

**REDBRIDGE
EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS AND
ENTERPRISE
PLAN
2015/16**

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Foreword

Over the last five years, Redbridge has experienced and responded to significant changes in the national, regional and local economy, Government changes to FE funding, welfare reform, skills training policy, and of course our own budgetary position. The introduction of Universal Credit in Redbridge in February 2016 will bring additional pressures. Redbridge's varied socio-economic demography will also present challenges. We are however seeing positive signs of economic growth in some of our town centres through new housing, retail and leisure investment and development.

Against this background, the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan provides a directional framework for the delivery of initiatives to increase the opportunities for education, training and employment. The Plan recognises the borough's strengths and focuses on the areas which need greater support, to enable as many residents as possible to develop and sustain their full potential and career progression.

Partnership is key to the delivery of our objectives. We already have strong partnerships, including Enterprise Redbridge, Work Redbridge and strong links with the voluntary sector, Department of Work and Pensions, Redbridge Chamber of Commerce, and the two Business Improvement Districts. We aim to strengthen our partnerships and collaborative working, to ensure we develop interventions that target and support those facing the greatest barriers to employment, and support businesses by providing for the skills needed today, and anticipating those required in the future.

We are looking beyond our borough boundaries, to Redbridge's place as part of a City Region, and a wider functional economic area. We are working with North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA) and London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (LSCC) to open up new partnership opportunities, and employment opportunities for our residents.

This Plan evidences the local economic situation, and sets out our priorities that will support Redbridge's economy and address some of the challenges faced by residents and businesses.

Cllr Helen Coomb

Cabinet Member for Planning, Economy and Regeneration

Introduction

The Redbridge Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders in the borough and members of the Enterprise Redbridge and Work Redbridge partnerships.

In the light of changes to the local and national economy, changes to the policy environment and key developments taking place in the borough and across London, this plan updates the evidence base and reviews the borough's priorities which were set out in the previous 2010/11 Plan.

During 2015 we have seen Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants in Redbridge fall to their lowest level since 2006; however Employment and Support allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefits and Income Support claimant rates are significantly higher and still remain predominantly hard to reach groups who face multiple barriers in accessing sustainable employment. There is an increasing need for targeted support to ensure the right level of support reaches those who need it the most.

There are some exciting developments on the horizon in the borough, notably the arrival of Crossrail and associated station developments and public realm improvement works in Ilford town centre, and these are set to have a positive impact on the area, making it a more desirable place to live and work, and ultimately improve the overall employment and skills landscape. There have been well-documented reductions in public sector spending and employment, both in the borough and nation-wide, and further reductions are probable. It is notable that we are seeing substantial disparity between wards in relation to many key issues, giving further weight to the drive for targeted support and service delivery.

Effective partnership working is fundamental to the borough and ensuring coordinated support and provision in relation to employment and skills, as well as to the overall success and impact of this plan. The Enterprise Redbridge strategic partnership and the Work Redbridge provider forum have examined the evidence base and identified priorities, recommendations and strategies to ensure the development of a highly skilled workforce and to help more people into employment.

The aim of this plan is to ensure a range of employment and skills providers from across the borough deliver a joined-up service to job-seekers and businesses and to ensure the sharing of better, clearer information regarding available support so appropriate referral routes and joined up pathways to employment can be developed.

Section One - Redbridge – the place

1.1 Location and borough characteristics

Redbridge is an outer north east London borough, with a culturally rich, well-educated community and many highly desirable, green and affluent areas. However, there are also areas of deprivation where residents are struggling to manage the rising cost of living and targeted service delivery is increasingly needed to ensure the support provided embraces and responds to the diversity in the borough.

The borough borders Waltham Forest, Havering, Barking and Dagenham and Essex. It stretches from Ilford and Seven Kings in the south through Newbury Park and Barkingside, to Woodford Green, Woodford Bridge and Hainault in the north. As a north-east, outer suburban borough, Redbridge has inner city features, predominantly in the south around Ilford, mixed with less densely-populated, more affluent areas in the north. Ilford is the main town centre in the borough and the location for the Council's civic centre, with the area also identified as an Opportunity Area and Metropolitan Centre in the London Plan; recognising its potential.

Other key town centres are located at Wanstead, Barkingside, South Woodford and Gants Hill. The latter two are notable leisure destinations, with strong evening economies. Gants Hill was awarded Purple Flag status in 2012, which acknowledges the role that the evening and night-time economy plays and encourages the greater potential of the area. It has also benefited from a £7.2 million TfL funded urban development scheme, complementing its excellent transport connectivity.

Redbridge is known for being a green, 'leafy' borough, with 41% of Redbridge made up of open or green space¹. Six Redbridge parks and open spaces achieved Green Flag Status for 2014/15².

1.2 Population

Total population (2014)³:

	Redbridge (numbers)	London (numbers)	Great Britain (numbers)
All people	293 100	8 538 700	62 756 300
Males	145 200	4 234 000	30 890 900
Females	147 900	4 304 700	31 865 400

The borough's population currently sits at 293 100 (2014), which is an increase of 18 000 people since 2010. Just over 65% of the population were of working age (aged

¹ "Living in Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

² "Living in Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

³ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

16 – 64) in 2014. More statistics in relation to employment and the working age population can be found in the second section of the plan.

Redbridge is seeing high levels of population growth. In absolute terms, it had the ninth highest population growth in London between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, with an increase of 40 000 people in comparison to the London average of 31 000. The population is expected to grow by 18.6% between 2012 and 2022⁴.

The borough has an increasing young-old population and in 2013 had the third highest proportion of under 16s in London (22.7%, 65 500) and the 13th highest proportion of over 65s in London in percentage terms (12.1%, 35 000)⁵. In 2014 there were 66 760 under 16s (22.8% of population) and 35 600 over 65s (12.2% of population) in the borough. Across London 20.3% of the population were aged under 16 and 11.5% were aged 65 and over.⁶

The borough is home to a thriving, vibrant, multi-cultural community and is the fourth most diverse community in England and Wales⁷.

A high percentage of the population (60.7% in 2013) come from a black or minority ethnic background, which is notably larger than the average BME population of 41.8% for London as a whole⁸.

In 2014 40.1% of the population were born outside the UK, which compares to 36.6% for London as a whole. This has increased from 35.3% of the Redbridge population in 2010⁹.

It is important to consider the challenges that this may pose in terms of employment and skills, notably offering appropriate and targeted support to an increasingly diverse, growing population, identifying key or hard to reach groups in need of support and monitoring further demographic changes and responding to these accordingly. In conjunction with this, demand for jobs will also increase so we need to ensure viable employment opportunities amongst local employers.

1.3 Development and regeneration

New development and regeneration in Redbridge is primarily focused on Ilford Town Centre, with the area soon to be the subject of a number of changes, developments and improvement plans. These will include new housing development and public realm improvement works and are designed to improve the overall appearance of the area, but will also increase the potential for additional high quality housing, retail and leisure developments and ultimately transform Ilford into a destination of choice.

⁴ "Living in Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

⁵ "Living in Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

⁶ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁷ "Living in Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

⁸ "London Borough Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

⁹ "London Borough Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

1.3.1 Ilford Housing Zone

Ilford has been confirmed as one of the Greater London Authority's Housing Zones; an initiative designed to promote housing development in London and improve town centres. This is expected to trigger investment for around 2 000 new homes in the area over a six year period, subsequently helping to create a sense of place in Ilford, increasing the area's overall desirability and helping to attract further investment and development. A mix of housing tenures is being sought, including homes for sale, private rent and affordable housing. The development could support up to 4,000 jobs and 150 apprenticeships in the construction supply chain, with potential for around 300 construction jobs and 20 apprenticeships to be created each year in Ilford for the next 5 years and the Council will also be working closely with contractors to ensure a local dividend in terms of associated employment.

It will be important to consider the long-term impact that such housing development and the subsequent population growth will have on local infrastructure and service demand and ensure we have appropriate provisions in place and are able to respond accordingly.

1.3.2 Crossrail

Crossrail will be arriving in Redbridge in 2018, which will mean a series of improvement works and upgrades to four of the borough's stations. This will further enhance Redbridge's excellent transport connectivity and improve the landscape of the stations and surrounding areas, but will also create the potential to attract new investment and improve the area's economy in the long-term. Steps will be taken to improve the integration of the town centre with investment to renew the public realm, tackle congestion and calm traffic as well as improving access to Ilford Station from York Road and Ilford Hill. Again, the Council will also be working closely with Crossrail and the relevant contractors to ensure a local dividend in terms of associated jobs and apprenticeships.

1.3.3 Business Improvement Districts

The borough hosts two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) at Ilford and Hainault Business Park. These are geographical areas in which the local businesses have voted to invest collectively to improve their environment and come with a number of business benefits. They work on behalf of businesses in the area to create an attractive, welcoming, vibrant and economically successful trading area. Further information on the BIDs is included in the second section of this plan.

The Council needs to ensure that any regeneration or development work is securing maximum local benefit. The future of Redbridge's town centres should be considered as there is a growing need for a diversification of activities in town centres

nationwide; with the general public wanting retail alongside leisure. They need to be attractive, safe, accessible places with “unique” activities¹⁰.

Redbridge has a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which charges developers on most types of new buildings in the borough. The Council allocates 15% of CIL money to local projects. In this way money is raised from development to help the Council pay for schools, leisure centres, aged care accommodation, roads and other facilities to ensure the borough grows sustainably. CIL replaces the section 106 “tariff” which has previously been used for this purpose.

1.4 Housing

As is the case with many other areas in London, there are issues around the supply of good quality housing in Redbridge, and notably around the supply of affordable and social housing. The aforementioned housing development projects will go some way to addressing these issues, but it is recognised that more needs to be done in this area and that housing demand needs to be closely monitored.

