The Norwood Road site is in Southall Green – the ward Peter Mason represents. He promoted the development publicly on social media before the contractor collapsed. The families who were promised homes there remain on the waiting list.

The Waiting List: A Managed Decline

The housing waiting list has been a persistent failure across the entire sixteen years of Ealing Labour control. A local newspaper report from 1996 recorded 9,000 families on the waiting list. Under the current administration, the number rose steadily: 9,000 families, then 10,000, then 11,000, then – according to internal communications cited by Southall Stories – above 12,000, growing by more than 100 new applications every month.

In September 2023, the council introduced a new housing allocations policy. All Band D applicants – the lowest-priority group, but still households in recognised housing need – were removed from the register. The waiting list dropped from above 12,000 to approximately 7,500 'live applications.' Families were not rehoused. They were simply no longer counted. The council subsequently described the fall in the register as evidence of progress.³⁶

Meanwhile, a study by the London Tenants Federation, reported in the Architects' Journal, found that across London, nearly twice as many social-rent homes were demolished as built over the decade to 2023: 12,050 built, 22,895 demolished. The borough with the highest number of home demolitions was Ealing, with approximately 5,000 social homes cleared – many as part of regeneration schemes where replacement homes were built later, fewer in number, and often at higher 'affordable rent' levels rather than the social rent levels of the homes they replaced. The council's own regeneration programme has therefore been a net negative for the most vulnerable households on the waiting list.³⁷

The borough with the highest number of home demolitions was Ealing, with approximately 5,000 social homes cleared.

Developers and the Infrastructure Deficit

The council's relationship with private developers has shaped Southall's housing landscape in ways that extend well beyond the delivery figures. Mason's 2023–2027 Land and Property Strategy identifies over 760 council-owned community assets under 'strategic review' – the administrative precursor to disposal.³⁸ The strategy institutionalises an approach to public assets that critics have traced back to a 2011 meeting, documented in a Southall Stories investigation, at which unelected property developers – including Berkeley Group's Tony Pidgley – mapped out the systematic disposal of public assets.

Pidgley’s documented advice to ‘not waste a good crisis’ and to target ‘buildings used for services for vulnerable adults, children and families’ for disposal prefigured what became official council policy more than a decade later.³⁹

The community infrastructure that should have accompanied new development has also been systematically underfunded. The council’s 2022 manifesto promised a Community Infrastructure Levy raising £12 million per year from developers. The levy was not adopted until December 2025 – a 15-year delay from when it could first have been implemented. Opposition councillors estimate up to £90 million in infrastructure funding was lost as a result.⁴⁰ The timing is notable: the council approved the massive expansion of the Southall Gasworks development – from 3,750 to 8,100 new homes – in November 2025, just months before the CIL came into force. Had the vote been delayed by a few months, the developer would have faced a substantial levy contribution.

The Southall Gasworks expansion was approved despite approximately one hundred local objections. Its scale – 8,100 homes on a contaminated former industrial site – represents one of the largest development decisions in the borough’s history. The environmental and health implications of the site are examined further in this report in Section 2.4.

In October 2022, speaking at a Southall Community Alliance forum, Mason described the housing conditions in his own ward with unusual candour. ‘If you live in Southall,’ he said, ‘your opportunity and your access to get onto the housing ladder is next to nothing. 80% of the homes in Southall Green are in the private rented sector. The challenges and the quality of accommodation available leads people having to live in terrible situations.’ At the same meeting he acknowledged that concentrating on residential

towers near Crossrail rather than retaining industrial employment land had been a failure: ‘the jobs haven’t come and that has to change.’ He was describing the consequences of a planning strategy he had shaped as cabinet member for Housing, Planning and Transformation.⁴¹

The wider consequences of embedding housing strategy within a developer-led growth model are visible across the borough. Council scrutiny data shows that 34% of Ealing households are now private renters, up from 27.5% in 2011. The median rent for a one-bedroom property is approximately £1,300 per month – around 53% of average salary. Some 20% of private renters in the borough live in Houses in Multiple Occupation. In Southall Broadway ward, more than half of all private rented properties are estimated to contain at least one Category 1 housing hazard.⁴² Investor marketing materials for developments in Southall have celebrated 53% rental growth over three years. From an investor’s perspective, that is a return. From a resident’s perspective, it is the reason families cannot afford to stay.

Council scrutiny data shows that 34% of Ealing households are now private renters, up from 27.5% in 2011. The median rent for a one-bedroom property is approximately £1,300 per month – around 53% of average salary. Some 20% of private renters in the borough live in Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The relationship between the council’s housing strategy and its developer connections is material to understanding these outcomes. For more than

a decade, Ealing delegations attended MIPIM – the world’s largest property developer marketplace, held annually in Cannes – with travel funded by developer sponsorship. At the 2019 conference, Mason attended alongside Ealing’s regeneration and housing director and the council’s future chief executive, with costs covered by a consortium that included Berkeley Group, St George (a Berkeley subsidiary), Hill, and other developers with active planning interests in the borough.⁴³ Mason initially defended the trips as necessary to ‘negotiate hard’ for affordable homes. In 2021, he publicly apologised, acknowledging it as ‘a mistake’ and stating that ‘what I found in terms of what I thought I was going to do was very different from the experience.’⁴⁴ The apology did not address the structural question: what effect does a decade of developer-hosted relationship-building have on the framing of housing strategy, the appetite for viability exemptions, and the willingness to prioritise market-sale units over affordable delivery?

Promise	What was claimed	What was delivered
2018 manifesto target	2,500 genuinely affordable homes by 2022	~1,217 completed by deadline
GLA grant programme	1,138 homes; ~£100m awarded	180 homes completed (16%)
2022 manifesto target	4,000 genuinely affordable homes	~3,000 starts projected (75% of target)
Housing waiting list	Reduce from 9,000	Rose to 12,000+; reduced to 7,500 by removing Band D applicants
Social homes demolished (London Tenants Federation)	N/A	~5,000 in Ealing – highest in London
Community Infrastructure Levy	Developer tax raising £12m/year (2022 manifesto)	Adopted December 2025; 15-year delay

Sources: Ealing Labour manifestos 2018 and 2022; FOI responses; Ealing Council performance data; London Tenants Federation/Architects’ Journal.

The Money That Left Southall

Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act are the mechanism by which councils extract infrastructure contributions from developers in exchange for planning permission. In theory, when 8,000 new homes are approved in Southall, the developer pays contributions to fund the schools, GP surgeries, parks, and transport

improvements those new residents will need. In practice, the picture in Southall tells a different story.

Analysis of Ealing Council’s own Infrastructure Funding Statements shows that between 2019 and 2024, Southall generated at least £13.1 million in Section 106 contributions from development. Over the same five years, £4.9 million was spent in Southall – a net outflow of £8.2 million. In the peak year of 2022–23, Southall generated £7.15 million in developer contributions; less than £800,000 was spent locally.⁴⁵

The council’s recent claim that “£27 million has been invested in our borough since 2022, paid for by developers” conflates allocations with actual spending: the official figures show £15.4 million in actual borough-wide expenditure. Southall’s share in those two years was £2.3 million against £8 million generated.⁴⁶

In the peak year of 2022–23, Southall generated £7.15 million in developer contributions; less than £800,000 was spent locally.

The Southall Gasworks – now the Green Quarter, one of the largest housing developments in West London – generated just £1.75 million in Section 106 contributions over its first seven years (2015–2022), according to a Freedom of Information response from the council. That sum funded education, employment training, air quality monitoring, highways works, and a £50,000 contribution toward a contaminated land officer. There is no new swimming pool. There is no new school traceable to this funding.⁴⁷

The most consequential infrastructure failure tied to the Gasworks development is the South Road bridge widening. A legal Section 106 obligation, secured when the development was first permitted in 2010, required the widening of the main road over the railway near Southall station – a basic piece of infrastructure to manage the traffic generated by thousands of new homes. By 2022, the council’s own report confirmed that while approximately £11.875 million had been available for the project through S106 and housing zone funding, construction costs had risen to £29.6 million. The council had already spent £2.58 million on design and pre-construction work. It recommended the project be closed.⁴⁸ The housing went ahead. The gridlocked bridge was never widened. Thousands of residents now live in the development, and the congestion the bridge widening was meant to mitigate has materialised as predicted.

The pattern across Southall’s S106 record is consistent: large sums generated by development, modest sums returned as infrastructure, and the largest single allocations – the £1.81 million Southall health hub earmarked in 2022–23, the bridge widening, the Southall Market affordable housing scheme (the biggest single S106 spend, now facing possible demolition) – either undelivered or at risk. Development has been approved. Infrastructure has not followed. The communities absorbing the new population have absorbed it without the mitigation they were promised.

Sources: Ealing Council performance data, FOI responses, London Tenants Federation/Architects’ Journal, Ealing Labour manifestos 2018 and 2022. See sources below.

2.3 A Pattern of Asset Disposal

Key findings:

- Community assets in Southall have been systematically targeted for reclassification, repurposing or disposal over a period spanning four successive regeneration frameworks.
- The 2011 asset disposal strategy identified community buildings as surplus to requirements. The Southall Charter (2012), the Opportunity Area Planning Framework (2014), the Southall Big Plan (mid-2010s) and the Southall Reset (2022) each acknowledged the failures documented by residents under the previous framework – and each was accompanied by further asset losses.
- The council’s own 2022 evidence base recorded that residents viewed Southall’s conditions as worse, not better, despite a decade of plans.
- The children’s centre closures are the largest single instance of this pattern: ten facilities proposed for closure in the borough’s most deprived communities, at the same moment a new national government was investing in the same type of infrastructure.
- A High Court judicial review was granted and heard in February 2026. Its outcome will determine whether the pattern holds – or whether, once again, community resistance compels a reversal.

“All these surveys and reports look like Ealing Council care... but don’t be fooled ... they need these Reports to fight the community objections” to planned destruction of current buildings and services. Look at all the cabinet documents carefully and Reports obtained. It says Southall is unhappy.⁴⁹

Resident, cited in Southall Reset Programme community feedback

The closures of community assets like the children’s centres, youth clubs and sports facilities in Ealing’s most deprived communities are often presented as the inevitable consequence of austerity. The evidence suggests something more systematic: a long-running strategy to reclassify public assets as surplus to requirements, remove services from the buildings, and make the land available for alternative use. The strategy has been applied to Southall Town Hall, a Windrush-generation music venue, a sports centre, a youth club and, most recently, ten children’s centres. In each case, the sequence follows the same logic: declare the service unviable; consult; close despite opposition; repurpose or dispose of the building. In each case, communities in the most deprived parts of the borough have organised, challenged, and sometimes won – at least temporarily.

The 2011 Strategy: “Playing Monopoly” with Public Assets

The origins of the pattern are documented in an Ealing Council publication. The 2011 second issue of Ealing in London magazine described a planning process in which the council and private sector partners identified a programme of disposing assets worth £20 million. The document describes a group of partners who saw the financial crash and austerity as an opportunity to dispose of public land and buildings, and explicitly listed “buildings used for services for vulnerable adults, children and families, libraries, leisure and open spaces” among the targets to be declared “surplus to requirements.” A group of eleven buildings was identified as likely to be sold following further review.⁵⁰ Participants included

Tony Pidgley, founder of Berkeley Group – the same company that would later build the Southall Gasworks development, now known as The Green Quarter, and whose Community Liaison Officer for that development is Jags Sanghera, a long-standing Ealing Labour activist who stood as a Labour council candidate in the 2022 local elections, and who is standing again in 2026.

