



BRENTWOOD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Brentwood Economic Growth Strategy

2025-2028





Councillor David Kendall

Chair of Finance and
Resources Committee

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Brentwood Economic Growth Strategy 2025-2028, a comprehensive framework designed to guide the sustainable growth and prosperity of our town and surrounding areas for the coming years.

Brentwood has always been a place of opportunity, rich in heritage and character, with a vibrant community and a thriving local economy. However, like many towns across the country, we face the challenges of adapting to changing economic landscapes, global competition and evolving resident and business needs. This strategy is our collective vision for the future—one that harnesses our strengths, addresses our challenges and capitalises on the unique opportunities before us.

Our approach is built on inclusivity, aiming to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared widely across all areas of Brentwood.

We will focus on supporting local businesses, attracting new investment through sites like Brentwood Enterprise Park, working closely with the Brentwood Connected Business Improvement District and developing key sectors such as retail, technology and green industries. At the same time, we will enhance the town's infrastructure, create high-quality jobs and provide a welcoming environment that attracts visitors and residents alike.

This strategy is not just about economic growth—it is about creating a place where people want to live, work and invest. By working in partnership with local businesses, communities and stakeholders, we are setting a course for a prosperous future that benefits everyone in Brentwood.

We recognise that the success of this plan hinges on the active involvement and collaboration of our local businesses, stakeholders and community leaders.

We encourage you to engage with this strategy, share your insights and contribute to shaping a thriving, sustainable economy for Brentwood. Your knowledge, expertise and perspective are invaluable in helping us identify opportunities, overcome challenges and ensure that the strategy is not only ambitious but also practical and responsive to the needs of our business community.

National Context

The government's Modern Industrial Strategy published in 2024 focuses on building a fairer, greener and more innovative economy for the UK, with a strong emphasis on tackling climate change, boosting regional growth and creating high-quality jobs. The key elements include:

- 1. Green Transition:** Prioritises achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, with significant investment in green industries like renewable energy, electric vehicles and carbon capture technologies. The government will work to create a low-carbon economy that not only addresses climate change but also fosters new industries and employment opportunities.
- 2. Regional Economic Growth:** Aims to reduce economic disparities across the country by investing in regions outside of London and the South East. The strategy includes a focus on regional economic hubs and providing tailored support to local economies, encouraging innovation and job creation in all parts of the UK.
- 3. Skills and Education:** Outlines a plan to upskill workers and improve education, focusing on the skills needed for future industries, including green jobs and digital technologies. It plans to reform vocational training and apprenticeships to ensure workers can adapt to changing job markets.
- 4. Innovation and Technology:** Promotes the development of high-tech industries like artificial intelligence, biotechnology and robotics. The government will support innovation by investing in research and development, aiming to make the UK a leader in cutting-edge technologies.

Essex Context

- 5. Public Investment:** Calls for a substantial increase in public investment in infrastructure, including transport, housing and digital networks, to drive economic growth and improve connectivity. The strategy aims to create a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive future for Brentwood, with an emphasis on collaboration, innovation and community involvement to achieve these goals.
- 6. Fairer Economy:** Emphasises tackling inequality by supporting workers' rights, raising wages and ensuring fair business practices. There is a focus on promoting fair pay and securing decent working conditions in emerging sectors.

The 2023 Essex Sector Development Strategy focuses on fostering economic growth and innovation in the region by prioritising key sectors such as green energy, advanced manufacturing, digital technology, life sciences and creative industries. It aims to enhance Essex's competitiveness by investing in skills development, particularly through vocational training and apprenticeships and supporting research and development initiatives.

The strategy also emphasises improving infrastructure, such as transport and digital connectivity, while promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility across industries. By creating a supportive business environment and attracting investment, the strategy seeks to build a resilient, future-focused economy in Essex that benefits all local communities.

Brentwood Context

The Brentwood Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 outlines the Council's vision and priorities for the development and growth of the Borough over the next few years. It focuses on delivering high-quality public services, improving the local economy and enhancing the quality of life for residents. Key areas of focus include:

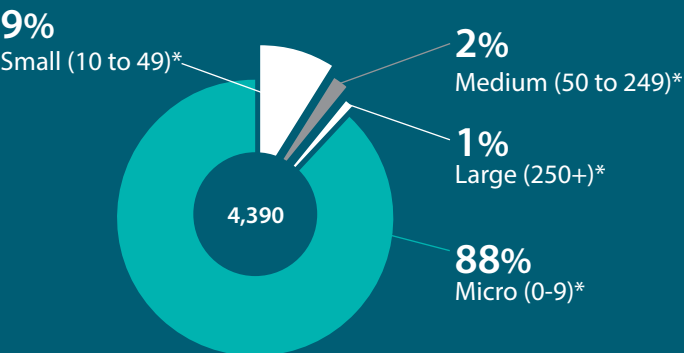
- 1. Economic Growth:** Promoting local business development, attracting investment and enhancing the town centre to create jobs and drive prosperity.
- 2. Sustainability and Environment:** Prioritising green initiatives, including reducing carbon emissions, promoting clean energy and improving waste management and green spaces.
- 3. Infrastructure:** Investing in transport, digital connectivity and public spaces to support growth and improve accessibility for residents and businesses.
- 4. Community Wellbeing:** Ensuring that residents have access to high-quality healthcare, housing and education to foster a strong sense of community.
- 5. Council Efficiency:** Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of council services, ensuring that resources are used responsibly and value for money is delivered.

The Brentwood Corporate Strategy 2024-2028

The strategy aims to create a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive future for Brentwood, with an emphasis on collaboration, innovation and community involvement to achieve these goals.