The government introduced temporary Permitted Development Rights in 2013; which allow offices to be converted into homes without the need to apply for full planning permission. This often results in the loss of commercial property needed to support employment and economic growth. Additionally, many of these developments do not respond to demands for affordable housing and price local people out of the area.

In the 2011 census, Redbridge was estimated to have 99 105 households (a household is defined as being occupied by at least one person); a 7.4% increase from the 2001 census.

Households in Redbridge (2013):-

- Working households – 43.3% (2010 – 40.2%)
- Workless households – 13.7% (2010 – 14.8%)

Property ownership in Redbridge (2014):-

- Properties owned outright – 22% (2010 – 24%)
- Being bought with a mortgage or loan – 40% (2010 – 43%)
- Social rented – 10% (2010 – 10%)
- Private rented/landlord – 27% (2010 – 23%)
- Rented from other sources – 1% (2010 – 0%)

Average local authority rent in Redbridge (2013/14):-

- £102.82 (2010/11 - £83.79)

Housing sales in Redbridge; excluding sales under the Right to Buy scheme (2013):-

¹⁰ “Further alterations to the London Plan March 2015,” www.london.gov.uk

- 2 975 (2010 – 2 955)

Average (mean) house prices in Redbridge; excluding sales under the Right to Buy scheme (2014):-

- £336 882 (2010 - £286 011) ¹¹

Average (mean) annual household income estimate: - £44 432

Lowest income at ward level: – Loxford - £28 673

Highest income at ward level: – Monkams - £72 814

Number of households on the local authority waiting list (2014):-

- 7 804 (2010 - 12 644) ¹²

It is to be noted that the accuracy of the list depends on the extent to which housing authorities keep the register up-to-date. The introduction of choice-based approaches to the letting of social housing has led to some increases in the number of households on the waiting lists, including those groups which are traditionally under-represented in social housing e.g. people in employment. Even where local authorities have not adopted Choice Based Letting, not everyone on the waiting list will necessarily be in urgent housing need.

Housing benefit reductions are likely to lead to increased demand for housing advice, as well as potential homelessness for private tenants who may then be placed in properties with even higher rents and still left struggling with rent arrears.

1.5 Schools

Redbridge has high performing schools and consistently high percentages of pupils achieving good examination results. In 2014, 77.1% of end of key stage four pupils achieved five or more A* - C grades at GCSE, and 68.7% of pupils achieved five or more A* - C grades at GCSE; including English and Mathematics¹³.

Redbridge schools routinely see high numbers of school leavers progressing to Higher Education, and in 2012 the borough had the highest number of school leavers going to university in the country¹⁴. In 2013, 69% of school leavers went on to study at a UK higher education institution; including 33% at the top third of HEIs¹⁵.

¹¹ "Average House Prices – Borough," www.data.london.gov.uk

¹² "Households on Local Authority Waiting List – Borough," www.data.london.gov.uk

¹³ "Borough Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

¹⁴ London Borough of Redbridge Fairness Commission

¹⁵ "Further Education and Higher Education destinations of KS5 students," www.data.london.gov.uk

1.6 Health

In the 2011 Census, a higher percentage of Redbridge residents (48.1%) considered themselves to be in very good health than for the country as a whole (47.1%), although the figure was lower than for London as a region (50.5%). A lower percentage of Redbridge residents (1.1%) considered themselves in very bad health compared to both the country as a whole (1.3%) and London as a region (1.2%).

In 2010-12, the healthy life expectancy at birth for males in the borough was 66 and 62.9 for females. This compares to 65.5 for Redbridge males in 2009-11 and 62.4 for females.

More information on benefit claimant rates and health issues can be found in the second section of this plan.

1.7 Deprivation

Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, Redbridge as a whole is the 125th most deprived local authority district (out of the 326 Local Authority Districts).

As previously noted, the south of the borough has inner city features, notably around Ilford. This is alongside less densely-populated, more affluent areas in the north of the borough. The most deprived areas of the borough are therefore located in the south, with Clementswood and Loxford the two most deprived wards, and the least deprived areas being located in the North West, with Monkams the least deprived ward (based on rank of average score within London - see table below for indices of deprivation rank). The borough is likely to face increasing challenges in this area as demographic changes bring a fast growing and very diverse population and services will need to be targeted in order to support residents and areas facing high levels of deprivation.

Deprivation at ward level¹⁶:

	% dependent children (0-18) in out-of-work households (2014)	% of households with no adults in employment with dependent children (2011)	% lone parents not in employment (2011)	Rank of average score (within London) (2010)	% of LSOAs in worst 50% nationally (2010)
Aldborough	9.6	5.1	43.0	391	63
Barkingside	6.4	3.5	41.4	502	25
Bridge	10.7	4.6	43.3	443	43
Chadwell	14.3	7.7	49.7	412	57
Church End	5.6	2.2	39.5	555	14
Clayhall	4.4	3.2	40.8	501	13
Clementswood	15.5	10.8	64.9	183	100
Cranbrook	9.2	4.9	46.8	433	50
Fairlop	11.4	5.4	48.7	403	57
Fullwell	13.3	6.2	49.1	379	50
Goodmayes	16.0	8.2	52.7	301	100
Hainault	19.5	7.8	49.5	204	100
Loxford	20.4	15.3	66.8	195	100
Mayfield	11.3	6.2	42.9	399	86
Monkhams	4.2	1.2	26.3	586	14
Newbury	10.6	7.0	47.5	371	63
Roding	10.3	4.4	39.4	397	43
Seven Kings	12.8	8.3	59.8	328	100
Snaresbrook	5.8	1.8	34.8	489	29
Valentines	11.9	7.5	53.8	255	88
Wanstead	6.5	2.5	31.0	473	13

This table shows that Clementswood and Loxford wards are recording consistently high levels across all measures and indicators of deprivation. Meanwhile Monkhams and Church End are recording consistently low levels across all measures and indicators of deprivation.

In percentage terms, Redbridge has seen a decrease in the number of children under 16 living in poverty. In 2012 this was at 19.3%; a fall of 5.7% from 2010 (25%). This figure corresponds to numbers of children aged under 16 living in low income families who are in receipt of out of work benefits or tax credits. The figure for London as a whole in 2012 was 23.7%.¹⁷

¹⁶ "Ward Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

¹⁷ "Children in Poverty," www.data.london.gov.uk

In 2015, 14.6% of pupils at maintained nursery and primary schools in the borough were known to be eligible for and claiming free meals. This figure has fallen from 18.2% in 2010, and is below the Outer London average of 15% (2015).¹⁸

In 2015, 17.3% of pupils were known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals in maintained secondary schools. This figure has fallen from 16.4% in 2010, and is below the Outer London average of 14.8% (2015).¹⁹

A new method of measuring child poverty is to be introduced under the Conservative government, which is reported to focus on the root causes of poverty and includes factors such as educational achievement, living in a workless household and income. This is likely to impact on child poverty statistics, but is important that associated issues continue to be prioritised and appropriately tackled.

In 2012, 10.8% of Redbridge households were experiencing fuel poverty, meaning they were unable to keep their home adequately heated. (The percentage of households in an area that experience fuel poverty based on the "Low income, high cost" methodology.) 48 088 Redbridge citizens were income deprived; meaning they were either out-of-work or in low-paid work.²⁰

1.8 Transport connectivity

The borough is well connected and easy to access and travel through using public transport. It is served by the London Underground and a number of train lines and bus services. Ilford is only eight minutes from Stratford Regional and Stratford International on the train, and 18 minutes from London Liverpool Street. The TfL Rail London Liverpool Street to Shenfield service serves four Redbridge stations; with this line set to be taken over by Crossrail. One of the eastern connections of the Crossrail scheme will serve four Redbridge stations; Ilford, Seven Kings, Goodmayes and Chadwell Heath, as well as Stratford and stations on the Great Eastern line to Shenfield. More than 40 bus routes run through and within the borough, as well as the London Underground Central Line, with ten Central Line tube stations in the borough.

The borough's transport priorities include improvements to Ilford station, which will be carried out as part of the Crossrail works, its surrounds and Ilford town centre, a direct bus route for Hainault Business Park and Forest Road and step-free access at Newbury Park station²¹.

Ilford town centre was the subject of a Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Major Scheme bid, which allocates financial support from TfL to boroughs for schemes to improve their transport networks. Redbridge was also one of the thirteen 'Biking

¹⁸ "Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals," www.data.london.gov.uk

¹⁹ "Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals," www.data.london.gov.uk

²⁰ "Pupil Health Outcomes Framework Indicators," www.data.london.gov.uk

²¹ "TfL Redbridge Borough Factsheet," www.tfl.gov.uk; "Travel to Redbridge," www.redbridge.gov.uk

Boroughs' in London who shared £4 million over three years to March 2014 to create cycle hubs and cycling communities in Outer London.

It is to be noted that Redbridge continues to be served by one Job Centre in Seven Kings, which may prove problematic to access for residents from the north of the borough. Residents may also face similar issues in travelling to relevant employment and skills partners across the borough and accessing the help and support available to them. It is vital to ensure that those most in need of support are able to access and fully utilise it.

1.9 Travel to work patterns

The top ten places of work of Redbridge citizens²²:

Place of Work	Number of Redbridge residents working in location
Redbridge	22 053
Westminster, City of London	16 760
Tower Hamlets	8 766
Newham	7 676
Waltham Forest	5 237
Barking and Dagenham	4 611
Camden	4 238
Havering	3 760
Islington	2 842
Hackney	2 606

The distance and travel to work patterns of Redbridge residents provide an interesting insight into how far people are willing to travel to get to work.