That 2011 document is not an internal leak or a whistleblower disclosure. It is a council publication, that was available in the public domain. The pattern it describes – using austerity pressures to accelerate the disposal of community assets on valuable land – has played out across the borough in the years since.

A Record of Community Resistance: Five Case Studies

Five episodes illustrate this pattern and its limits.



Southall Town Hall

In 2018, Ealing Council sought to sell Southall Town Hall to the highest bidder. A community campaign challenged the decision by judicial review. Judge Martin McKenna at the Royal Courts of Justice ruled that the council had acted unlawfully. He found that “a sale cannot simply be conducted where the interests and needs of the community are at stake” without considering whether to sell for less than the highest price where the community are involved. He was also critical of the council’s equalities impact assessment, finding that the council had failed in its legal duties. The council presented, in the judge’s assessment, little or no relevant evidence at the hearing. The decision to sell was quashed.⁵¹

Southall Sports Centre

In December 2021, Ealing Council and leisure operator Everyone Active announced that Southall Sports Centre – with the only women-only gym in the area, regularly used by disabled residents – would close in March 2022 to be converted into a construction academy. A local GP stated that Southall has some of the highest rates of diabetes and heart disease in the country and that affordable, accessible sports facilities are essential to reducing health inequalities. The centre closed as planned. No equivalent replacement facility was provided.⁵²

Tudor Rose

In January 2020, Ealing Council and Peabody Enterprises included the Tudor Rose venue on The Green, Southall, in a demolition plan to make way for housing. At the time, the Tudor Rose was owned and managed by members of Southall's African-Caribbean Windrush generation, who opened it in 1983. It was the only African-Caribbean-owned venue of its kind in Southall, having hosted internationally recognised musicians for four decades. Campaigners accused both the Council and Peabody of failing to carry out adequate public consultation or an equalities impact assessment when making its decision. The campaign to save the venue cited its unique cultural heritage and its role serving communities identified as "hard to reach" by national government.⁵³

Southall Young Adult Centre

In 2021, the council proposed demolishing the Young Adults Centre – one of only three youth clubs in the borough – to build sixty residential flats. A campaign led by young people, the Ealing Young Champions, gathered over 1,500 signatures.⁵⁴ The petition was debated at a council cabinet meeting in October 2021, and the council reversed its decision. A £2 million refurbishment followed.⁵⁵ When the refurbished centre was announced, Peter Mason described the decision as responding to "the growing need for opportunities for young people in Southall,"⁵⁶ crediting young people as "key decision-makers." The community newsletter VisitSouthall recorded that the reversal was driven by community resistance and that consultations – which had been based on demolishing the centre – had not led to the change; the voices of the Ealing Young Champions had initially been ignored.

Warren Farm

In March 2024, the council's Cabinet considered the future of Warren Farm Sports Ground, a former playing field in Norwood Green. The council proposed designating the site as a nature reserve and Local Nature Reserve – a genuine conservation objective, but one that also ended the possibility of it serving as a sports facility.⁵⁷ Southall FC, which lost its Western Road home ground in 1992 and has played in a series of groundshares since, had been in negotiations with the council about returning to Southall at Warren Farm. Southall FC is chaired by Sanjeev Sharma, son of the former Ealing Southall MP Virendra Sharma, and its CEO is Aatish Sharma, Virendra Sharma's grandson⁵⁸. The club is registered at the former MP's Southall home address at Companies House.⁵⁹ In 2023–24, Southall FC signed Berkeley Group's Green Quarter development as its kit sponsor – the same Berkeley Group that developed the Gasworks site and whose Southall Community Liaison Officer stood as a Labour candidate in the 2022 elections and is standing again in 2026.⁶⁰ The Cabinet report noted that the council had reached agreement with Imperial College London to provide replacement sports facilities on adjacent Imperial College land. Warren Farm itself, the community ground, was removed from the equation.

Ealing's Children's Centres: The Largest Closure Yet

In 2024, Ealing Council proposed closing or repurposing ten of the borough's children's centres – nearly half the total. Three of the six children's centres in Southall were included. Southall, as Mason himself acknowledged in October 2022, has the highest concentration of child poverty, deprivation and health inequality in the borough, where 80% of homes are in the private rented sector and individual average income is around £18,000. The council's own Southall Reset programme, published in 2022, acknowledged that the area faced “deeply embedded health and wellbeing challenges” and called for “investment in adequate primary care” and “deeper meaningful engagement.”⁶¹

The national government, led by the same Labour party, announced in July 2025 that family hubs would be set up across England from April 2026, “through either reconfiguring existing children's centres or setting up new sites.”⁶² The Education Secretary's plans described building on existing foundations, not removing them.

When the Local Democracy Reporter asked Mason how he would respond to claims that Ealing's policy contradicted the Labour government, he did not answer directly.

Mason's public defence of the closures rested on three arguments. Firstly, he cited budget pressures: “If we hadn't have had £140 million in real terms taken out of our budget over the last 16 years.” Secondly, he argued that previous administrations had prioritised buildings over services – “we've spent an awful lot of money keeping the lights on, keeping the heating on, keeping the doors open.” Thirdly, he argued that council buildings were “intimidating” for families fearful of authorities, and that outreach services would reach more people. Then he confirmed that all the closed buildings would remain open – just with different services inside them. The Local Documentary Reporting Service (LDRS) noted the logical tension: if the buildings were too expensive to run as children's centres, they would still need to be run as something else.⁶³

As long ago as January 2015, Mason had tweeted: “Think its really important that we put people before buildings. Important we keep



activities going & that can be done in a different way.”⁶⁴ Ten years later, he was closing the buildings where people accessed those activities.

“Repurposing will effectively close a children’s centre to current and future young children and their families, and remove access to vital and much valued children’s centre services in their local area.” – Parent and Governer at a school and Children’s Centre in Southall.⁶⁵

The campaign group Save Ealing Children’s Centres challenged the closures in the courts. The High Court granted permission for a judicial review in late December 2025. The claim was brought by a two year old child, supported by their parent as a litigation friend. The court found the grounds arguable and recognised

the urgency of the case. The hearing took place at the Royal Courts of Justice in February 2026. Judgment is pending at the time of this report’s publication.⁶⁶

One Save Our Children’s Centres campaigner said that the council had “failed to engage” with the campaign group. She said: “We sent an invitation to all Ealing Councillors, signed by 30 local organisations and community groups including the National Education Union and schools. We are demonstrating [...] because the council has so far failed to engage with us.”

Craig Smith, an organiser for Save Ealing Children’s Centres and Campaigns Officer for Ealing Trades Union Council, claimed the consultation was “fundamentally dishonest”. He said: “Ealing Council has shown it is capable of the cruellest cuts to vital public services and to staff jobs in its pursuit of cost savings.”⁶⁷

The Arithmetic of Accountability

The financial context for the children’s centre closures deserves scrutiny. The saving projected from closing ten children’s centres was approximately £750,000. In the same period, the council spent over £1 million on increased councillor allowances. Mason’s own leadership allowance rose by 70 per cent to £58,000⁶⁸, according to figures reported by Ealing.news and cited in campaign materials. The council justified the allowance increases on the grounds of attracting “higher calibre candidates” to stand for election – in communities where 35 per cent of children live in poverty after housing costs.

Meanwhile, the Community Infrastructure Levy – the mechanism that could have raised £12 million per year from developers to fund exactly the infrastructure children’s centres are part of – was not adopted until December 2025, fifteen years after it could first have been implemented. The council’s own 2022 manifesto had promised it. By the time it was adopted, the Southall Gasworks expansion to 8,100 homes had already been approved. Opposition councillors estimated the delay cost the borough up to £90 million in lost infrastructure funding.

Fifteen Years of Plans: The Southall Framework Record

The asset disposal pattern described above has unfolded against a backdrop of successive regeneration frameworks, each of which acknowledged the failures of its predecessor. Over fifteen years, Southall has been the subject of four major planning and engagement initiatives. Each was launched with the language of partnership, community voice and transformation. Each has been followed by conditions that residents describe as worse than before.

The Southall Charter was adopted by Ealing Council in 2012, framed as a social contract between the council, public agencies, community organisations and local businesses. Its vision was to “work together to renew pride in Southall, building on the ambition of its culturally diverse community, creating a place where the potential of all is truly realised.”

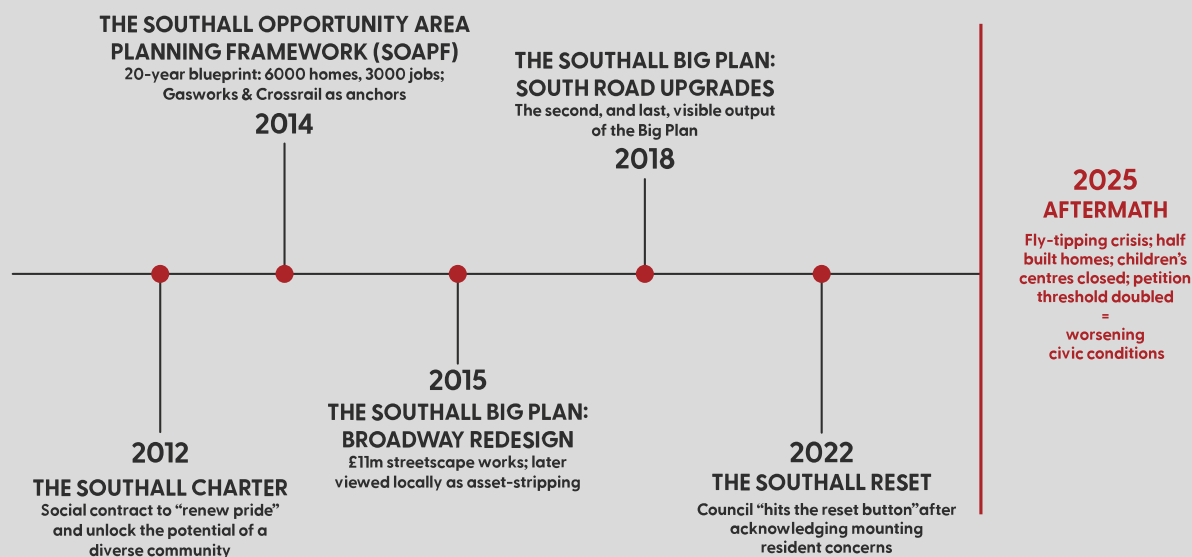
The Southall Opportunity Area Planning Framework (SOAPF) was jointly prepared by Ealing Council, the Mayor of London and Transport for London, and adopted in July 2014. It set out a twenty-year plan to deliver at least 6,000 new homes and 3,000 new jobs across a 520-hectare area. The Gasworks development – already approved at 3,750 homes – was a centrepiece. Crossrail was expected to open in 2018–19 and to anchor the transformation. Then-leader of Ealing Council Julian Bell said the framework would “help us to deliver the community-driven Southall Big Plan, transforming the area into a vibrant and attractive place to live, work and visit.”⁶⁹

The Southall Big Plan ran alongside the OAPF through the mid-2010s, delivering primarily streetscape improvements: the Southall Broadway redesign (completed 2015) and South Road upgrades (completed 2018), funded through an £11 million programme.⁷⁰ These were the most visible outputs of several years of planning activity. VisitSouthall, documenting community reaction to the Reset in 2022, noted that residents viewed the Broadway improvements as an asset-stripping exercise, not an investment, and pointed to the relocation of the library to the Dominion Centre as a reduction in provision rather than an improvement.⁷¹

The Southall Reset was launched by Mason’s administration at Cabinet in July 2022. Its own evidence base acknowledged frankly what had gone wrong. A council survey found that Southall residents’ views were “much more negative compared to the borough overall” on living conditions. Key concerns documented by the council included: fly-tipping, lack of consultation, congestion, poor infrastructure, the disposal of community assets, and the absence of jobs from the new developments.⁷² Ealing Labour’s own account acknowledged that “much of the last decade has seen huge residential investment in new homes” but that “investment in opportunities for good, well-paid jobs hasn’t kept pace.”⁷³ Mason tweeted: “Tonight we hit the reset button for Southall.” The Reset promised a community forum to give residents a voice in future development.