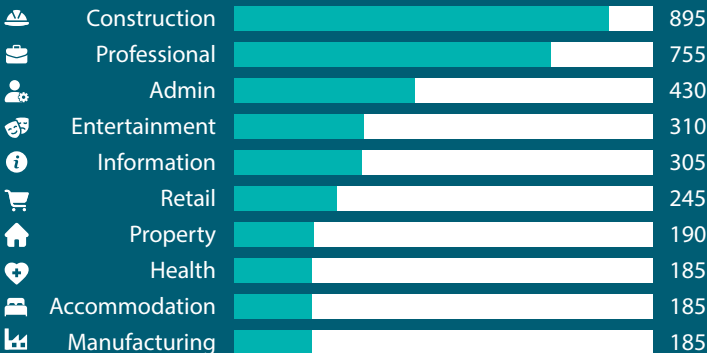
Our Borough Economy

Total Businesses



* Number of employees. Source: UK Business Counts (2024).
Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS).

Top 10 sectors in Brentwood Borough



UK Business Counts - enterprises by industry and employment size band (2024).
Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS). Note: Number of businesses by industry

Gross Value Added (GVA)



£50.20
Gross value added per hour worked
Highest in Essex

Source: ONS: Gross value added (GVA) per hour worked (2022)

Earnings

£772 Gross
median weekly
pay in Brentwood
Borough



Source: Local indicators for Brentwood (E07000068) - ONS (2024)
Notes: This indicator shows the average (median) weekly pay based on where people live, in the UK, for a pay period in April 2008 to April 2024.

Employment



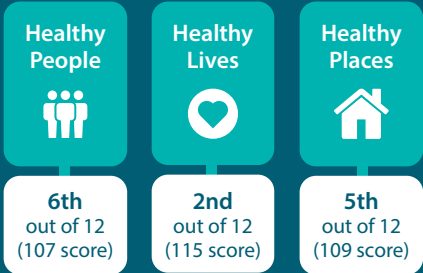
3.4%
Unemployment rate

3.8%
East region
average

3.9%
Great Britain
average

Source: ONS annual population survey
(April 2023 – March 2024)

Health Index



Source: Health Index Dashboard | Essex Open Data ONS 2021
Note: Rankings show the Borough's position in Essex.

Population

Brentwood Borough
has a population of
approximately

77,000

Source: Census 2021



Qualifications

35.4%

Percentage of highest
qualifications



2nd
Highest
in Essex

Source: ONS - 2021 Census (TS067)



Vision

Brentwood Borough will be a dynamic, entrepreneurial hub that fosters innovation, nurtures start-ups and equips its community with the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving economy. Our vision is to create a vibrant, sustainable economy where businesses of all sizes can flourish, with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship, skills development and environmental responsibility.

Start-Ups: Entrepreneurial Spirit at the Core



Brentwood Borough will be recognised as a thriving destination for entrepreneurs, providing a supportive ecosystem that encourages creativity, risk-taking and growth. By offering tailored support services and strategic networking opportunities, we aim to cultivate an environment where new ideas can quickly take shape and scale.

Key Objectives:

1. Foster an entrepreneurial culture that celebrates creativity and innovation.
2. Provide tailored support services, accessible funding and strategic networking for entrepreneurs.
3. Work with local developers to secure high quality affordable workspace for small businesses and support larger business propositions to generate larger-scale inward investment along strategic routes.
4. Work with the Brentwood Connected Business Improvement District to future proof our high streets in Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone.
5. Redevelop The Baytree Centre to create a retail, hospitality and leisure hub in the Brentwood town centre.

Outcome:

- ✓ Brentwood Borough becomes a recognised destination for entrepreneurs seeking to launch and grow their businesses.

Skills: Building a Workforce for a Modern Economy



Brentwood Borough will prioritise skills development to meet the demands of the future. Through partnerships with local schools and employers, we will ensure that our workforce is equipped with the skills required by the modern economy, with a focus on digital, technical and green industries. Apprenticeships, vocational training programs and lifelong learning initiatives will be central to building a workforce that is adaptable, highly skilled and ready to meet the needs of both current and emerging sectors.

Key Objectives:

1. Collaborate with schools and employers to develop a skilled, adaptable workforce by prioritising digital, technical and green industry skills.
2. Promote apprenticeships, vocational training and lifelong learning to enhance skills development.

Outcomes:

- ✓ A workforce that is highly skilled, flexible and equipped for emerging industries.
- ✓ Greater higher-quality employment opportunities for residents, contributing to a competitive and resilient economy.
- ✓ Increased digital connectivity to encourage upskilling opportunities and business growth.

Sustainability: At the Heart of Growth



As Brentwood Borough develops, it will do so with a strong commitment to sustainability. Our economy will thrive on green technologies, renewable energy solutions and sustainable business practices, reducing our environmental footprint while generating new job opportunities. We will encourage businesses to adopt circular economy principles and implement green initiatives that contribute to the long-term health of both the local economy and the planet.

Key Objectives:

1. Integrate sustainability into Brentwood's economic growth through green technologies and renewable energy.
2. Promote green initiatives that support long-term economic health and environmental responsibility.

Outcomes:

- ✓ Brentwood Borough becomes a leader in sustainable business practices and green technologies.
- ✓ Creation of new jobs in the green economy, particularly in renewable energy and environmental sectors.

Together, this strategy will create a forward-thinking, inclusive and resilient economy for Brentwood Borough, where businesses, communities and individuals work together to achieve lasting prosperity. Through fostering entrepreneurship, championing innovation, prioritising skills and embedding sustainability, Brentwood will become a beacon of growth and opportunity in the heart of Essex.

Contact us

01277 312 500

business@brentwood.gov.uk

brentwood.gov.uk/business

Brentwood Borough Council

Town Hall

Ingrave Road

Brentwood

Essex

CM15 8AY

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 Brentwood Borough Council

 @Brentwood_BC

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