Just over 22 000 residents living in Redbridge choose to work in the borough, however the majority of residents work outside the borough, notably in Westminster, City of London.

Distance may prove to be a barrier to employment for some individuals, such as those with childcare requirements, who may only be willing to seek employment locally. There is a need to engage with local employers to encourage them to recruit local employees. This is likely to become increasingly relevant as the population of the borough continues to grow and public sector employment in the borough continues to shrink. It is important to try and balance the outbound workforce with the inbound workforce as much as possible by keeping the area economically viable through providing an accessible working environment and ensuring good employment opportunities in the borough.

²² "Place of Residence by Place of Work," www.data.london.gov.uk

Method of travel to work by distance travelled to work²³:

Distance travelled to work	All categories: Method of travel to work (2001 specification)	Work mainly at or from home	Train, underground, metro, light, rail, tram, bus, minibuss or coach	Driving a car or van	All other methods of travel to work
All categories: Distance travelled to work	125 362	11 183	56 563	44 310	13 306
Less than 10km	49 226	0	14 619	25 654	8 953
10km to less than 30km	46 187	0	33 948	10 377	1 862
30km and over	4 305	0	1 581	2 386	338
Work mainly at or from home	11 183	11 183	0	0	0
Other	14 461	0	6 415	5 893	2 153

This highlights the large number of residents using public transport to travel to work; reinforcing the importance of a strong and reliable public transport network in and around the borough.

²³ "Travel to work trends," www.data.london.gov.uk

Section Two – The Local Labour Market

2.1 Employment rates of working age people

Working age population (aged 16-64) (2014):

	Redbridge (numbers)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
All people aged 16-64	190 700	65.1	68.2	63.5
Males aged 16-64	95 000	65.4	68.8	64.3
Females aged 16-64	95 800	64.8	67.6	62.8

The working age population (all people aged 16-64) in the borough is 190 700 (2014); or 65.1% of the overall population²⁴.

Employment and Unemployment (2015):

	Redbridge (numbers)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Economically active	144 800	74.0	77.4	77.5
In employment	132 300	67.5	72.2	73.1
Employees	106 600	54.7	59.3	62.5
Self-employed	25 700	12.8	12.5	10.1
Unemployed	10 400	7.3	6.6	5.7

The borough's working age employment rate is 67.5% (132 300), compared with London 72.2% and Great Britain 73.1%, placing Redbridge 4.7% below the London average and 5.6% below the Great Britain average.

Between December 2010 and June 2015, the employment rate in Redbridge increased from 64.6% to 67.5%, an increase of 3.1%. This compares with a rise of 4.9% for London as a whole and a rise of 2.9% for Great Britain over the same period.

The employment rate is higher for males (77.7%; 76 400), than for females (57.3%; 55 800).

The working age employment rate for ethnic minorities in the borough is 62.2%, with the unemployment rate at 10.2%.

²⁴ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

The employment rate is higher for ethnic minority males at 75%, than for females at 49.8%²⁵.

The working age unemployment rate in the borough is 7.3% (10 400), compared with London 6.6% and Great Britain 5.7%, which places Redbridge 0.7% above the London average and 1.6% above the Great Britain average.

Between December 2010 and June 2015, the unemployment rate in Redbridge fell from 8.9% to 7.3%, a decrease of 1.6%. This compares with a decrease of 2.3% for London as a whole and a decrease of 1.9% for Great Britain over the same period.

The unemployment rate is higher for females (11.8%; 7 500), than for males (6.2%; 5 000)²⁶.

In work support to help people sustain and progress in employment is needed to help prevent people falling in and out of employment, but also to help address issues of 'the working poor' by helping people gain skills and qualifications whilst in work, to ensure they can progress to higher levels and better paid employment. The rates of people on zero hour's contracts, or earning the minimum wage, and associated issues are well documented nationally; but regional data is harder to come by. In January 2015, the Office for National Statistics estimated that 1.8 million jobs are on the basis of a zero-hours contract with 96 000 of those workers in London. Women, younger or older age groups and people in full or part time education are the most likely to be on zero hour contracts. These are trends that will need to be monitored and the relevant support provided to those in work still in need of help and guidance.

Although unemployment impacts health negatively, jobs that are insecure and low-paid can cause ill health in the form of material deprivation, psychological distress and unhealthy behaviour. Supporting people into work is therefore of critical importance for reducing health and social inequalities, but jobs need to be sustainable and offer a minimum level of quality; including a decent living wage, opportunities for in-work development, a healthy work-life balance and protection from adverse working conditions.

2.2 Self-employment

The percentage of the Redbridge workforce in self-employment is currently 12.8% (25 700), which represents an increase of 2.2% since October 2010. This figure is above that of self-employment across London as a whole (12.5%), as well as that of self-employment across Great Britain (10.1%)²⁷.

²⁵ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

²⁶ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

²⁷ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

2.3 50-64

The employment rate for residents aged 50 – 64 is 74.8%; an increase of 12% since December 2010 (62.8%).

The employment rate is higher for males aged 50 – 64 (80.6%), than females (70.0%).

The unemployment rate for residents aged 50 – 64 is 3.9%. This has fallen from 6.6% in 2010²⁸.

As of May 2015, 680 JSA claimants in Redbridge were aged 50-64²⁹.

Unemployment amongst this age group will need to be monitored and appropriate support made available to ensure those aged over 50 to enter, or re-enter, the workforce and have the right skills to do so successfully.

We are seeing increasing numbers of 50-64 year olds being made redundant, often from higher level roles, but who have not been through the job searching and application process for a number of years and need targeted support to be able to manage this.

2.4 Long-term unemployment

An individual is classed as being long-term unemployed when they have been claiming JSA for 12 months and over. As of July 2015 605 Redbridge residents were long-term unemployed, which is a decrease of 350 residents since July 2010³⁰.

Unemployment can lead to a worsening of health and wellbeing in a number of ways; lower living standards due to financial difficulties, limited social integration, low self-esteem, insecurity of income and poor health behaviours. It is to be noted that negative health outcomes related to being out of work are greatest among those experiencing long-term unemployment.

2.5 Economic inactivity

The economic inactivity rate in the borough is currently 26%, with just under one fifth (17.7%) of those wanting a job. The economic inactivity rate has fallen by 3.8% since March 2010.

The economic inactivity rate is higher for females (34.7%) than for males (17.2%).

The economic inactivity rate for ethnic minorities is 30.7%.³¹

²⁸ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

²⁹ Department for Work and Pensions

³⁰ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

³¹ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

However, it is important to note that economic inactivity figures can be skewed by the visa status of an individual and their subsequent eligibility for work and training. Certain visas do not allow an individual to work, or only allow an individual to work for a small number of hours a week; which in turn impacts on their economic activity status. Most training courses also have visa restrictions. There is therefore a gap in the market for organisations that support all those looking to find work or training and services such as Work Redbridge, which has no eligibility restrictions, are increasingly important for ensuring the economically inactive population and all those needing support are able to access it.

Economic inactivity (2014)³²:

	Redbridge (amount)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Total	48 000	25.4	23.0	22.6
Wants a job	10 500	21.8	26.0	24.5
Does not want a job	37 600	78.2	74.0	75.5

2.6 Benefit claimant rates

Total JSA Claimants (September 2015):

	Redbridge (amount)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
All People	2 928	1.5	1.8	1.6
- Males	1 610	1.7	2.1	2.0
- Females	1 318	1.4	1.6	1.2

As of September 2015, 1.5% (2 928) of the borough's population were claiming Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA). The overall claimant rate has fallen substantially since the publication of the previous plan; in May 2010 the claimant rate was 3.7%, and current figures represent the lowest JSA claimant rates in the borough since 2006. The current claimant rate of 1.5% is 0.3% lower than that of London (1.8%) and 0.1% lower than that of Great Britain (1.6%). 0.3% of Redbridge residents have been claiming JSA for over 12 months, classing them as long-term unemployed³³.

³² "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

³³ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

JSA claimants by age and duration (September 2015)³⁴:

	Redbridge (amount)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Aged 16 to 64				
- Total	2 900	1.5	1.8	1.6
- Up to 6 months	1 940	1.0	1.1	0.9
- Over 6 and up to 12 months	405	0.2	0.3	0.3
- Over 12 months	555	0.3	0.5	0.4
Aged 18 to 24				
- Total	630	2.5	2.4	2.2
- Up to 6 months	535	2.2	1.8	1.5
- Over 6 and up to 12 months	65	0.3	0.4	0.4
- Over 12 months	30	0.1	0.2	0.3
Aged 25 to 49				
- Total	1 605	1.4	1.7	1.7
- Up to 6 months	1 030	0.9	1.0	0.9
- Over 6 months and up to 12 months	250	0.2	0.3	0.3
- Over 12 months	330	0.3	0.4	0.5
Aged 50 to 64				

³⁴ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

- Total	670	1.5	2.1	1.3
- Up to 6 months	375	0.8	0.9	0.6
- Over 6 months and up to 12 months	95	0.2	0.3	0.2
- Over 12 months	200	0.4	0.8	0.5

JSA Claimants by ward level (2015)³⁵:

Ward name	JSA claimant rate (%)	Total JSA claimants (September 2015)³⁶	Age 18-24 (September 2015)³⁷
Aldborough	2.1	147	30
Barkingside	2.0	103	35
Bridge	1.8	111	25
Chadwell	3.0	193	45
Church End	1.1	77	10
Clayhall	1.3	73	20
Clementswood	3.3	200	45
Cranbrook	1.9	120	20
Fairlop	1.9	106	20
Fulwell	2.2	135	35
Goodmayes	3.0	177	35
Hainault	2.9	181	35
Loxford	4.1	274	55
Mayfield	2.3	153	35
Monkhams	0.8	45	5
Newbury	2.3	196	50
Roding	1.9	102	15
Seven Kings	2.9	182	35
Snaresbrook	0.9	71	15
Valentines	3.1	206	40
Wanstead	1.3	72	15

It is to be noted that wards in the north-west (Monkhams, Bridge, Church End) have JSA claimant rates significantly lower than those in the south of the borough (Clementswood, Loxford, Valentines); with the Loxford ward having the highest JSA claimant rate.