Three years later, the council was closing children’s centres in Southall and had doubled the petition threshold required to trigger a council debate.

Timeline Diagram of Southall's Mayor Initiatives (2012–2025)



Wasting Ealing's Wealth

The Reset's framework also incorporated the South Road bridge widening as an active travel measure – the same project that was abandoned the same month as being unaffordable after £2.58 million was spent on design work. It listed the Peabody development at The Green as a regeneration commitment. In November 2025, the council formally terminated the Peabody partnership after the housing association declared the scheme financially unviable. The council removed a £16.4 million capital allocation from its investment programme. A scheme agreed in 2019, given planning permission in 2021, and included in the 2022 Reset programme had produced no homes.⁷⁴

The same project that was abandoned the same month as being unaffordable after £2.58 million was spent on design work.

A scheme agreed in 2019, given planning permission in 2021, and included in the 2022 Reset programme had produced no homes.

Each framework has required a new name because the previous one did not deliver what it promised. The Southall Charter became the basis for the Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF). The OAPF became the context for the 'Big Plan'. The Big Plan's failures became the rationale for the Reset. The Reset acknowledged the failures documented by residents under every previous framework.

None of them acknowledged the asset disposal strategy running in parallel throughout – documented in the council's own 2011 publication and visible in each of the five case studies described above.

2.4 Health, the Gasworks, and the Cost of Neglect

Key findings

- Southall carries the heaviest burden of preventable chronic illness in the borough.
- During the decade of the Gasworks remediation, residents adjacent to the site reported symptoms consistent with exposure to benzene and naphthalene – compounds confirmed by Public Health England to have regularly exceeded guideline values.
- The monitoring and oversight systems meant to protect residents were compromised: the school governor with responsibility for health and safety was Berkeley's Head of Construction; the replacement air monitor measured the wrong pollutants; the Contaminated Land Officer's salary was paid by the developer.
- The community has simultaneously lost its primary sports centre, its main leisure pool, and the prospect of a permanent community sports ground.
- The council's own data documents the health consequences. The council's own decisions have removed the facilities that could have mitigated them.

The health inequalities documented in Part One (Setting the scene) of this report are not merely statistics. They are the accumulated consequence of decades of decisions by Ealing Council's leadership – about land use, housing quality, employment, sport and recreation, environmental protection, and the accountability of developers operating in the borough's most deprived communities.

This section examines four interconnected failures that have compounded those inequalities: the Gasworks remediation and its health impacts; the systematic dismantling of sports and leisure infrastructure; the degradation of the physical environment; and the capture of the monitoring and accountability systems meant to protect residents.

As established in Part One, Southall already carries a disproportionate burden of chronic illness. The standardised mortality ratio for circulatory disease in residents under 75 on Southall Broadway is 220.3 – more than double the national average. Diabetes prevalence in North Southall's primary care network is approximately 15.2%, compared to 7.1% across England. Year 6 obesity in Southall Green stands at a staggering 41.2%, against a national figure of 25.5%. Male healthy life expectancy across Ealing is 62.7 years – below the London average. These figures reflect a community with the greatest need for effective environmental protection, accessible sports facilities, and proactive public health intervention. What Southall has received instead is far from what it needs, as is documented below.

The Gasworks: What the Data Shows



The former Southall Gasworks site – decommissioned in 1972, used as a Heathrow car park, then sold to Berkeley Group for development – was contaminated with benzene, naphthalene, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), heavy metals, asbestos, and ‘blue billy’, a form of asbestos-containing coal tar residue. From approximately 2016, Berkeley began the remediation process: excavating and treating contaminated soil in a ‘soil hospital’ the size of twelve Olympic swimming pools, in the open air, adjacent to residential streets, Blair Peach Primary School, and a nursery.⁷⁵

Air quality monitoring was carried out by Atkins, an environmental consultancy appointed by the developer, Berkeley West Thames. Public Health England (PHE) was asked by Ealing Council to independently review the monitoring data. PHE produced four successive health risk assessments between 2018 and 2020. Its final assessment, published in July 2020, confirmed that benzene, trichloroethylene, trimethylbenzene and 4-isopropyltoluene were intermittently above guideline values during the monitoring period, and that naphthalene levels were regularly above guideline values. Ealing Council published this report on its own website.⁷⁶



The planning officer’s report for the original Gasworks planning application (P/2008/3981, 2009) required that a full Health Impact Assessment (HIA) be commissioned.⁷⁷ The required HIA was to consider potential and negative health impacts on both existing and new residents, short and long term – including, explicitly, ‘potential exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease arising from temporary decreases in air quality.’ It was also required to involve local communities and to incorporate its recommendations into the final plans for the site. An HIA was produced in 2008 – before the planning application was approved – and submitted with the original application. Independent review of the 2008 HIA, conducted in connection with a subsequent community-led health impact assessment for the area, found it methodologically inadequate. Four specific failures were identified: the 2008 HIA lacked ethical application of WHO guidelines; it excluded those most impacted; it used broad and multifaceted metrics rather than community-specific measures of health impact; and in environmental terms it measured particulates as proxies for health impact rather than capturing the daily symptoms and lived experience of air pollution.⁷⁸ The susceptibility to harm from air pollution is greater for lower-income communities – precisely the communities living adjacent to the Gasworks site – and this differential was not reflected in the methodology.

When the Gasworks development was subsequently expanded, a second HIA was produced in 2023. The multiple political delays and refusals between 2008 and the eventual development did not require updating the original HIA. In other words, a document produced before the remediation began, assessed by independent experts as methodologically inadequate, remained the only HIA on the public

record for the duration of the decade-long remediation. The community group Clean Air for Southall and Hayes (CASH) produced their own Community Health Impact Assessment using external funding. When they secured a meeting with Mason, he expressed enthusiasm for their work and identified areas where the council ‘could improve its efforts to understand issues of urban health.’⁷⁹

PHE’s conclusion was nonetheless reassuring: the exceedances were for shorter periods than the annual average on which the guidelines are based; they remained below levels likely to cause acute effects; and concentrations ‘will have diluted further before reaching the surrounding population.’ The council and Berkeley adopted this framing publicly. In 2016, the council tweeted that odours from the site were ‘not hazardous and should clear in a few days.’⁸⁰

Independent analysis of the underlying Atkins monitoring data tells a more troubling story. Analysis conducted by residents’ campaign group CASH – based on the same data reviewed by PHE, obtained from Berkeley and subsequently Ealing Council – found that average levels of benzene and naphthalene at the southern site boundary, near the soil hospital and adjacent to residential streets, were up to twice the legal limit for at least seven months during the monitoring period.⁸¹ The analysis also identified apparent inconsistencies in Atkins’s own published figures: in at least one data table, the stated average concentration does not match the weekly figures provided. Additionally, PHE’s methodology

changed across successive reports in ways that systematically diluted the published averages – by increasing the number of monitoring stations to include locations further from the site boundary, and by including data from periods after the soil hospital – the primary source of the pollution – had closed.

Analysis conducted by residents’ campaign group CASH found that average levels of benzene and naphthalene at the southern site boundary, near the soil hospital and adjacent to residential streets, were up to twice the legal limit for at least seven months during the monitoring period.

The site is located in a community that is predominantly of South Asian and African heritage. Both naphthalene and benzene carry particular risks for this population. Naphthalene is known to cause acute haemolytic anaemia in individuals with G6PD (glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase) deficiency, a genetic variant that is substantially more prevalent in people of African and South Asian heritage than in the general European population. Benzene is a known carcinogen with no safe level of exposure.⁸²

What Residents Reported

A health and impact questionnaire designed and administered by CASH in 2019 gathered testimony from residents living adjacent to the Gasworks site.⁸³

The responses document a consistent pattern of symptoms: eye, nose and throat irritation; nausea and vomiting; chest infections and breathing difficulties; heart problems; inability to open windows on hot days; children prevented from playing outside; pets dying suddenly. Several respondents described conditions worsening specifically during periods when strong odours were reported from the site, improving when they were away from Southall, and returning upon their return.

‘I can only walk a few hundred yards without having the feeling of having a heart attack. My throat burns.’

– Southall resident,
CASH health questionnaire, 2019

Another described being ‘ill on a daily basis’ since June, on top of existing health issues, in conditions made worse by a heatwave that prevented residents from opening windows. A parent wrote that their daughter suffered nausea from the fumes every time they tried to take her to a park, and that the development had ‘taken our freedom to enjoy the sunshine away.’ A resident who worked outside Southall noted that they were always well at work, developed cold-like symptoms consistently on returning home, and connected the two. Others reported ectopic pregnancies, non-epileptic seizures and cancer diagnoses.

The experience of complaining was nearly as damaging as the pollution itself. Of nineteen respondents who described the reporting process, not one described a positive outcome. The typical experience was a circular referral: Ealing Council directed complainants to the Environment Agency; the Environment Agency directed them back to the council. One resident wrote: ‘Even if you write to them they have basically refused to take responsibility of any issues you have raised. Had an independent person been doing what Berkeley Group are doing they would

be held responsible and work stopped.’ The council told one resident who had left a detailed report of ongoing health effects that they would receive a callback – and the callback, when it came, was an instruction to contact Berkeley Group directly.

One of the CASH co-founders was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in October 2024. The causal link to the Gasworks remediation is not established. Published peer-reviewed research has found that exposure to volatile organic compounds including benzene, naphthalene and toluene is associated with COPD. The question of whether years of living adjacent to a site where these compounds regularly exceeded legal limits contributed to the condition has not been investigated by any public authority.⁸⁴

Institutional Capture: The School, the Monitor, the Contaminated Land Officer

The response of public institutions to the Gasworks contamination reveals a pattern of regulatory capture that goes beyond simple failure.

