

# Hounslow

**VISIT DATE:**

March 2025

**VISIT LED BY:**



John Bason, Chair of Primark and Chair of  
Hounslow Pride of Place Board







# Addressing deprivation in Hounslow

Hounslow is a borough marked by stark contrasts and significant need. With more than 2,300 asylum seekers and residents speaking 188 languages, it is one of London's most diverse communities. Despite its vibrancy and ongoing regeneration efforts, the borough faces entrenched issues including high unemployment, food and digital poverty, youth disengagement, and poor access to quality education and employment. It is one of the newest places that Business in the Community is targeting for long-term, place-based transformation through Pride of Place partnership and the King's Seeing is Believing visit.

Business leaders witnessed the devastating effects of poverty and lack of opportunity on individuals, families and communities, and they gained an understanding of community efforts already underway. The visit brought home the importance of long-term, consistent support to tackle entrenched issues.

Offers of apprenticeships, pro bono support and long-term partnerships between businesses and community groups are building trust and are kickstarting the process of transformational change.



## What did business leaders learn?

Moving personal testimonies, including those from a former gang member turned mentor and from a grieving mother whose son was killed for resisting gang involvement, brought home the urgent need for change in Hounslow. The 11 business leaders visiting **Hanworth Centre Hub** learned that centres like this are currently sustained by local goodwill rather than stable funding, and they require consistent support to carry on their work.

Delegates saw how **Feltham Community Development Association** was stepping up to support disadvantaged young people, including through its partnership with **Brentford Football Club** to reach and inspire young people through sport.

Young people training in trades such as plumbing, carpentry, and logistics met with business leaders at **West Thames College's Skills Centre**, highlighting how business can expand pathways into work through apprenticeships, mentoring, and practical support.

Many of the business leaders have existing ties to the borough through business operations or employee communities and the visit enabled them to engage directly with grassroots organisations and residents to seek solutions.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups.

# 25%

of 19-year-olds in Hounslow do not have a Level 3 qualification

# 2.9%

of young people aged 16–17 in Hounslow are not in education, employment, or training

# 4.8%

unemployment rate in Hounslow, compared with national average of 3.8%

“As business leaders we can drive meaningful change in the communities with the most deprivation. It is my hope that this visit will inspire the collective business actions to bring about that change. By working together and harnessing the work of the Hounslow local authority and community groups we can build a better future.”

John Bason, Chair of Primark, Chair of Hounslow Pride of Place Partnership



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## What was the business response?

The visit resonated strongly with delegates, who came to the shared conclusion that the challenges they witnessed cannot be solved by short-term or isolated actions.

Offers of apprenticeships have already been forthcoming from **Berkeley Group** and **ABM**, who have also pledged to expand their Junior Engineering Engagement Programme.

Brentford Football Club's Community Trust is benefitting from pro bono support from **Pinsent Masons**, who are also exploring support for the Hanworth Centre and a mentoring programme for young people.

**Sky** is developing an initiative for care leavers and follow up discussions are continuing with **British Airways** and **Phoenix Group**.

Delegates recognised the unique and powerful role that business can play in reversing cycles of poverty and exclusion, committing to long-term engagement in the borough.

Building on these existing commitments, the aim in Hounslow now is to build on the momentum that has been created, identify the areas of highest need, and ensure that business involvement leads to scalable, measurable improvements in people's lives.

As part of this, a number of other businesses, including **Compass Group**, **Phoenix Group** and **JCDecaux**, are exploring ways in which they can become further involved in the borough. **British Airways** is currently exploring local engagement opportunities that match the needs of its workforce with community priorities.

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*The power of the Business in the Community (BITC) network has enabled me to experience first-hand the issues encountered by communities that are so close to where I live physically but can appear to be a world apart. By leading BITC's The King's Seeing is Believing visit to Hounslow earlier this year, I see the need, I want to make a difference, and I know that, together with other businesses, we can proactively support Hounslow and the work of community organisations working at a grassroots level.*

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John Bason, Chair of Primark, Chair of BITC's Hounslow Pride of Place Partnership



The Lens – Weaving a passion for communities within business.







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**Business in the Community**

137 Shepherdess Walk  
London N1 7RQ

[www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)  
020 7566 8650

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