³⁵ "Ward Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

³⁶ Department for Work and Pensions

³⁷ Department for Work and Pensions

Working-age client group – key benefit claimants (February 2015)³⁸:

	Redbridge (numbers)	Redbridge (%) (proportion of resident population aged 16 – 64)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Total claimants	18 160	9.7	11.2	12.6
By statistical group				
- Job seekers	3 190	1.7	2.1	2.0
- ESA and incapacity benefits	8 390	4.5	5.5	6.4
- Lone parents	1 590	0.8	1.2	1.1
- Carers	2 500	1.3	1.1	1.5
- Others on income related benefits	440	0.2	0.3	0.3
- Disabled	1 710	0.9	0.8	1.1
- Bereaved	340	0.2	0.1	0.2
- Key out of work benefits	13 610	7.3	9.1	9.8

Despite a substantial decrease in the number of Redbridge residents as a whole claiming JSA, other benefits types are still seeing relatively high numbers of claimants from hard to reach demographics.

DWP figures indicate that 8 400 Redbridge citizens were claiming ESA in May 2015, and those claiming, who are unable to work due to illness or disability, face barriers in accessing training and employment. More co-ordinated, joined-up help and advice will need to be provided to support ESA claimants into work and increase awareness and understanding of employee health issues amongst businesses and employers.

³⁸ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

Active engagement with employers will also ensure they are able to create appropriate employment opportunities that respond to the needs of claimants.

Those claiming income support, notably lone parents, or carer's allowance also face barriers in accessing training and employment. Due to childcare or other care needs, this group often have less opportunity to access information and advice services and their availability to work can be restricted. We need to engage with local businesses and employers to encourage them to employ local people and offer part-time or flexible working options, as well as ensuring we promote growth sectors to ensure healthy employment prospects for Redbridge in the long-term. The carer's allowance claimant rate for Redbridge is above the London average.

The disabled population and those claiming disability benefits also face barriers in accessing training and employment, with more needing to be done to raise the numbers of disabled people in employment, which are lower than the overall employment rate both borough-wide and nation-wide.

It should be noted that there is a proportion of the population who are likely to be eligible for benefits but are not claiming. It is difficult to put a figure against this and there are a multitude of reasons for why a person would not claim benefits to which they are entitled, but it is essential to work with partners who are engaged with such individuals and ensure they are offered the appropriate help and support.

2.7 Department for Work and Pensions - Root Causes of Worklessness

The DWP has identified eight root causes of worklessness:

- Drugs and alcohol – 1 in 5 benefit claimants falls into the drugs and/or alcohol dependence group
- Ex-offenders – prison leavers spend longer on benefits than other new JSA claimants
- Homelessness – London has the largest number of rough sleepers. The main causes of homelessness are loss of private rented accommodation and eviction by friends and family
- Care leavers – approximately 10 000 young people leave care in England each year
- 50 plus – nearly half of those claiming IB/ESA are 50+; 21% of JSA claimants in Redbridge are aged 50-64
- Troubled Families – there are 120 000 troubled families in England
- Approximately £9 billion is spent annually on families with multiple and complex needs
- Mental Health – the employment rate for all people with mental health problems is 37%, compared to 58% for people with health conditions in general and 71% for the working-age population as a whole
- Domestic violence – 1 in 4 women will be the victim of domestic abuse over the course of their life time

It will be important to monitor these issues across Redbridge and the impact they have on individuals and out-of-work numbers.

2.8 Young People

2.8.1 Schools

As previously noted, a large percentage of Redbridge school leavers (KS5) move onto higher education. In 2013, 82% of school leavers moved onto an overall education, employment or training destination. This includes 77% going onto any education destination, 69% going onto a UK higher education institution and 1% going onto an apprenticeship³⁹.

Governing bodies have a statutory duty to ensure that all registered pupils in their schools are provided with independent careers guidance from year 8 (12-13 year olds) to year 13 (17-18 year olds). The Department for Education has produced statutory guidance for schools to use when carrying out duties relating to advice and guidance. It outlines why schools must secure independent careers guidance for young people, what they must do to comply with their legal responsibilities in this area and the role of the governing body and head teacher in shaping the guidance and support offered by the school.

An Ofsted report published in 2013 found that of 60 secondary schools and academies that were inspected, only 12 had made sure every student was receiving enough careers advice. It found that very few of the schools visited knew how to provide a service effectively or had the skills and expertise needed to provide a comprehensive service.⁴⁰

It is of paramount importance to engage with schools to ensure they are offering good, timely career advice to students that prepares them for the realities of the world of work and ensures they are 'work ready', explains all available options and career routes to them and allows them to make informed decisions. Schools will need appropriate skills and experience to provide a comprehensive service, as well as knowledge of employment and skills organisations across the borough.

2.8.2 Employment

The working age employment rate for young people (aged 16 – 24) in Redbridge is 40.3%, compared with 46% for London as a whole and 52.4% for Great Britain. This places Redbridge 5.7% below the London average and 12.1% below the average for Great Britain.

³⁹ "Further Education and Higher Education destinations of KS5 students," www.data.london.gov.uk

⁴⁰ "Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012," Ofsted

Between December 2010 and June 2015 the working age employment rate for young people in Redbridge increased from 35.5% to 40.3%, an increase of 4.8%. This compares with a rise of 5% for London as a whole and 2.2% for Great Britain⁴¹.

The working age unemployment rate for young people in Redbridge is 25.3%, compared with 18.9% for London as a whole and 15.7% for Great Britain. This places Redbridge 6.4% above the London average and 9.6% above the Great Britain average.

Between December 2010 and June 2015 the working age unemployment rate for young people in Redbridge increased from 21.5% to 25.3%, an increase of 3.8%. This compares with a decrease of 3.6% for London as a whole and a decrease of 3.6% for Great Britain⁴².

2.8.3 Apprenticeships and traineeships

Redbridge has a low take-up of apprenticeships and they are often still regarded as less important than academic qualifications and academic routes into employment. More needs to be done to promote apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities and career paths to young people and to encourage a greater range of employers and businesses and industries to offer apprenticeship opportunities.

Closer links between businesses, training providers and schools could help to promote the benefits of vocational and apprenticeship routes to young people. Good careers advice and guidance aimed at getting school age students engaged in 'getting ready for work' as well as work experience to learn about the realities of the job market early on are important to ensure young people are well informed and prepared to make realistic choices about further learning, training and employment when they leave school.

Work Redbridge will be launching an Apprenticeship Campaign with the aim of promoting apprenticeship opportunities to both young people and local employers and working with local employers to create new opportunities in a wide variety of sectors. This will look to get 100 young people into local apprenticeship opportunities over a two year period.

Redbridge apprenticeship figures:

Apprenticeship total starts – 243 (2012/13); 229 (2011/12)

Apprenticeship total achievements – 207 (2012/13); 203 (2011/12)⁴³

The government has committed itself to delivering increased numbers of apprenticeship opportunities to young people. However, a 2015 Ofsted Report on

⁴¹ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁴² "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁴³ "Apprenticeships Starts and Completions," www.data.london.gov.uk

apprenticeships found that a third of apprenticeships surveyed were failing to provide sufficiently high-quality training and the much-reported growth in apprenticeships has been concentrated in service sectors where low-skilled roles are being classified as apprenticeships. Notably for Redbridge, SMEs are not sufficiently involved in developing new frameworks or in apprenticeship provision more generally. There are still insufficient apprenticeships providing the advanced, professional-level skills needed in the sectors with shortages; something which would really benefit the borough's economy. Crucially, the number of 16 to 18 year olds being taken on as apprentices nationally is as low today as it was a decade ago, with most new places going to the over-25s, who often receive too little training while at work or during off-the-job sessions.⁴⁴ It is essential to ensure that the apprenticeship opportunities being provided in Redbridge are of a high quality and, as so far as is possible, are within growing sectors offering progression opportunities. We must work with employers to ensure they are aware of the business benefits of an apprentice as well as the commitment required from them.

We must consider how we work with young people who are about to leave school and those closely associated with them; parents, carers and schools, and look to actively promote apprenticeships and traineeships, as well as other options, as viable career options. It is important to work with schools to look at the careers advice currently offered and ensure this is fit for purpose and try to encourage a focus on getting ready for work and the realities of the job market. This should also be done alongside work to promote youth employment opportunities amongst local businesses.

2.8.4 Benefit claimant rates

As of September 2015, 2.5% (630) of 18 – 24 year olds were claiming Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA). It is noteworthy that the vast majority of these claimants, 2.2% (535), have been claiming for less than six months. Between 2010 and 2015 the proportion of 18 – 24 year olds in the borough claiming JSA fell from 6.4% to 2.5%, a decrease of 3.9%⁴⁵.

3.3% of 16 – 18 year olds in Redbridge are classed as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). This compares with 3.4% across London as a whole and 4.7% across England⁴⁶. A large number of Redbridge NEET's have Special Educational Needs or learning difficulties, which impacts on the type and level of support they require.