Blair Peach Primary School stands adjacent to the former Gasworks site. In November 2017, the school’s head teacher reported to the governing body that odours from the construction site had on certain occasions been ‘extremely strong, resulting in headaches and asthma attacks’ among staff and children, and that ‘a white cloud or mist was apparent for two days.’ At the same meeting, the governing body was asked to accept Berkeley Group’s Head of Construction at the site as a Local Authority appointed school governor, with special responsibility for health and safety. Governors questioned whether there could be a conflict of interest. They were told there was not – that the Berkeley employee’s role was to enable a ‘two-way conversation’ so that ‘matters can be influenced such that concerns are dealt with before they become an issue.’ The appointment was accepted. Berkeley subsequently arranged for two dead rats to be removed from the nursery playground.⁸⁵

In November 2017, the school’s head teacher reported to the governing body that odours from the construction site had on certain occasions been ‘extremely strong, resulting in headaches and asthma attacks’ among staff and children, and that ‘a white cloud or mist was apparent for two days.’

Prior to Berkeley’s excavation beginning, Ealing Council removed a functioning air quality monitor from Blair Peach School grounds. After the remediation was complete, a new monitor was installed near the school. It was paid for by Berkeley Group.⁸⁶ The monitor does not measure benzene, naphthalene or other VOCs found in the contaminated land – the compounds that had caused the headaches and asthma. It records urban background emissions from vehicles.

In addition, Ealing Council’s Contaminated Land Officer – whose role was to independently verify Berkeley’s compliance – had the post funded by Berkeley Group through the Section 106 agreement: clause 2 of the S106 required Berkeley to pay £25,000 to Ealing Council prior to remediation commencing and a further £25,000

one year later, totalling £50,000 designated as ‘Contaminated Land Officer Costs.’ The S106 also required Berkeley to pay a total of £614,000 to the council in four instalments as an Air Quality Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Contribution.⁸⁷ These payments are set out in the signed S106 agreement (Legal.14451441.2/OWRI/L0930.00070, page 27 of the agreement). The structural effect was the same in both cases: the developer funded the public officers responsible for overseeing the developer’s own compliance. High readings of pollutants, including ozone, were subsequently deleted from the public record by the company contracted to maintain the monitor, without any investigation.⁸⁸

These facts are documented in the minutes of the Blair Peach governing body meeting (November 2017), published on Southall Stories; in a Freedom of Information response from Ealing Council; and in Ealing Council’s own Around Ealing coverage of the air quality monitoring investment.

The cumulative effect was that the institution responsible for protecting school children’s health from the developer operating next to their school had the developer sitting on its governing board in a health and safety role; the monitoring equipment was inadequate; and the public officer responsible for independent oversight was funded by the party being overseen.

The Green Quarter: Rebranding the Problem

Berkeley Group rebranded the Southall Gasworks development as ‘The Green Quarter’ and ‘Southall Waterside’ – names that emphasise nature and water rather than the contaminated industrial history of the site. Its marketing describes ‘a place filled with nature and green space, to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors.’ The development’s community engagement programme in Southall has been run by Jags Sanghera, whose dual role – Berkeley’s Community Liaison Officer at The Green Quarter and Ealing Labour council candidate in the 2022 and 2026 elections – was documented in the previous section.

Sanghera has chaired the Southall Community Alliance since October 2022, the same umbrella community organisation that hosted Mason’s 2022 Reset presentation described earlier in this report. Berkeley’s community engagement has included sponsoring litter-picking events and clean-up days in Southall – initiatives that simultaneously perform environmental care and associate Berkeley’s brand with community stewardship. A photograph shows Sanghera presenting a cheque for £2,500 to the Southall Community Alliance from Berkeley. Berkeley Group also became

Southall FC's kit sponsor in 2023/24, connecting the developer to the football club owned by the family of the area's former MP.⁸⁹

The effect of this network of relationships is not that any individual acted wrongly in isolation. It is that the channels through which residents might have held Berkeley and the council accountable – the school governors, the local community organisation, the contaminated land officer, the air quality monitors, – were occupied by or financially dependent on the parties whose conduct required scrutiny, and some of our councillors accepted gifts from those same property developers.

Lost Facilities: Sport, Exercise and the Health Gap

Southall has some of the highest rates of diabetes, heart disease and obesity in England. The relationship between these conditions and access to affordable, local sports facilities is well established. In January 2023, Mason himself acknowledged that children in Southall and Hanwell were 'currently underserved with space for sports and play.'⁹⁰

The response of the administration he leads has been to reduce provision further. Southall Sports Centre – with the only women's-only gym in the area, a facility used regularly by disabled residents and serving a population with documented high rates of conditions directly amenable to physical activity – closed in March 2022. A local GP wrote at the time: 'Southall needs more sports facilities, not less. Our population has some of the highest rates of diabetes and heart

disease in the country, and some of the lowest levels of activity. Easy, local and affordable access to sports facilities, including via exercise on prescription schemes, are essential to help reduce health inequalities.'⁹¹ Gurnell Leisure Centre, the main council-run swimming facility in the west of the borough, had already been lost. Warren Farm Sports Ground, used for decades as a community sports facility, was left to rewild after the council failed to maintain and then failed to sell the land to Queens Park Rangers FC. It achieved protected nature reserve status in 2026, with replacement facilities dependent on a future land deal with Imperial College.

Our population has some of the highest rates of diabetes and heart disease in the country, and some of the lowest levels of activity. Easy, local and affordable access to sports facilities, including via exercise on prescription schemes, are essential to help reduce health inequalities.

These losses are not random. They are concentrated in the same communities that already carry the highest burden of preventable chronic illness. The communities that most need accessible sports facilities are the communities that have lost them. No equivalent replacement has been provided. The council's own health data, its own Reset evidence base, and Mason's own public statements all acknowledge the problem. The policy response has deepened it.

3.0 Democratic Deficit and Political Player

Key findings:

- Under Peter Mason's leadership, Ealing Council operates with one of the highest petition signature thresholds in London, has restructured ward forums away from direct accountability, and is led by a figure whose primary political career has been national rather than local.
- Mason's public statement that anti-Zionists have no place in the Labour movement raises direct questions about his capacity to represent the divestment concerns of Southall' and Ealing's communities.
- Internal Labour documents describe a culture of patronage and cronyism within the Labour Group.
- These are not incidental features of the council's governance – they are its architecture.

“They are trying to rig the system against public engagement with local democracy.”⁹²

—A Campaigner, July 2025

The failures documented in all of Part Two do not exist in a vacuum. They are the product of a governance architecture that has been progressively reshaped – under Peter Mason’s leadership – in ways that make accountability harder to achieve and dissent harder to sustain. This part examines how that happened, who drove it, and what it reveals about the nature of political power in Ealing.

How Ealing Council Governs: The Leader and Cabinet Model

Ealing Council operates under the Leader and Cabinet model of local government. Under this system, executive power is concentrated in a cabinet of councillors appointed by the Leader – not elected by the full council. The Leader determines who holds which portfolio, and cabinet members are accountable upward to the Leader rather than outward to



their wards or the full council chamber.⁹³

This model is not unusual in London local government. But what distinguishes Ealing under Mason's leadership – which began in May 2021, when he replaced Julian Bell – is the degree to which informal power has reinforced formal power. Former councillor Lewis Cox, who represented Hobbayne ward from 2017 until his resignation in 2021, described the Labour Group's internal culture in his resignation letter in terms that have since been echoed by multiple other sources:

Ours is not a system of meritocracy, where the most qualified or most experienced are put in the Cabinet or gifted roles with responsibility so that we might best serve the interests of residents. No – it was when I joined, and remains tonight, a system very much based on patronage, back-room deals and cronyism.

– Cllr Lewis Cox, resignation letter, 2021

Ealing Labour - 'A toxic brand'

Cox resigned rather than serve under Mason, describing the Labour Group's leadership choice as representing 'different faces, but the same old cynical and self-serving practices as before.' His letter describes a culture in which loyalty to leadership is rewarded with positions and allowances, while independent-minded councillors are sidelined. Ealing Labour, he wrote, had become 'a toxic brand.'⁹⁴

Peter Mason as 'a real and present danger to the left'

Cox was not alone in this assessment. In April 2021, ahead of the Labour Group AGM at which Mason was elected leader, more than fifty Ealing Labour members and activists signed an open letter to left-leaning councillors urging them not to vote for Mason. The letter described Mason as 'a real and present danger to the left' and documented his role in Labour Party disciplinary processes at a national level.⁹⁵

Closing the Doors: Petitions, Ward Forums, the Architecture of Non-Participation, and a Crackdown on Democratic Process

Under Mason’s leadership, two specific changes to the mechanics of democratic participation in Ealing are worth documenting.

- **The first concerns petition rules –** and a specific change to them made by Mason’s administration in July 2025. Until that point, Ealing’s threshold for a petition to trigger a Full Council debate stood at 1,500 signatures. In July 2025, while the Save Ealing’s Children’s Centres campaign was actively petitioning outside Perceval House, the council voted to more than double the threshold to 3,671 signatures – equivalent to 1% of the borough population. Every Labour councillor voted in favour. Every Conservative and Liberal Democrat councillor voted against. The same meeting also banned hybrid petitions combining paper and online signatures – unlike neighbouring Hounslow and Hillingdon, which both accept hybrid petitions. The council described the change as the ‘fairest, most efficient and most transparent’ approach. Ealing’s Liberal Democrat leader described it as an attempt to ‘shut people up.’ A campaigner from the Save Our Children’s Centres campaign, said the council was rigging the system ‘against public engagement with local democracy.’

The table below shows how Ealing’s new threshold compares across London.

Council	Governing model	Petition threshold for debate
Ealing	Leader and Cabinet	3,671 (1% of population)
Westminster	Leader and Cabinet	100 signatures
Barnet	Leader and Cabinet	25 signatures
Hounslow	Mayor and Cabinet	10 signatures
Brent	Leader and Cabinet	5 signatures
Hillingdon	Leader and Cabinet	No formal threshold

Sources: Harrow Online (Local Democracy Reporter), July 2025⁹⁰; GLA Research Unit, October 2024.⁹⁶

The petition demanding that Ealing Council divest pension fund investments from companies complicit in the Genocide of Gaza, submitted by Ealing residents in 2024 gathered thousands of signatures. Under Ealing’s rules, it was insufficient to compel a debate. Had the same petition been submitted in Lambeth or Hackney, it would have triggered one. The council did not debate it. The threshold is not arbitrary – it is a choice, by design.

- **The second concerns ward forums.**

Ward forums have traditionally been a mechanism for direct councillor accountability in Ealing: public meetings where residents can raise concerns and require responses on the record. Under Mason’s leadership, ward forums were restructured and effectively replaced by the ‘Your Town, Your Voice’ programme – a council-controlled format that critics argue substitutes managed engagement for genuine accountability. The ward forum at which Southall residents first raised concerns about fly-tipping in July 2016 – on the record, with an official action log – is the kind of primary evidence mechanism that the new format does not replicate or support.⁹⁷

Peter Mason: A National Political Career

To understand the governance of Ealing under Peter Mason’s leadership, it is necessary to understand that Mason’s political career has never been primarily a local government career. He has operated simultaneously at local, regional, and national levels of the Labour Party in ways that have significantly shaped both his political identity and his priorities.