2.8.5 Redbridge Connexions

Redbridge Connexions Service is contracted by the London Borough of Redbridge to deliver support, information and advice and guidance to vulnerable young people

⁴⁴ "Apprenticeships: Delivering Skills for Future Prosperity – Ofsted Survey," CSN Policy Briefing

⁴⁵ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁴⁶ "Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training," www.data.london.gov.uk

who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Personal advisers provide IAG and support in the following areas:

- Education, training and employment
- Positive activities e.g. volunteering
- Finances and money management

The reduction in Connexions services' limits its remit and the number and nature of young people it is able to work with. As previously noted, careers advice in schools is now the responsibility of the individual school, and we need to ensure we are engaging with schools so as to guarantee the quality of this advice.

2.9 Jobs and employment in the borough

In 2014, 69.4% of the working age population were in employment (13.5% being self-employed and 55.7% working for someone else) and 6.8% were unemployed. Employment rates were higher for men (78.6%) than for women (60.3%) and the rate for ethnic minorities was 66.3%.

Employee Jobs (2014)⁴⁷:

	Redbridge (employee jobs)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Total employee jobs	74 400	-	-	-
Full-time	49 200	66.2	73.8	68.3
Part-time	25 100	33.8	26.2	31.7

In 2014 there were approximately 74 400 jobs in Redbridge; the majority (66.2%) being full-time.

Employment by Occupation (2015)⁴⁸:

	Redbridge (numbers)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Major group 1	65 300	49.6	53.2	44.3
- Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	14 800	11.2	11.6	10.3
- Professional Occupations	30 200	22.8	23.6	19.7
- Associate Professional	20 300	15.4	17.6	14.0

⁴⁷ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁴⁸ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

and Technical				
Major group 2	26 900	20.5	17.7	21.5
- Administrative and Secretarial	17 800	13.4	10.2	10.6
- Skilled Trade Occupations	9 100	6.9	7.5	10.7
Major group 3	20 400	15.5	14.9	17.1
- Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	8 600	6.5	7.9	9.2
- Sales and customer Service Ocs	11 800	8.9	6.9	7.7
Major group 4	18 900	14.4	14.2	17.2
- Process Plant & Machine Operatives	7 700	5.8	4.3	6.3
- Elementary Occupations	11 200	8.5	9.8	10.8

Employee jobs by Industry (2014)⁴⁹:

	Redbridge (employee jobs)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Primary Services (agriculture and mining)	0	0.0	0.1	0.4
Energy and water	200	0.3	0.5	1.1
Manufacturing	1 800	2.4	2.4	8.5
Construction	4 000	5.4	3.1	4.5
Services	68 400	91.9	94.0	85.6
- Wholesale and Retail	11 800	15.9	12.6	15.9
- Transport storage	2 700	3.7	4.8	4.5
- Accommodation and Food Services	4 200	5.7	7.6	7.1
- Information and Communication	4 000	5.4	7.9	4.1
- Financial and other Business Services	14 700	19.8	33.0	22.2
- Public Admin, Education and Health	27 400	36.8	23.0	27.4
- Other Services	3 500	4.7	5.1	4.4

⁴⁹ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

Despite significant public sector cuts, and in parallel with the last plan, the vast majority of Redbridge jobs (91.9%) are within service industries and 36.8% (27 400) of these service industry jobs are in public administration, education and health. This is 14.2% above the percentage of public administration, education and health sectors jobs in the whole of London (22.6%) and 8.8% above the percentage of such jobs for Great Britain (28%).

2.10 Redbridge business base

UK Business Counts (2015)⁵⁰:

	Redbridge (numbers)	Redbridge (%)	London (numbers)	London (%)
Micro (0 to 9)	10 825	93.5	400 710	90.1
Small (10 to 49)	655	5.7	35 500	8.0
Medium (50 to 249)	80	0.7	6 780	1.5
Large (250+)	20	0.2	1 890	0.4
Total	11 575	-	444 880	-

Redbridge is a borough of micro businesses. In 2015 some 93.5% (10 825) of the borough's 11 575 total businesses were classed as micro businesses and had fewer than 10 employees. This is an increase of nearly 4 000 micro businesses since 2010⁵¹.

However, Redbridge has high rates of both business formation and failure, commonly referred to as business 'churn.' In 2013 there were 2 430 enterprise 'births', 1 525 enterprise 'deaths' and 12 085 active enterprises⁵².

2.11 Business support

The Enterprise Desk launched in October 2015 in Redbridge Central Library and will initially operate until July 2016. The project is collaboration between Vision (Redbridge Culture and Leisure), Redbridge Council and other relevant partners and will provide new and existing micro, small and medium enterprises with support to help their business grow in Redbridge. It will also offer co-working space, advice and mentoring, workshops and training and networking events.

Redbridge Council are working with London Small Business Centre and Enterprise for London to support the borough's large self-employed population and those looking to set up a small business. These are both enterprise agencies that work with start-ups and established businesses based in London to help them build and

⁵⁰ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁵¹ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁵² "Business Demographics and Survival Rates," www.data.london.gov.uk

grow their business. Both agencies will be based in the Enterprise Desk one day a week, with members able to book a one-to-one appointment for tailored business help and advice.

Increased levels of joined up working and coordination are needed to ensure a comprehensive package of business advice and support is available to businesses, both at the start-up stage and on an on-going basis, to address the borough's high business failure rates. Businesses that survive beyond 12 months are more likely to grow and go on to employ more people, further contributing to growth of the local economy.

2.12 Redbridge Chamber of Commerce

Redbridge Chamber of Commerce is designed to represent businesses in the borough and act as a resource to support their growth. The Chamber provides a range of support services to businesses including information signposting, training, networking and advice on changes in government legislation. It is also a useful platform for promoting services such as Work Redbridge for Business and Enterprise Desk; with members of the latter receiving free membership of the Chamber, and allowing such services to engage with business owners in the borough.

2.13 Office space

Iford faces an ongoing issue with an oversupply of "bad" office space. The area has too much low quality office space, which is often left vacant and only capable of accruing low rents. This simultaneously puts off businesses from setting up in the area and potential developers from creating new, purpose-built, more desirable office accommodation. It is noteworthy that the projected demand for new office space in Iford is in negative figures, which contrasts with many other areas of the borough⁵³.

Iford needs an appropriate office space strategy to ensure potential investors to the area are not turned away, which should be done in conjunction with increasing work to support local businesses.

We need to ensure we work with planning departments and developers wherever possible to safeguard business property and ensure supply meets demand and projected future demand. Permitted Development Rights risk further exacerbating this issue.

2.14 Business Partnerships and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

Redbridge Town Centre Business Partnerships and the two Business Improvement Districts demonstrate effective partnership working between local businesses, the Council, Police and voluntary and community sector representatives.

⁵³ Retail, Leisure and Office Demand Study for London Borough of Redbridge

The Business Partnerships cover the major shopping areas of the borough and the Hainault Business Park, each focusing on sustaining and making their local environments attractive, welcoming, safe and accessible. Each year many of the town centre partnerships organise events and festivals in their areas celebrating major dates in the calendar, as well as special shopping and entertainment events.

Redbridge has two BIDs, located in Hainault and Ilford, and in their first terms they both delivered over £3 million of investment into their respective areas improving safety, promotion and creating more welcoming and vibrant environments. Ilford BID currently brings in around £425 000 of investment per annum. Both have secured second terms and Hainault is re-balloting for a third term which if successful will run from April 2016 to March 2021.

Community partnerships and collaborative working are becoming more important as a means of joining up organisations and projects and responding to increasingly limited resources.

2.15 Welfare Reform and Universal Credit

The impact of Welfare Reform and the advent of Universal Credit, which will be rolled out in Redbridge to single person claims from February 2016, requires a supportive response, and a joined up, more holistic response from Housing, Children's and Families services as well as employment and training providers.

Universal Credit is one simple monthly payment; as opposed to weekly payments, for people in and out of work, which uses PAYE in real time information. This is designed to ensure people are better off in work than on benefits by removing the limit to the number of hours someone can work each week and reducing a claimant's Universal Credit payment gradually as their earnings increase, so they will not lose all their benefits at once if they are on a low income. Working families on Universal Credit can claim up to 70% of actual childcare costs up to a monthly cap and from 2016 this will be increased to 85%.

This is a major welfare reform and 'digital by default' benefit, which will also impact on IT and internet needs and appropriate help, support and training will need to be made available.

There will also be a real need to identify an organisation(s) that is able to support people with financial planning and budgeting to ensure a smooth transaction to monthly payments.

2.16 Disability and health issues

There are growing concerns around the number of Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits claimants (4.4% in 2014; 8 390) and the barriers that they may face in accessing training, employment and support services, notably those suffering from a mental health concern.

There are noticeable differences between the overall employment rate and the employment rate for those with a health condition, learning disability or those with a mental health condition.

17.5% of the Redbridge working age population have a disability (EA core or work-limiting disabled), which compares to 16% across the whole of London and 18.8% for England (2014).

The economic activity rate for the disabled population (EA core or work-limiting disabled) is 55.9%, which compares to 56.1% for London as a whole and 55.2% for England (2014).

The working age employment rate for those with a disability (EA core or work-limiting disabled) is 52.5%; which compares to 49.0% for London as a whole and 48.9% for England (2014).

The working age unemployment rate for those with a disability (EA core or work-limiting disabled) is 6%; which compares to 12.5% for London as a whole and 11.4% for England (2014)⁵⁴

Percentage point gap between the employment rate for those with a long-term health condition and the overall employment rate – 5.2% (2013/14)

Percentage point gap between the employment rate for those with a learning disability and the overall employment rate – 52.1% (2013/14)

Percentage point gap between the employment rate for those in contact with secondary mental health services and the overall employment rate – 62.9% (2013/14)⁵⁵

2.17 Wage levels

Earnings by residence (Median earnings for employees living in the area) (2014)⁵⁶:

	Redbridge (£)	London (£)	Great Britain (£)
Gross Weekly Pay			
Full-time workers	621.6	617.7	520.8
- Male FTW	667.1	661.3	561.5
- Female FTW	574.9	574.9	463.0

⁵⁴ "Borough Profiles," www.data.london.gov.uk

⁵⁵ "Public Health Outcomes Framework Indicators," www.data.london.gov.uk

⁵⁶ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

Hourly pay (excluding overtime)			
Full time workers	16.26	16.10	13.15
- Male FTW	16.69	16.63	13.70
- Female FTW	15.27	15.45	12.34

17.7% of those economically inactive in Redbridge want a job, so it is essential to ensure this group have access to appropriate help and support⁵⁷.

The growing number of people who are underemployed or on zero hour contracts are nation-wide issues, however it is hard to get numbers or evidence for this at a borough-wide level. This is something to be monitored as so far as is possible and appropriate support and provision is to be made available.

2.18 Skills and qualification levels of population

Qualifications (2014)⁵⁸:

	Redbridge (level)	Redbridge (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
Individual levels				
NVQ4 and above	84 800	45.0	49.1	36.0
NVQ3 and above	116 100	61.6	64.7	56.7
NVQ2 and above	137 400	72.9	76.4	73.3
NVQ1 and above	154 100	81.8	84.2	85.0
Other qualifications	17 600	9.3	8.0	6.2
No qualifications	16 700	8.9	7.8	8.8

The borough has a relatively highly skilled population. 45% of residents are qualified to NVQ Level 4 and above, equivalent to degree level. This is lower than the London average (49.1%), but higher than the national average (36%). However, it is

⁵⁷ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁵⁸ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

noteworthy that this represents a significant reduction from 2013, when 49.2% of the population were qualified to NVQ Level 4 and above.

Despite the relatively high number of people with NVQ Level 4 qualifications, there are still high numbers of people in the borough with no qualifications. In 2014 8.9% of residents had no qualifications. Those with no qualifications had gone down considerably in 2013 to 6.8%, but 2014 saw the number increasing again⁵⁹.

2.19 ESOL needs

As previously mentioned a large proportion of the Redbridge population were born outside the UK and are therefore likely to have a first language other than English. There continues to be high demand for language and literacy support and ESOL classes. There is a need for greater partnership working to ensure adequate ESOL provision is available and appropriately targeted in order to address language barriers. Currently, demand for ESOL classes is outstripping supply and population growth, increasing diversity and insufficient funding for courses is likely to further exacerbate this issue. It is also of note that many ESOL courses have eligibility restrictions and are fee-paying, which may prevent certain individuals from accessing this support.

65% of primary school students and 57% of secondary school students in the borough are known or believed to have a first language other than English (2015). This compares to 59.4% of primary school students and 50.9% of secondary school students in 2010⁶⁰.

2.20 Digital inclusion

Redbridge faces issues around digital inclusion and ensuring the working age population have good levels of IT and internet skills; as well as appropriate computer access. There is a need for greater partnership working to ensure IT provision and support is appropriately targeted and reaching the right people to overcome any barriers here.

The increasing digitalisation of DWP services and job search and job application processes is likely to increase issues in this area and the need for joined up working to appropriately tackle them. Growing numbers of employers are choosing to advertise their vacancies online; further prompting the need for greater support in this area.

In 2014, 16.1% of the population had never used the internet; which has fallen from 14.4% in 2012⁶¹.

⁵⁹ "Labour Market Profile – Redbridge," www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁶⁰ "Percentage of Pupils by First Language," www.data.london.gov.uk

⁶¹ "Internet and Computer Use," www.data.london.gov.uk

2.21 Financial inclusion

Redbridge Council selected Liberty Credit Union to be its Credit Union partner to deliver affordable, fair financial products to its residents. A credit union can help an individual take control of their money by encouraging them to save what they can and borrow only what they can afford to repay.

The aims of LCU are:

- To encourage its members to save regularly
- To provide loans to members at very low rates of interest
- To provide members with help and support on managing their financial affairs

LCU promotes financial resilience across the community. These services are of particular help to the less wealthy in the community who may find accessing affordable credit difficult.

Financial inclusion and further support in this area will become increasingly relevant when Universal Credit is introduced to the borough and budgeting and financial planning becomes a priority for many residents.

2.22 Skill needs and employment opportunities

There is an increasing need for collaborative working to ensure growing industries and sectors across the borough are identified and training and skill sets are matched to these growth areas and existing employment opportunities. In 2013, 24% of Redbridge employers reported skills gaps in their workforce.⁶² Addressing the skills shortage will become increasingly relevant as the demand for higher skills is likely to grow. We also need to work closely with colleges and training providers to ensure they place a greater focus on employment outcomes.

It is now necessary to rethink the local Redbridge economy with the public sector, historically a major source of employment, as a marginal player and place a much greater focus on the local growth sectors.

Redbridge is experiencing increasing demand in personal care, residential and nursing care, civil engineering and construction, hospitality and entertainment and catering and we must ensure training providers are offering training appropriate to these growth sectors. The success of local sector strategies can give a significant boost to the local economy and the retail and business support services are experiencing growth in Outer London boroughs, including Redbridge.

More affordable rental levels and living costs in certain areas within the London Stanstead Cambridge Corridor, including Redbridge, could be a major attraction

⁶² "LSCC June 2014 Skills Report," www.lsc.co

factor for financially struggling residents in Inner London, which may pose additional challenges for the area in terms of raising the skills levels of the local population⁶³.

2.23 Department for Work and Pensions Programmes

DWP are currently running a number of programmes designed to help and support jobseekers and businesses and employers.

Sector Based Work Academies – these are designed to help meet an employer’s immediate and future recruitment needs as well as to recruit a workforce with the right skills to sustain and grow their business. They can last between two and six weeks and have three main components: pre-employment training that is relevant to the needs of the business and sector, a work experience placement that is of benefit to the individual and a business and a guaranteed job interview.

Skills Conditionality – this is a mandated programme dealing with skill needs for people claiming JSA, or ESA in the work-related group, and not currently on the Work Programme. This involves a range of course programmes from five to twelve weeks in duration and includes training on certain units of a main qualification, employability skills, work experience and Functional Skills training (including Numeracy Level 1 and 2, Literacy Level 1 and 2 and ICT) if applicable. Staff also contact employers that may have vacancies available for employment or apprenticeships.

Rapid Response Service – there is Job Centre Plus support and advice available to employers and employees currently undergoing an organisational restructure. This could include helping people facing redundancy to write CVs and find jobs, providing general information about benefits, helping people to find the right training and learn skills, helping with costs like travel to work expenses.

Universal Jobmatch – this is a free DWP on-line job-posting and matching service allowing individuals to set up an account and be automatically matched to jobs through their CV.

2.24 Partnership projects and programmes

Work Redbridge – this is a Council- run service that offers a range of support to help people into employment and explore employment, training and volunteering opportunities. This includes regular drop in work clubs, one-to-one appointments with an advisor, Jobs and Training & Apprenticeship Fairs and specific, targeted campaigns. They also provide free and informal ESOL classes and IT clubs, which are run by volunteers.

Work Redbridge for Business – this provides support and advice to employers on recruitment, skills and training, as well as a free recruitment service. It is a

⁶³ “LSCC June 2014 Skills Report,” – www.lsc.co

partnership of local organisations led by the Council and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Redbridge into Construction – the construction industry has been identified as a growing sector in the borough and Work Redbridge are increasing their employer engagement offer and offering specific support for those looking for employment in construction.

Health and Social Care Sector – the health and social care sector has also been identified as a growing sector in the borough and the Council are commissioning a piece of research designed to analyse this growth and associated opportunities in more depth. This will ensure we are able to respond accordingly to this opportunity and support people into jobs and careers in the sector

Troubled Families – Work Redbridge provides advice work and a dedicated advisor to the Council's Troubled Families programme.

Disability Employment Network – the DEN is currently run by the Council and promotes employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Work Programme – this is a government welfare-to-work programme designed to get the long-term unemployed into work.

Fresh starts – this is a programme for ex-offenders; offering support in order to address the issue of individuals who become 'lost' between prison and the provider.

Community Learning Partnership Trust – The Community Learning Partnership Trust is a sub group of Enterprise Redbridge. It is co-ordinated by Redbridge Institute and brings together community learning providers and community stakeholders who play a key role in providing adult learning in a range of outreach and community based locations. Engagement in community learning is often the first step on a pathway towards accredited vocational training and employment, and in Redbridge has been shown to be a way of engaging with those furthest from the labour market.

London Borough of Redbridge Fairness Commission – this was set up to investigate poverty and inequality in Redbridge and look at how the Council and its partners are taking action to address such issues. A meeting dealing specifically with Working and Learning in Redbridge was held in May 2015, and a report with recommendations from the Commission was produced in October 2015. The recommendations relating to the local economy support and link directly to the objectives of this Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan. Fairness Commission recommendations include:

- As a major local employer and procurer, the Council should seek to secure the maximum benefit for the local economy through its budget and influence.

- The Council should establish a time limited Debt Action Group which brings together Redbridge Advice Network, the Credit Union, Job Centre Plus and key Council service areas such as the Housing Service and Payments & Benefits to pool data and expertise, and develop a shared understanding of how to improve the financial resilience of families on low incomes.
- This work should inform the production of a Financial Resilience Strategy which sets out a range of activities and interventions for key local partners to take forward which help local people who are struggling to become more financially secure.
- The Council should agree a long-term economic vision for the Borough through the development of an Economic Strategy.
- The Council should develop a 'New Business Starter Pack' for businesses opening or moving to the Borough setting out key local contacts and support services.