Mason was first elected to Ealing Council in 2014, representing Elthorne ward, and then to Southall Green in 2018 – one of the most deprived wards in the borough, with a large South Asian, Muslim, and Sikh community. From 2013 to 2021 he served as National Secretary of the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM).⁹⁸ He served on Labour’s National Constitutional Committee (NCC) from 2016 to 2024, including as its Vice Chair from 2021. In September 2024 he was elected to Labour’s National Executive Committee as part of the ‘Labour to Win’ slate of candidates supporting Keir Starmer.⁹⁹ Since 2024 he has been Deputy Leader of the LGA Labour Group and Deputy Chair of the Local Government Association – the national body representing local councils. (Fig. 1)

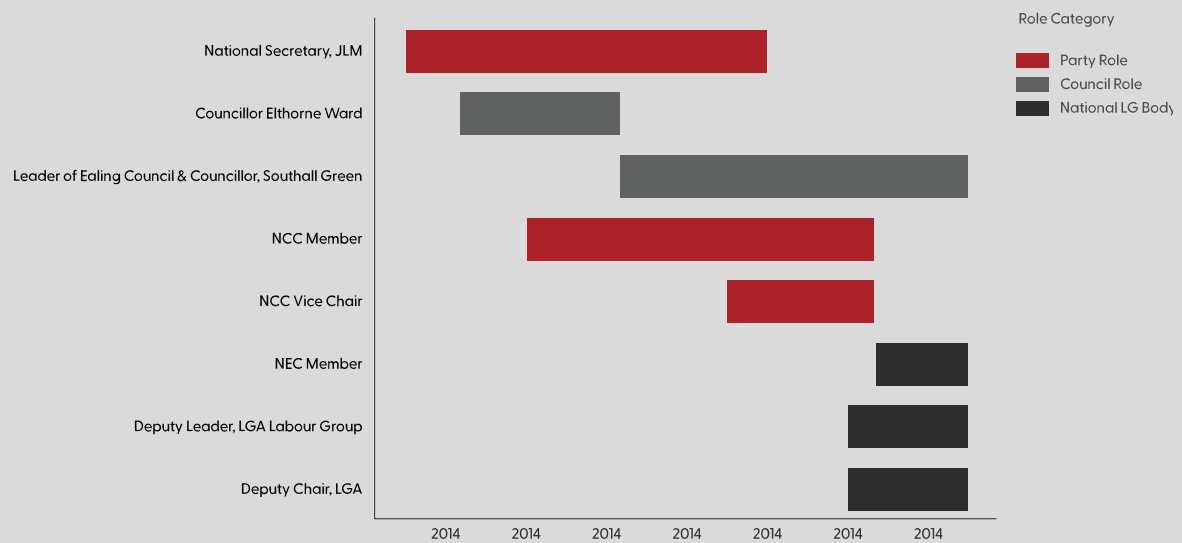


Fig. 1: Cllr Peter Mason’s career progression

In his own words, on his personal website, Mason describes his NCC work as pushing ‘the Party to uphold a fair and rigorous approach to handling our internal disputes’ and his JLM work as leading ‘the fight against antisemitism within the Labour Party.’¹⁰⁰ His election to the National Executive Committee (NEC) was welcomed by the JLM, which described him as having been ‘instrumental in bringing about our Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) referral, which was key to making Labour a safe space for Jews once again.’¹⁰¹

These are Mason’s own accounts of his record, and they describe a sustained engagement with Labour Party internal politics at a national level spanning more than a decade. They are relevant here not to dispute that record, but to establish its character: Mason’s political identity and his network of national influence are inseparable from his role as Council Leader.

Mason and the Anti-Zionism Question

One specific public statement by Mason requires direct examination in the context of this report – not because it concerns his views as a private person, but because of its relevance to the community he was elected to represent and the questions we will go on to examine in Part Four.

On 30 December 2019, Mason posted the following on social media, in a public exchange on the Labour Party and Zionism, asserting that anti-Zionists – people who oppose Zionism as a political ideology – have no place within the Labour movement:

Yeah – you won’t find me defending anti-Zionists I’m afraid. I’ve plenty of time for non-Zionists, but people who commit themselves to being opposed to Jewish national self determination / liberation aren’t my cup of tea. They can exist, sure, just outside of the Labour movement.¹⁰²

– Peter Mason, public social media post, 30 December 2019

Mason represents Southall Green. His ward, and the wider Southall and Ealing area, has one of the largest Sikh, Muslim, South Asian, and Arab populations in London. Many residents of Southall, of all backgrounds, including many Labour voters and Labour members, hold anti-Zionist political views – this is now of particular relevance given the destruction and genocide of Gaza since October 2023. It is important to note that the divestment campaign documented in Part Four is substantially driven and supported by those communities.

The question this raises for residents is not about Mason’s right to hold personal political views. It is about whether a leader who has publicly stated that anti-Zionists should exist ‘outside of the Labour movement’ is well-placed to represent, advocate for, or even meaningfully engage with the divestment concerns of those communities – either within Ealing’s governance

structures or, as documented in Part Four, within the national bodies where pension investment decisions are shaped.

This is not a question this report can answer. It is a question residents are entitled to ask.

From Local Council to National Power: The Full Picture

The trajectory of Peter Mason’s career since becoming Council Leader in 2021 represents a significant and accelerating expansion of national influence. In July 2024 – the same month he left the LCIV board – he was appointed to the LGA board. In September 2024, he was elected to Labour’s NEC. He is, on his own account, part of the Starmer inner circle of Labour right politics, having played a central role in the project that displaced the Corbyn left.

Former BBC TV Newsnight and Channel 4 News political journalist Michael Crick, whose @TomorrowsMPs account – operated in partnership with the Centre for British Politics at Hull University – monitors candidate selections for winnable Commons seats, noted in June 2024 that Mason was a ‘favourite’ for the Ealing Southall parliamentary seat, describing him as ‘plugged into the McSweeney clique’ – a reference to Morgan McSweeney, who served as Downing Street Chief of Staff until his resignation in February 2026.¹⁰³ McSweeney resigned amid pressure over his role in recommending Peter Mandelson as UK Ambassador to the United States, following recent controversies around Mandelson which called into question McSweeney’s political judgement.¹⁰⁴

We cite Crick’s observation not as established fact about Mason’s ambitions, but as informed political intelligence from a credible source about where Mason’s networks and trajectory point. Whether or not he seeks a parliamentary seat, the picture that emerges of Peter Mason is of a council leader whose primary political orientation is national rather than local – whose career has been built through party machinery, internal disciplinary processes, and national bodies rather than through the sustained, granular work of improving conditions in Southall. This raises questions about where Mason’s priorities lie.

The communities of Southall did not elect a national Labour Party operator. They elected a ward councillor, and through the Labour Group process, acquired a council leader. The gap between those two things – between the councillor Southall Green needed and the national political figure Ealing got – is, as this report argues, a significant part of the explanation for why so much has gone wrong in Southall, and in the wider Ealing area.

A Brief History of Ealing Labour: The Consolidation of Power and the ‘relentless attack on the left’

Mason became leader in May 2021 following the resignation of his predecessor Julian Bell. The transition was not straightforward. The open letter signed by fifty-plus members in April 2021 – cited above – described a ‘politburo’ of Mason and ally Seph Brown that had systematically blocked left-wing applicants from becoming Labour candidates in the 2018 local elections. The letter documented Mason’s role at the NCC in what signatories described as the suspension and expulsion of left-wingers using disciplinary processes. It asked left councillors to recognise Mason as representing ‘a relentless attack on the left.’¹⁰⁵

Whether one accepts that characterisation or Mason’s own account of fighting antisemitism within the party, the structural outcome is visible in the composition of the Labour Group that Mason leads: it is, by his own description, ‘the largest group of Labour councillors since the formation of the council in the 1960s,’ secured at the 2022 local elections. A large, disciplined, ideologically aligned Labour Group – operating under the Leader and Cabinet model, with high petition thresholds and neutered ward forums – produces a council that is formally accountable but functionally difficult to challenge.

**This is not a council designed to respond to its most deprived communities.
It is a council designed to govern them.**

4.0 From Local to Global

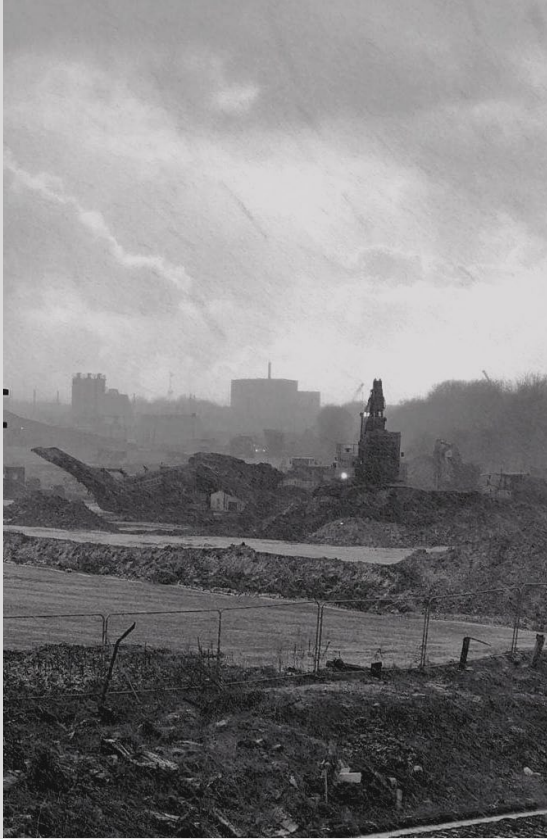
Key findings:

- Ealing’s Pension Fund Panel has never placed divestment on its agenda, despite a formal residents’ petition that the council refused to debate, and confirmed exposure to companies flagged by UN, AFSC and Who Profits databases.
- The council’s leader held a board position at London CIV until July 2024.
- This is not a structural constraint. It is a political choice.

How Ealing Council’s pension investments connect our borough to an international crisis – and why the leadership’s silence is a political choice

In October 2024, the United Nations International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a landmark advisory opinion. It found that Israel’s continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is unlawful under international law, and that all states have an obligation to refrain from assisting in the maintenance of that unlawful situation.¹⁰⁶ The ICJ had previously ruled in January 2024 that there was a ‘plausible’ risk of genocide in Gaza.¹⁰⁷ These are not the conclusions of campaign groups or political parties. They are findings of the world’s highest court.

This part examines what those international findings mean for a London borough – specifically, what Ealing Council’s pension fund is invested in, what it has chosen to do about it, and who in the council’s leadership is responsible for those choices.



(Top) February 2018. View from Beaconsfield Road, Southall
(Bottom) October 2023. View from Al-Rimal, Gaza City

What London’s Pension Funds Are Invested In

As of 1st April 2026, Ealing Council does not manage its pension investments directly. Like all London boroughs, it will pool its pension assets through the London Collective Investment Vehicle (LCIV), a private limited company authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The LCIV manages a portfolio of £34.4 billion on behalf of 32 London local authorities.

Before the move to the London CIV, Ealing Pension Fund had investments amounting to £112,896,000 in companies complicit in Israel’s Genocide of Gaza, including investments in Elbit Systems, Israel’s largest weapons manufacturer, Palantir, and Maersk, a logistics company involved in the shipment of weapons to Israel.

A 2025 study by coalition group Shake the CIV found that London CIV funds hold investments in companies flagged for their activities in relation to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories – including arms manufacturers and technology firms.¹⁰⁸ The LCIV has disputed some of the figures involved, arguing that a headline figure of £7 billion is “incorrect” because it includes approximately £6.5 billion in passive strategies managed by third-party fund managers over which LCIV has limited direct control.¹⁰⁹ Even accepting LCIV’s own framing, the exposure runs to hundreds of millions of pounds across its active holdings.

Ealing’s own position within these funds is substantial. A Freedom of Information response obtained in March 2026 (FOI 25-0178) confirms that as of 30 September 2024, Ealing Council owned 17.43% of the LCIV Global Alpha Growth Fund and 3.41% of the LCIV Multi-Asset Credit Fund.¹¹⁰ These are not peripheral or negligible holdings. Ealing is one of the LCIV’s most significant partner funds.

The same FOI response – submitted by residents following a divestment petition demanding Ealing divest from companies complicit in Israel’s Genocide of Gaza debated at Ealing Council in December 2024 – provided a consolidated list of companies in which Ealing has indirect exposure, screened against three internationally recognised databases: the United Nations Human Rights Office database of business enterprises with involvement in activities related to the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the AFSC Investigate watchlist, and the Who Profits company database.

The council itself, in responding to the FOI, did not dispute the existence of this exposure. It confirmed it.

The Double Standard: Russia and Israel

To understand why Ealing’s inaction on divestment is a political choice rather than a structural inevitability, it is necessary to examine what the LCIV did when Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

At that time, LCIV’s Chief Investment Officer issued a public statement that is worth examining closely. It declared that London CIV ‘does not believe Russia will be an investable proposition for the foreseeable future’ and that further investment was ‘not consistent with our Responsible Investment Policy and Investment Beliefs.’ Managers were instructed to make no further investment in Russia, and LCIV committed to working with managers to sell existing positions.¹¹¹

This decision was taken proactively – before any government sanctions compelled it. Russian exposure across LCIV’s entire public market fund range amounted to just 0.02% of assets under management. And yet the LCIV leadership treated this as both an ethical imperative and an investment principle.

The contrast with the approach to Israel and the illegally Occupied Palestinian Territories could scarcely be more stark. LCIV’s June 2025 statement on the subject explained that it ‘must remain neutral except where led by the UK government’ – citing ‘divergent views’ across its client base as justification for inaction. In other words: on Russia, ethical clarity. On Gaza, inaction, and procedural neutrality.

On Russia, ethical clarity.

On Gaza, inaction, and procedural neutrality.

Ealing’s own FOI response makes the comparison explicit. Asked whether the council reviewed its investments following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, it confirmed that all holdings in Russian companies were ‘either reduced to a value of zero or fully removed in 2022, in accordance with UK sanctions law.’ But it also noted that ‘the council did not issue a specific directive to divest, as fund managers acted independently.’ On Russia, the council did not need to act – the moral and financial consensus was overwhelming. On Israel, no such consensus has been sought, built, or even discussed.

Ealing’s Own Pension Fund Panel: Silence as a Decision

The FOI response reveals something important about how Ealing’s leadership has engaged – or rather, not engaged – with the question of divestment. Asked for a list of all meetings and correspondence involving council representatives or pension committees where divestment was discussed between April and December 2024, the council’s answer was unambiguous:

The Pension Fund Panel has not addressed divestment as a separate agenda item in its recent meetings.

– Ealing Council FOI Response 25-0178, March 2026

This is not a technical or administrative failure. It is a decision. At a time when 21 councils across England and Wales had publicly committed to supporting divestment – when five London boroughs had declared their intention to divest and were working within the LCIV system to do so – Ealing’s Pension Fund Panel did not once place the question on its agenda.¹¹²

On 19th March 2026, Islington Council ‘suggested it could be the first local authority to fully end all financial investments linked to “conflict and genocide”. The local authority is planning a six-week consultation with workers over proposals to eliminate £5m in pension fund holdings in firms profiting from the war in Gaza, and Israel’s military occupation of the West Bank. The latest proposals could see the council sell off £5m in indirect shares in companies identified as potentially profiting from human rights abuses and war crimes arising from the conflict, including Palantir Technologies.¹¹³

Residents in Ealing have repeatedly raised divestment. A formal petition demanded it. The Council refused to debate it. The Pension Fund Panel did not engage.

Residents in Ealing have repeatedly raised divestment. A formal petition demanded it. The Council refused to debate it. The Pension Fund Panel did not engage.

The council's response to the divestment cost question is also instructive. It acknowledged that full divestment could cost in excess of £1.5 million – a real figure, based on advisers' estimates covering approximately 40% of the fund's equities. But it also confirmed that 'since our exposure is largely in listed securities, there are no direct penalties for exiting investments.' The cost is a transaction cost, not a penalty. And no assessment of partial or phased divestment – targeting only the most directly implicated arms companies, for instance – was provided. The question was never asked.

The Legal Landscape: Contested, Not Closed

In March 2026, UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) wrote to the chief executive of London CIV, warning of potential legal risks if the organisation yielded to pressure to divest from companies connected with Israel. The letter argued that pension fund managers are bound by fiduciary duties to act in the financial interests of scheme members, and that investment decisions influenced by political campaigns could breach those duties.¹¹⁴

UKLFI cited the two-condition test established by the Law Commission and endorsed by the UK Supreme Court: that non-financial factors can only be considered if scheme members can reasonably be expected to share the concern, and if the decision does not risk significant financial detriment to the fund.¹¹⁵ The organisation argued that both conditions would be difficult to satisfy in the case of Israel divestment campaigns, describing the matter as 'likely to be highly controversial among pension scheme members.'

This is a legitimate legal argument, and it deserves to be taken seriously. But it is not the final word – and it is important to note what it is not.

First, the UKLFI letter is advocacy from a campaigning organisation, not a court ruling. The legal position on non-financial factors in pension investment is genuinely contested, and other legal opinions have reached different conclusions.¹¹⁶ The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) has circulated a counter-analysis; legal academics have questioned whether fiduciary duty is as absolute a barrier as UKLFI suggests.

Second, the first condition – that scheme members must share the concern – is an empirical question, not a settled fact. Ealing is a borough with large South Asian, Arab, Muslim, and diaspora communities for whom the situation in Gaza has profound personal and ancestral resonance. Whether pension scheme members in this borough share the concern about investment in companies flagged for human rights abuses in the Occupied Territories has never been tested, surveyed, or considered. The council has not asked.

Third, the Russia precedent cuts directly against the argument that fiduciary duty prevents ethical divestment. When LCIV divested from Russia, it did so on ethical and reputational grounds, proactively, with exposure of just 0.02%. No UKLFI letter was sent. No fiduciary objection was raised. The principle that investment decisions must reflect both financial and ethical dimensions was applied without controversy.

What this means is that the legal position is live and contested – not a settled prohibition. Councils that wish to advocate for divestment within the LCIV consensus process have legal arguments available to them.¹¹⁷ What Ealing's leadership has not done is engage with those arguments at all.

Peter Mason and the LCIV: Questions That Remain Unanswered

There is one further dimension to this story that residents of Ealing deserve to know.

The London CIV is governed by a board that includes shareholder-nominated non-executive directors. In December 2021, Councillor Peter Mason – Leader of Ealing Council – was appointed to that board as a Shareholder Nominated Non-Executive Director.¹¹⁸

I am pleased to have joined the London CIV Board and see my role as important in supporting the development of London CIV in collaboration with London local authorities so that it delivers the best possible outcomes for beneficiaries and other London stakeholders, working towards a sustainable future.

– Cllr Peter Mason, December 2021

Peter Mason sat on the board of the very body that manages Ealing’s pension investments from December 2021 until his resignation in July 2024. His was not a personal appointment. It was a shareholder-nominated directorship – a seat on the LCIV board held specifically to represent the interests of Ealing Council and, by extension, the pension fund members whose retirement savings the LCIV manages. When Mason resigned, he was not stepping back from local government pension governance. According to Companies House records, on 2 July 2024 – the same month he left the LCIV board – Mason was appointed as a Director of the Local Government Association.¹¹⁹

The significance of that move becomes clearer when you understand what the Local Government Association (LGA) did next. In October 2024, three months after Mason joined its board, the LGA commissioned senior barrister Nigel Giffin KC to produce a legal opinion on whether the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds had any obligation to divest from companies linked to the conflict in Gaza. That opinion concluded that local authorities were “not well placed to know whether crimes have in fact been committed” and were under no public law obligation to divest on the basis of international law alone.¹²⁰ It has since become the primary institutional argument cited by councils and pension bodies resisting divestment calls across England and Wales.

To be clear about what the evidence does and does not show: there is no public record that Mason personally directed, commissioned, or influenced the Giffin opinion. That would require further investigation to establish. What the public record does show is that Mason left a seat at the LCIV – the body managing Ealing’s pension investments – and took a seat at the LGA, the body that promptly became the key institutional actor shaping the national legal framework that

councils use to resist divestment. He has not made any public statement on LGPS divestment with regards to complicit Israeli companies in either capacity.

Meanwhile, the LCIV board seat he vacated remains empty. According to London CIV’s own governance pages, there are currently two vacancies for shareholder-nominated Non-executive Directors (NEDs).¹²¹ Ealing’s seat has been empty throughout the entire period of the divestment petition, the council’s refusal to debate it, and the FOI process that confirmed the exposure. At the precise moment Ealing residents most needed their council to have a voice in the room where pension investment decisions are made, that room had no one from Ealing in it.

At the precise moment Ealing residents most needed their council to have a voice in the room where pension investment decisions are made, that room had no one from Ealing in it.

The questions this raises are ones residents are entitled to ask. While Mason held the LCIV seat, what positions did he take on responsible investment? What did he say – or not say – as the LCIV applied one standard to Russia and another to Gaza? Since joining the LGA, has he raised Ealing residents’ concerns about pension investment in companies flagged by the United Nations, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Who Profits databases? Why has the LCIV seat been left vacant? Why has the Pension Fund Panel never discussed divestment? No public record answers these questions. The council has not volunteered answers, and it has refused to provide a forum in which they could be asked.

What residents can say with confidence is this: Ealing had a voice at the table. It was given up. The seat has not been filled. The leader who held it moved to a more powerful position in the same governance architecture. And in the vacuum left behind, nothing has changed – not the investments, not the silence of the Pension Fund Panel, and not the council’s refusal to engage with the petition brought to it by its own community.

Investments in Genocide: A Political Choice

The picture that emerges from the available evidence is not one of a council constrained by law, structural impossibility, or financial necessity. It is one of a council that has chosen not to act.