Section Three – Strategic Context

3.1 Redbridge Council strategy

The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan will be informed by, and inform other, Council policies and strategies including the Corporate Strategy and Child Poverty Strategy. Redbridge is responsible for developing strategies and partnerships across a range of roles and areas including:-

- **Corporate Strategy** – the next few years present a major challenge for Redbridge. Population projections suggest there will be an increase of over 25 000 people by 2018 and the Council will need to save £70m due to the increased pressures on current services and reductions in government funding. The Corporate Strategy co-ordinates all Council activity; explaining the work the Council plans to do and how it is going to be delivered. Externally the Corporate Strategy will provide a shared vision for the borough, identify corporate priorities for the coming years and describe how the Council and its partners will face challenges, minimise risk and improve outcomes for people in the borough where possible. Internally it provides a clear vision for employees to work to, ensures that all strategies and plans are working towards the same goal, represents political priorities across the work we do and provides employees with an understanding of how they contribute to the vision of the Council.

The strategy identifies four overarching corporate priorities, to which all work will be aligned, and details how the Council will deliver on these priorities. The sections included below highlight any links to employment and skills and provision:

1. Increase fairness and respond to the aspirations of the borough

As the Council is no longer able to deliver the same range of services to all our residents, services must be targeted where possible, as early as possible. Services will be designed with residents and partners to encourage all to achieve their full potential.

Key priority projects include providing Council support to local services and initiatives which address the pressures of the cost of living, such as credit unions and other sources of support for managing money responsibly, and improving external support for the business community of all sizes by working with partners to safeguard employment space, facilitate access to superfast broadband and ensure routes to workforce, training, skills and labour.

2. Empower our community to help shape our borough and the services we deliver

The next few years are going to be hard, as the Council faces tough decisions to prioritise what it does. These decisions cannot be made in isolation from the local community; there is a real need for meaningful engagement around how the Council delivers services.

Key priority projects include Local Forums to bring Council services to residents in the form of a 'marketplace' and allow residents to provide their views.

3. Improve the quality of life and civic pride amongst our communities

The Council needs to focus its work to ensure Redbridge continues to be a place of choice to live and work because of the good quality of life it provides.

One of the key ways in which this will be done is using the Council's role in the regional economy to generate investment and regeneration and sustain growth by investing in local businesses and encouraging residents to shop locally.

4. Transform our Council in tough times to be dynamic and responsive to the challenges of the future

With the Council facing such unprecedented pressures it is acknowledged that there needs to be large scale change. It is necessary to be proactive to tackle the challenges and innovate in finding solutions.

This will be done by identifying new ways for residents to access services across the borough and redesigning or reducing services where necessary.

- **Core Strategies and Action Plans** – there is not a separate action plan connected to the Corporate Strategy, but rather six overarching strategies and action plans, with a number of strategies that sit underneath them, that deliver this work in the Borough:
- **Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14 (due to be updated in 2015)** – the Children's Trust Partnership Board exists to improve outcomes for children and young people in Redbridge. The partnership is made up of key agencies that deliver services to young people and representatives of service users. The fundamental purpose of the Board is to promote joint working on issues relating to children and young people, principally through the Children and Young People's Plan, which identifies key priority areas. The government has since removed the statutory requirement for local authorities to publish a CYPP and with that the guidance of what it must contain.
- **Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-16** – works in partnership at a strategic level to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Redbridge.

- **Housing Strategy 2014-19** – is set within the national, regional and sub-regional landscape and the associated priorities that the Council must recognise and respond to. Welfare Reform has provided the need to take a more proactive approach to enabling residents to access training and employment opportunities. The Council will build on existing community development and resident engagement work to assist residents into work, by developing a broader employment strategy to support residents across all tenures. Housing Advice will also be linked to employment and signposting to relevant services will be adopted.
- **Redbridge Environment Action Plan 2010-2018** – an environmental strategy for the borough. It outlines how the Council and other key organisations, such as the Police, NHS Redbridge and local community groups, intend to make Redbridge a cleaner, greener and more sustainable borough and tackle climate change.
- **Local Development Framework** – used for planning at a local level. This delivers the spatial development strategy for the Borough and builds upon existing local and regional strategies and initiatives, in particular the Mayor's London Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy. The LDF in Redbridge is made up of the following documents:
 - **Local Development Scheme** – a three year plan that sets out the Planning Policy Documents the Council will produce including a timetable for their preparation.
 - **Statement of Community Involvement** – sets out how local communities, and anyone with an interest in the area, can play a part in influencing the creation of key planning documents, which are used every day when assessing planning applications.
 - **Adopted Development Plan Documents**
 - **Submission Joint Waste Development Plan Document**
 - **Crossrail Corridor Area Action Plan**
 - **Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance and Planning Briefs**
 - **Redbridge Characterisation Study**

Currently being considered:

 - **Draft Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030**
 - **Redbridge Monitoring Report**
 - **Adopted Minerals Local Plan-Independent Examination in Public (EiP)**
- **Child Poverty Strategy** - makes a national commitment to end child poverty in the UK by 2020 and requires all local authorities to co-ordinate the development of a strategy for their local areas. The Redbridge Child Poverty Strategy commits

Redbridge to a number of high-level activities and partnership working to improve outcomes for low income families.

- **Safer Redbridge Strategy 2013-16** – outlines priorities and sets a strategic direction to focus on the multi-agency work which will be undertaken to reduce crime, disorder and substance misuse in Redbridge.
- **Economic Strategy** – a Local Economic Assessment was produced for Redbridge in 2011, but the statutory requirement for this document has now been removed. However, an Economic Strategy for the borough will be produced in early 2016, which will provide a detailed, high-level analysis of the borough's economic situation and identify key issues and priorities where further work is needed.

3.2 External strategy

The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan will also be informed by policy and strategy emanating from external organisations of which Redbridge is a member or directly affected by:

- **London Economic Plan** - The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2036. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor. The Plan offers guidance to London borough councils on how to interpret this within Local Development Frameworks and implement at a local level.

The plan aims to secure London's strong economic future by:

- Creating over half a million extra jobs in London by 2020 by backing businesses, attracting worldwide investment and continuing to raise standards in schools
- Solving London's acute housing problem by building over 400,000 new homes
- Delivering £10 billion of new investment in London's transport over the next Parliament including new tube improvements, better roads, more buses and cycle lanes and identifying the next big infrastructure investment after Crossrail
- Making London a centre of the world's creative and commercial life, with new investment in science, finance, technology and culture
- Giving more power to Londoners to control their city's future, with new powers for the Mayor of London to support economic growth, boost skills in the capital and have more control over planning powers

Iford has been identified as an Opportunity Area and Metropolitan Centre in the London Plan. Opportunity Areas are fundamental to planning development, and have the potential to accommodate new homes and jobs as they are London's

major source of brownfield land and have significant capacity for new housing, commercial and other development linked to existing or potential improvements to public transport accessibility. Typically they can accommodate at least 5 000 jobs or 2 500 new homes or a combination of the two, along with other supporting facilities and infrastructure. Metropolitan centres are located predominantly in the suburbs, serve wide catchment areas covering several boroughs and offer a high level and range of comparison shopping. They typically have over 100 000 square metre of retail floorspace, including multiple retailers and department stores. They also have significant employment, service and leisure functions. The increasing need for diversification of activities in town centres nationwide has been recognised as a means of attracting a greater footfall to the area, as retail and leisure opportunities are increasingly located in the same area.

The Plan details what the Mayoral office will do to support and help develop such areas, with LDFs developing more detailed policies and proposals for the areas.

- **London Enterprise Panel and Jobs and Growth Plan** – the local enterprise partnership for London. This is the primary, private sector-led vehicle to advise the Mayor on jobs and growth in the capital, and builds on London’s strong history of joint working between business and the public sector to deliver economic growth and regeneration.

The Panel’s primary purpose is to advise the Mayor on action to:

- Provide strategic investment to support private sector growth and employment
- Promote enterprise and innovation and the acquisition of skills for sustained employment in London
- Protect and enhance London’s competitiveness

The Plan will help to deliver jobs and growth for London through:

- Skills and employment - to ensure Londoners have the skills to compete for and sustain London’s jobs;
- Micro, small and medium sized enterprises - to support and grow London’s businesses;
- Digital creative, science and technology - for the capital to be recognised globally as world leading hub; for science, technology and innovation - creating new jobs and growth
- Infrastructure - to keep London moving and functioning.

- **Mayor’s Economic Development Strategy** – this sets out the Mayor’s vision for the London economy and how it can be realised.

Contains five economic objectives:

- Promote London as the world capital of business, the world's top international visitor destination, and the world's leading international centre of learning and creativity
 - Ensure that London has the most competitive business environment in the world
 - Make London one of the world's leading low carbon capitals by 2025 and a global leader in carbon finance
 - Give all Londoners the opportunity to take part in London's economic success, access sustainable employment and progress in their careers
 - Attract the investment in infrastructure and regeneration which London needs, to maximise the benefits from this investment and in particular from the opportunity created by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and their legacy
- **London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (LSCC)** - a strategic partnership of public and private organisations covering the area north from the Royal Docks, Tech City, the City Fringe, Kings Cross, and the Olympic Park, up through the Lee Valley, the M11, A1 and A10 road, the East Coast and West Anglia Mainline rail corridors to Stevenage, Harlow and Stanstead, and through to Cambridge and Peterborough.

The consortium brings together public and private sector organisations which have the common aim of seeking economic growth, higher employment rates, providing places for people and business while preserving the quality and character of the corridor. It was formed to organise and promote what is a clear economic area, with strong inter-connections, commuting to work and learn patterns, clusters of industries and supply chains. The principal objective of the consortium is to drive economic development and enhance quality of life in the area. There are a number of workstreams underway to support this.