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Ealing owns a significant stake in the LCIV. Its leader sat on the LCIV board until July 2024. Its Pension Fund Panel has never discussed divestment. Its own FOI response confirms that it knows exactly what it holds, and confirmed the exposure using reputable international databases. The legal position is contested – other councils have found a path to advocacy. The financial cost, while real, involves no direct penalties. And the moral precedent – Russia – demonstrates that the LCIV can and does act on ethical grounds when the political will exists.

Russia – demonstrates that the LCIV can and does act on ethical grounds when the political will exists.

In Ealing, that political will has not been exercised.

This matters to our community not as an abstract geopolitical question, but as something immediate and tangible. Ealing is a borough shaped by its diaspora communities – South Asian, African, Arab, Caribbean, Irish, Palestinian, Ukrainian and many others – people whose families and homelands have been touched by conflict, occupation, and displacement across generations. Many of those communities are directly connected to what is happening in Gaza. Their council taxes fund pension payments to pensioners when the investments underperform. The pension funds the LCIV. And the LCIV holds investments in companies flagged for their role in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

They are being made complicit – without their knowledge, without their consent, and without their leadership lifting a finger to question it.

The ICJ has ruled that states and their institutions have an obligation to act. Twenty-one councils across England and Wales have concluded that they can and should respond to that obligation. Ealing’s leader sat on the board of the body that manages these investments until July 2024. The question is not whether action was possible. The question is why it was not taken – and why, since his resignation, nothing has changed.

Postscript findings:

- On 24 March 2026, the Pension Fund Panel met for its final conventional meeting before the mandatory transfer of Ealing's pension assets to the LCIV on 1 April 2026.
- Divestment was not on the agenda.
- The panel received a private briefing from JP Morgan. Residents protested outside.
- The question they had been asking for over a year went unanswered to the end.

On 24 March 2026 – one week before mandatory pooling transfers full custody of Ealing’s pension assets to the LCIV on 1 April – the Pension Fund Panel met at Perceval House for what campaign groups had described as its last conventional meeting before the transition. The published agenda was extensive. It included a 30-minute private training session delivered by executives from JP Morgan, held with the public and press excluded. It included a presentation from Mercer on the Triennial Actuarial Valuation. It included performance monitoring, budgetary estimates, and a document titled “Draft Guidance Pooling Explained” – setting out the mechanics of the handover to the LCIV. Appendix B covered LCIV Global Alpha Voting: the fund in which Ealing holds a 17.43% stake.¹²²

The agenda did not include any discussion of divestment. It did not include any response to the formal residents’ petition. It did not include any item relating to the council’s confirmed exposure to companies flagged by the UN, AFSC and Who Profits databases. It did not reference the FOI response, the PSC legal notice, the UKLFI letter, or the LGPS Advisory Board’s requests for a government statement. On the last occasion Ealing’s Pension Fund Panel would meet before losing direct control of the fund, the one question residents had been asking for over a year was absent from the agenda entirely.

Outside Perceval House that evening, residents gathered to protest. The demonstration had been organised by a coalition including Palestinian Youth Movement, Shake the CIV, and Ealing Friends of Palestine. Their message was direct: Ealing Council Pension Fund invests over £112 million in companies that campaign groups allege are complicit in Israel’s actions in Gaza, including investments in Elbit Systems – Israel’s largest weapons manufacturer – and in Maersk, reportedly the highest Maersk exposure of any London borough.

Inside, the panel received a private briefing from JP Morgan. Outside, residents held flags and placards. The window had closed. The panel had not looked through it once.

5.0 Conclusion

This report has examined four areas of concern across Ealing Council's record: waste, housing, community assets, and health. It has also examined the governance architecture that shapes how decisions are made and contested, and the connection between local pension investments and an international crisis. The evidence comes almost entirely from the council's own documents, from Freedom of Information (FOI) responses, from public planning records, news articles, and from the testimony of residents whose voices have been systematically marginalised.

What emerges is not a collection of separate failures. It is a pattern.

Ealing Council: A Pattern of Failure

The pattern works like this.
A problem is identified – fly-tipping, housing need, a deprived community's health crisis, contaminated land.
A plan is announced: the Southall Charter, the Opportunity Area Framework, the Big Plan, the Reset. Consultation takes place. Residents raise concerns. The decision is taken regardless. The consequences materialise. A new plan is announced to address the consequences of the previous plan.



Meanwhile, the community assets that residents depend on – a youth club, a sports centre, a Windrush-generation music venue, a town hall, children’s centres – are reclassified as surplus to requirements, removed from service, or made available for disposal. The residents who object are directed to petition thresholds that have been raised specifically to make petition-triggered debates harder to achieve. The ward forums where councillors once faced direct questioning have been replaced with managed engagement. The petition rules have been rewritten. The drawbridge, as Mason himself described it, has been drawn up.

The communities most affected are Southall’s: the poorest ward in one of the more wealthy West London boroughs; the community with the highest rates of diabetes, heart disease and obesity; the community that breathed the toxic air from the Gasworks for years while being told it was safe; the community that built this borough’s economy for generations and now finds its children’s centres being closed and its housing unaffordable.

These communities are not incidental to the pattern. They are its target.

What the Evidence Shows

On waste

The council switched to fortnightly waste collections in 2016, fly-tipping doubled, and the cost of the consequences now exceeds the claimed saving by a factor of three. The policy has never been formally reviewed. The council’s public explanation blames residents.

On housing

Of approximately £100 million awarded to build affordable homes, 16% of the target was delivered. The housing waiting list was reduced not by housing people but by removing the lowest-priority applicants from the list. Ealing demolished more social homes than any other London borough. The Community Infrastructure Levy was delayed for fifteen years. Developer contributions generated in Southall were spent elsewhere. A legal planning obligation to widen South Road bridge was abandoned after the development it was supposed to mitigate had already been part-built and occupied.

On assets

A strategy documented in the council's own 2011 publication set out to use austerity as an opportunity to dispose of community buildings. Southall Town Hall was saved by judicial review. The Young Adults Centre was saved by a petition campaign. The Tudor Rose was threatened with demolition. Southall Sports Centre was closed with no replacement. Children's centres are in the High Court. Each time, the community has had to fight for what it was already entitled to. Each time the fight has been made harder.

On health

The Gasworks remediation exposed Southall residents to benzene and naphthalene at levels that regularly exceeded guideline values, according to Public Health England's own published data. The planning consent required a Health Impact Assessment that considered the risk of chronic lung disease. The HIA that was produced was, by independent expert assessment, inadequate. The school governor with health and safety responsibility at the adjacent primary school was Berkeley's Head of Construction. The officer responsible for independent oversight had their post funded by Berkeley through Section 106 money. The air quality monitor installed after remediation does not measure the compounds that caused the problem. No public authority has investigated whether the decade of contamination contributed to the health conditions – including respiratory disease – that residents now carry.

On democratic accountability

The petition threshold has been doubled. Follow-up questions have been removed from the petition process. Senior officers no longer give evidence at petition debates. The council leader's primary career is national Labour politics, not local government. The Labour Group's own internal communications describe a culture of patronage. Residents' elected representatives sit in silence while eleven opposition councillors try to represent community concerns.

On the global

Ealing's pension fund holds investments in companies identified by UN databases as operating in the illegally Occupied Palestinian Territories. Twenty-one councils across England and Wales have committed to supporting divestment. Ealing's Pension Fund Panel has never placed it on the agenda. The council leader who sat on the board of the investment vehicle that manages those assets until July 2024 has publicly stated that anti-Zionists have no place in the Labour movement. This is a political choice being made on behalf of a community in which, Mason himself acknowledged, the average individual income is £18,000 a year.

The Leader at the Centre

Peter Mason has been a councillor in Ealing since 2014 and Council Leader since 2021. He is a professionally qualified town planner who was cabinet member for Housing, Planning and Transformation throughout the decade in which 16% of the borough's affordable homes target was delivered. He was a board member of the investment vehicle managing Ealing's pension assets during the period in which divestment was not placed on the agenda. He attended MIPIM in Cannes, a property and real estate event with tickets costing thousands, with expenses paid by Berkeley Group while Berkeley was remediating the contaminated Southall Gasworks site adjacent to Blair Peach Primary School. These expenses were removed from Council records. He launched a programme called the Southall Reset – the fourth major framework for Southall regeneration in fifteen years – while his administration was planning to close three of the six children's centres in Southall. He told the Southall Community Alliance in October 2022 that 80% of homes in his ward are in the private rented sector and that access to the housing ladder is 'next to nothing' – and then approved the expansion of the Gasworks development to 8,100 homes months before the Community Infrastructure Levy he had promised in 2022 came into force.

None of this is presented as evidence of personal corruption. It is presented as evidence of political choices – consistently applied over more than a decade, consistently at odds with the interests of the communities Mason represents, and consistently insulated from the democratic accountability that might have changed them.

What the Evidence Does Not Show

This report does not claim that all of Ealing's problems are Mason's fault. Austerity is real. The cuts to local government funding since 2010 are real – nearly 25% in real terms, by the Institute for Government's calculation. The structural pressures on social housing, on public health, on council budgets are real. A council facing those pressures will make difficult choices. The question this report asks is not whether difficult choices had to be made. It is whether the choices that were made were the right ones, and whether the communities who bore the consequences had any meaningful say in them.

The evidence suggests the answer to both questions is no.

What Can and Must Change

This report is published in the weeks before the May 2026 local elections. It is not an instruction about how to vote. It is an attempt to put on the public record, in accessible form, the evidence that residents need to make an informed choice.

What the evidence also shows is that the communities most affected are not powerless. Southall Town Hall was saved. The Young Adults Centre was saved. The children's centres judicial review was won at the permission stage. The LGPS divestment movement is growing: twenty-one councils have committed, London boroughs are moving, and the mandatory pooling that came into force on 1 April 2026 has not ended the possibility of ethical investment – it has changed the terrain on which it is contested.

Each of those wins came from the same source: organised community pressure that refused to accept that the decision had already been made. The council's response to that pressure – raising the petition threshold, removing follow-up rights, restructuring ward engagement – is itself evidence of how seriously it is taken.

**‘We’ve drawn up the
drawbridge [...], brought down
the shutters because we feared
a conversation that we know
that we would otherwise need
to happen.’**

**– Peter Mason, speaking to the
Southall Community Alliance, October 2022**

Mason said this about the council he had inherited. The evidence in this report suggests it describes the council he has led. The drawbridge is still up. The shutters are still down. The conversation is still being avoided.



PAGM
PRIVATE LAND
TERMS AND CONDITIONS
ENFORCEMENT IN OPERATION 24 HOURS
PARKING CHARGE of £100

ONE
way.



The residents of Southall have been having this conversation anyway. Southall wants change. The time for that change is now. This report is part of that conversation.

Community Powered Reporting

March 2026

GLOSSARY

Advisory Opinion (International Law Context)

- A formal opinion issued by an international court or tribunal, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), providing legal interpretation of international law at the request of an authorised body. Advisory opinions are not binding in the same way as judgments between states but carry significant legal and moral authority and are often used to guide state conduct and institutional policy.

Affordable Housing Target - A policy benchmark set by a local authority or central government requiring a specified number or percentage of new homes to be delivered at below-market rents or prices. These targets are typically included in planning strategies and regeneration frameworks, and are used to measure progress in addressing housing need.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Investigate Watchlist - A publicly available research database maintained by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) that identifies companies and entities alleged to be involved in activities related to human rights concerns in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Air Quality Monitor - A device used to measure pollutants in the air, such as particulate matter or specific chemical compounds.

Asset Disposal - The removal of an asset from a public authority's ownership or accounts through sale, transfer, or redevelopment. In this report: refers to the sale or transfer of publicly owned land, buildings, or community assets by Ealing Council, often for private development.

Austerity - A set of government policies aimed at reducing public expenditure to lower budget deficits, typically through spending cuts, tax increases, or both.

Austerity Regime - A sustained period of public spending reductions and fiscal constraint imposed on local authorities..

Collective Investment Vehicle (Pension Context)

- A pooled investment structure in which multiple investors combine assets to be managed collectively by a single investment entity.

Community Asset - A building, facility, or resource that provides social, cultural, or economic value to a local population.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - A charge imposed by local authorities on new development to help fund infrastructure.

Council Plan Performance Report - An official document produced by a local authority to track progress against strategic objectives and performance indicators.

Democratic Deficit - A condition in which political institutions or processes fail to adequately represent or respond to the electorate.

Defined Benefit Pension Scheme - A type of pension scheme in which retirement benefits are calculated based on salary and length of service.

Displacement (Housing Context) - The process by which residents are forced to move from their homes due to rising costs or redevelopment.

Divestment - The act of selling off or withdrawing investment from a business, company, sector, or

asset, involving the reduction or complete elimination of financial holdings, typically for financial, ethical, legal, or strategic reasons.

Ealing Council – The local authority governing the London Borough of Ealing, responsible for delivering public services including housing, planning, waste management, education, social care, and environmental services.

Economic Inequality - The uneven distribution of income, wealth, and access to resources within a geographic area.

Environmental Remediation - The process of cleaning up contaminated land or environments to remove pollutants and restore safe conditions.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) - a non-departmental public body in Great Britain, established by the Equality Act 2006.

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) - A financial penalty issued for minor offences such as littering or fly-tipping.

Fly-tipping - The illegal disposal of waste on land not licensed to receive it.

Fiduciary Duty - A legal obligation requiring pension fund trustees and managers to act in the best financial interests of beneficiaries.

Freedom of Information (FOI) - A legal right allowing individuals to request access to information held by public authorities, including personal and nonpersonal information, under specific legislation.

Gasworks (Industrial Site) - A former industrial facility used for gas production, often associated with contamination risks.

Genocide - The legal definition of genocide is set out in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948).

Article II of the Convention defines genocide as:

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- Killing members of the group;
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

A key element of this definition is specific intent (often called *dolus specialis*) to destroy the protected group, in whole or in part. Without this intent, the acts may constitute other international crimes (such as crimes against humanity or war crimes), but not genocide under international law.

Governance Architecture - The structured system of roles, processes, hierarchies, and informal networks through which an organisation is directed and controlled.

Governance Failure - A situation in which institutional systems fail to produce effective, accountable, or transparent decision-making.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) - A structured process used to evaluate the potential effects of a policy, project, or development and to provide recommendations to promote health and reduce inequalities.

Housing Ladder - A concept describing progression from lower-cost housing to ownership or higher-cost housing.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) – HMO stands for houses in multiple occupation, which are properties rented by 2 or more households.

Independent Expert Assessment - An evaluation conducted by qualified professionals not directly involved in the subject.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) - The principal judicial organ of the United Nations established in 1945.

International Law - A body of rules governing relations between states and international entities.

Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) - The Jewish Labour Movement is a membership organisation of Labour supporting members of the Jewish Community and a formal affiliate of the Labour Party in the UK since 1920.

Labour Party National Constitutional Committee (NCC) - A senior disciplinary body within the UK Labour Party responsible for upholding the party's constitution and managing discipline.

Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS) - A BBC-funded initiative supporting local journalism on democracy. The scheme pays for the employment of journalists by local independent news outlets, in order to improve the coverage of issues relating to local democracy.

Local Government Association (LGA) - The national membership body representing councils in England and Wales, advocating for local government and supporting councils to improve services and governance.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) - An independent body investigating complaints about councils and social care providers.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - A defined benefit occupational pension scheme for

local government employees, established under the Public Services Pensions Act 2013. In England and Wales, it is administered by 86 local pension funds.

London Collective Investment Vehicle - (London CIV) - An investment management company established in 2015 by London local authorities to manage and pool the assets of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It oversees the investment of pension funds for 32 London boroughs through a collective investment platform.

National Executive committee - (NEC) is the governing body of the UK Labour Party, responsible for setting strategic direction and overseeing party operations.

Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) - A strategic planning tool guiding development, regeneration, infrastructure and areas of growth potential in London.

Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) - Territories including the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip illegally occupied by Israel.

Peter Mason - Councillor and Leader of Ealing Council since 2021.

Politburo - The principal policymaking committee of a communist party.

Political Player - Any individual or organisation that has influence over political processes or outcomes.

Power Consolidation - The centralisation of decision-making authority within a smaller group or individual.

Planning Consent - Official approval granted by a local planning authority permitting development.

Planning Framework - A strategic document guiding land use and regeneration.

Pooling (Pension Investment Context) - The consolidation of multiple pension fund assets into single investment pool.

Public Health England (PHE) - An executive agency of the UK Department of Health responsible for protecting and improving public health in England. It operated until 2021, when its functions were transferred to successor organisations, including the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

Representation (Political Representation) - The responsibility of elected officials to act in the interests of constituents.

Regeneration Framework - A structured plan aimed at revitalising an area through development and investment.

Remediation Liability - The legal responsibility under the Building Safety Act 2022 for developers, landlords and associated bodies to rectify defects in buildings that pose safety risks.

Responsible Investment Policy - A framework incorporating Environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors to guide investors in investment decisions.

Section 106 Agreement - Section 106 is established under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is a legally binding agreement between local planning authorities and developers to ensure development impacts are mitigated and community benefits are delivered.

Shake the CIV - A Pan-London divestment campaign to stop the CIV bankrolling genocide in Palestine, comprising a coalition of 30 grassroots London-based Palestine solidarity groups.

Southall Big Plan - A long-term, council-led strategic vision for the regeneration and development of Southall, setting out priorities for housing, infrastructure, economic growth, and community

wellbeing. It brings together planning frameworks, including the Southall Opportunity Area Planning Framework (SOAPF), alongside local policies and investment programmes to guide how Southall evolves over time. The plan aims to balance new development with the needs of existing residents, promote inclusive growth, improve public spaces and transport connectivity, and ensure community engagement in shaping the area's future.

Southall Opportunity Area Planning Framework (SOAPF) - A strategic plan designed to manage new development in Southall, accelerated by the Crossrail project, guiding development, regeneration, and infrastructure investment in an area with significant growth potential. It aims to maximise the potential of the area for the benefit of existing and new residents and businesses, focusing on delivering at least 6,000 new homes and 3,000 new jobs across 10 development sites over 20 years. The framework also seeks to create a balanced and inclusive community with high-quality homes, accessible transport, and social infrastructure, regardless of age, economic status, lifestyle, and level of independence. It forms part of the Southall Charter and the Southall Big Plan and has been subject to extensive community engagement and consultation.

Southall Reset - A four-year initiative by Ealing Council aimed at addressing deep-rooted challenges in Southall town centre and its surrounding communities by supporting residents and businesses, improving infrastructure, and promoting economic recovery and inclusion. The programme focuses on fostering a thriving community and enhancing the local economy through initiatives such as active travel and job recovery efforts, while promoting a more inclusive environment that responds to the needs and concerns of the community.

Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) - A statistical measure used in epidemiology to compare the mortality rate of a specific population with that of a standard population, typically expressed with a baseline value of 100. The SMR is calculated by dividing the observed number of deaths in the study population by the expected number of deaths, which is derived from age-specific mortality rates in the standard population and adjusted for demographic differences such as age structure.

An SMR of 100 indicates that the observed number of deaths is equal to the expected number. An SMR greater than 100 indicates higher-than-expected mortality, while an SMR below 100 indicates lower-than-expected mortality. The SMR is widely used in public health, environmental health, and occupational health studies to assess and compare mortality risks between populations, particularly where direct comparison is complicated by differences in population structure.

Statutory Body - An organisation created by legislation.

Triennial Actuarial Valuation - A statutory review conducted every three years to evaluate the financial health of a pension fund.

UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) - A legal advocacy organisation engaging in legal debates around Israel-related issues.

Urban Regeneration - A strategic approach in urban planning involving the redevelopment of deprived or underutilised urban areas through integrated social, economic, and environmental interventions.

United Nations Human Rights Office Database - A UN database identifying companies involved in activities in occupied territories.

Ward (Local Government) - An electoral subdivision represented by councillors.

Ward Forum - A local meeting for residents to engage with councillors.

Waste Management Policy (Local Authority Context) - Framework governing waste collection, recycling, and disposal to protect public health, minimise environmental impact and promote sustainable practices.

Who Profits Database - An independent research database documenting corporate involvement in the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories. It catalogues companies across sectors such as settlements, natural resource extraction, and population control, and is used by researchers and campaigners to assess potential business involvement in activities related to occupation and associated human rights concerns.

Your Town, Your Voice Programme - A council-led public engagement format replacing traditional ward forums. A council-led public engagement initiative designed to provide a structured platform for residents to raise local issues, share feedback, and interact with elected councillors and officers. The programme is intended to replace or complement traditional ward forums by offering a more centralised and managed format for community participation. It typically involves organised sessions where residents can submit questions or concerns in advance, with responses provided by council representatives within a controlled setting.

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Photo Credits

Most of the photos in this report have been shared with us by residents of Southall. They wish to remain anonymous. We are deeply grateful for their support.

1. Setting the Scene

Ealing Green

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Stills from the Hidden Homeless of Southall documentary

With kind permission from SJWDUR

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7w-Q4WW8xsk>

2.3 Asset Disposal

Save Ealing Childrens Centres banner With permission

<https://saveealingchildrenscentres.wordpress.com/>

4. Local to Global

Damage in Gaza

By WAFA (Q2915969) in contract with a local company (APAIMages)

Correspondence with Wiki Palestine (Q117834684)

Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1387756>

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This project at times felt like too big of an undertaking for a small group of volunteers. When it became overwhelming, we leant on and drew inspiration from Southall itself - reminding ourselves of the work that has come before us in the name of change. We send gratitude to those whose shoulders we stand on.

To our elders who fought and still fight for a fairer and kinder society.

communitypoweredreporting@proton.me
www.communitypoweredreporting.co.uk
www.instagram.com/communitypoweredreporting

About us

Community Powered Reporting is a resident-led, community focused, research group campaigning for change.

As we approach the election period, we want to ensure our families and neighbours are presented with evidence among the propaganda.

We are an unfunded, non-profit, informal volunteer group from Southall and Ealing - researching statistics and data gathering around our day jobs and looking after the kids.





Waterside Road
1-28

It is an offence
to dump refuse
or fly tip

Ealing Council
Tenants of this
Block Only