The consortium has identified several Opportunity Areas in the area, which includes the Crossrail Corridor. The arrival of Crossrail provides an important opportunity for investment in one of outer London's fastest growing boroughs. Redbridge's Crossrail Corridor Area Action Plan identifies 45 opportunity sites.

- **North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA)** - a politically led organisation with a core membership of local authorities which make up the north east London area (Barking and Dagenham, Enfield, Greenwich, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.) The key purpose of NELSA is to develop and articulate a clear vision for north east London and to provide strategic leadership to ensure that a shared vision is realised. The alliance is working towards a devolution 'package' for the north east London boroughs.
- **Growth boroughs** - these six boroughs (Barking and Dagenham, Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest) were all involved in delivering the successful 2012 Olympic Games and make up the UK's strongest

potential growth area. Since the Olympics, focus has shifted to bringing about what the Games was really about – a lasting legacy of renewal for what has traditionally been London's and the UK's poorest area and a major boost for UK plc. The Strategic Regeneration Framework brings together the regeneration of the physical area of the host boroughs and the socio-economic regeneration of the communities who live within it.

Notably, Redbridge is external to this working group, whilst many neighbouring boroughs play a part. The potential impact of this is to be carefully monitored as the group's regeneration work gathers momentum.

This plan must be integrated within other existing, relevant policy and strategy and further changes in the policy environment must be monitored.

Section Four – Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

There is already a wide range of support and provision available across Redbridge to help people into employment, ensure they are able to remain in employment and create a highly-skilled local workforce. This support and provision encompasses a number of organisations and initiatives, including the DWP and JCP, Work Redbridge and Work Redbridge for Business, colleges, training providers, private sector organisations, Redbridge Volunteer Centre and other voluntary organisations, Work Programme providers, the Troubled Families Programme and housing providers.

To a certain extent, Redbridge is now largely identified as a ‘dormitory’ borough, with a large number of residents choosing to work outside the borough, the majority of businesses being micro businesses and available office space limited. The Economic Strategy will go some way to determining whether this is the economic direction for the borough or whether further investment and development can be channelled into Redbridge.

4.2 Partnership working

Collaboration and partnership working is therefore fundamental to the success of this plan. It is essential to ensure that all partners continue to work closely so as to monitor the nature of existing provision, co-ordinate provision with each other and facilitate joined up pathways between organisations that ensure individuals are signposted to the most appropriate provision. The Work Redbridge partnership has a key role in helping to lead on this but further work and widening engagement within the partnership would assist in joining up both employment and training support and providing individuals with ‘wrap around’ support. This will also ensure that information is shared, appropriate referrals are made, any ‘gaps’ in provision are filled and duplications are reduced. A greater focus on joint working between housing, employment, economic development, services for children and families, and VCS services could also assist in providing a joined up, targeted response to resident’s needs, with advisers and practitioners able to overcome barriers and offer a holistic approach to supporting residents.

Greater partnership working will enable partners to collect information on employer demand and skill requirements and identify future skill priorities in order to better understand employer needs and the Redbridge labour market. This will also allow us to identify large and growing employers locally and work with them to promote and fill vacancies. In turn, this information can be used to influence the service offer of training providers, which will include improved mechanisms for providing ESOL classes and essential employability training and skills. Partnership work will ensure an efficient mechanism for referring individuals to the appropriate provision to equip them with the skills needed to enter the workplace.

4.3 Employer Engagement

Work Redbridge for Business is essential to ongoing engagement with employers and offering them support and advice on recruitment, skills and training. This will help to bring about closer working relations with local businesses and industries in order to identify and promote and support growth sectors and will look to further increase the number of employers it currently works with.

4.4 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE)

In this time of austerity and scarce resources, it is crucial that we look to work with the community and voluntary sector wherever possible. Organisations such as Ilford BID, Redbridge CVS and the Time Bank at Seven Kings provide good alternative sources of support, information and community working and should be engaged with and seen as part of the overall employment and skills offer wherever possible.

VCSE services continue to play a pivotal role in offering help and support to those who need it to access sustainable employment opportunities; giving them the opportunity to develop relevant skills and experience in a 'safe space' and engaging them with the job market. The sector also plays a key role in the local economy, with numbers of people employed in the voluntary sector nationally increasing and approximately a third of voluntary sector workers living in either London or the South East.

4.5 Securing economic benefit from development and regeneration work

There are a number of significant changes taking place across the borough, with further development and improvement works planned. A significant number of these improvement and regeneration works are planned in Ilford town centre; including substantial levels of housing development and the arrival of Crossrail to the area scheduled over the next few years, both of which are likely to bring a number of additional benefits and further investment to the area. However, this will see the borough population further increasing and is likely to impact on demand for services and local infrastructure, which will need to be monitored closely. Redbridge is already seeing rapidly increasing population and diversity levels; placing further strain on available services and support.

We also need to seek to ensure that future housing developments are also responding to the need for more affordable and social housing.

These developments could also bring with them substantial employment opportunities. The borough's move from S.106 to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) makes it more difficult to secure contractual requirements for training, apprenticeships and local labour, but this is an area in which the Council could work with contractors to secure more employment and apprenticeship opportunities for local people on key projects in different industries.

4.6 Securing economic benefits from procurement

The Council spends approximately £250 000 000 per annum on procuring goods and services, and has potential to secure greater benefits for the borough and local economy, by requiring or requesting that contractors create apprenticeships and employ local people in delivering these contracts.

We can look to better utilise the Social Value Act, which requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

4.7 Targeted support for those facing barriers to employment

Statistical evidence in relation to the Redbridge labour market shows us that overall unemployment rates (JSA claimant counts) are low, but it has also allowed us to identify hard to reach or isolated groups that have employment rates below the borough average and face multiple barriers in accessing training and employment. The partnership must look to work with employers to increase awareness and understanding and share information in relation to job seekers who are aged 50 and above, come from ethnic minority groups and ethnic minority females in particular, are ESA claimants, are NEET and are long-term unemployed. Going forward, the partnership must work to ensure all available support is targeted and adapted as necessary to ensure harder to reach and vulnerable and isolated groups are able to access the help and support needed, that issues are appropriately dealt with and resources are used in the best possible way.

It has been widely documented that unemployment can negatively impact on physical and mental health, and that being in 'good' employment can be protective of health and wellbeing. Designing more integrated health and employment services at a local level could have a positive impact on residents' health and employment outcomes.

4.8 Targeted support – most deprived geographical areas

Much of the statistical evidence also highlights a large number of discrepancies between wards in Redbridge, with the south of the borough often home to a number of more significant issues and a population more in need of targeted help and support. These discrepancies need to be properly acknowledged and understood so targeted support can be provided and results monitored.

4.9 Welfare reform and support

Universal Credit, due to be launched in Redbridge in February 2016, represents the most significant welfare reform in recent years and will need to be carefully managed and monitored.

Sufficient financial planning and budgeting help and support will need to be made available and partners will be required to work together to ensure residents manage this transition smoothly and become more financially secure. IT support will also need to be available to allow residents to manage the increasing digitalisation of welfare services.

4.10 In work support and career progression

Much of the support available and documented within this plan is focused on getting people into work, but support is also needed by those already in work to address any issues that arise once an individual has found employment. Comprehensive in work support prevents people falling in and out of employment and ensures people are able to sustain and progress in employment. Suitable support can also help to address issues of 'the working poor' by helping people in work to gain the skills and qualifications they need to progress to higher levels and better paid employment. The rates of people on zero hour's contracts or earning the minimum wage are well documented nationally and these are both key employment issues currently; but regional data is harder to come by. Nevertheless, these are issues that will need to be tracked so far as is possible and appropriate support made available to employees.

Workforce development is of paramount importance in securing the economic viability of the borough and in encouraging businesses and employers to see the area as a good opportunity and somewhere their business could develop.

4.11 Business support

Redbridge is a borough of small business; with the vast majority of local businesses employing less than 10 people. However, the borough also suffers from a high rate of business churn which needs addressing in order for the area to be seen as a viable location for business and to increase employment opportunities.

To address high business failure rates more needs to be done to engage with small businesses locally and more comprehensive business support will be needed, both at the start-up stage and on an ongoing basis. The Enterprise Desk, launched in Redbridge Central Library in October, will go some way to providing this support to businesses looking to grow in Redbridge and will bring together key organisations involved in start-ups and small businesses.

As this plan identifies a large section of the population do choose to work elsewhere and numbers of large businesses based in Redbridge are low. However, the borough is still home to a significant amount of small business activity and with the right help and support these small businesses can drive the economic prosperity and viability of the area.

We need to have a solid business and employment offering for people in the borough to use their skills, and this will rely on having an economically viable borough, safeguarding business property and having local jobs available.

4.12 Skill needs

There are good schools and good standards of education in Redbridge, with school leavers consistently performing well academically and a large number going onto higher education. However, a large proportion of the population work outside the borough and there are certain skill gaps across the Redbridge workforce which are more prominent amongst certain sectors of the population.

Local skill gaps must be identified and addressed.

ESOL and English language and literacy needs, IT and internet skills and 'soft' transferable skills, debt and money management support remain skill priorities for the borough.

Existing support and provision must be properly co-ordinated and marketed so partners can refer to the most appropriate organisation, ensure support is joined up and also identify where further support will be needed.

It is important to ensure good links with local businesses and employers to capture their future skill need projections. Knowledge of local and sub-regional skill needs, based on employment opportunities and growing sectors, will enable us to work with training providers to ensure they are offering relevant programmes and responding to the opportunities available. CBI surveys will also give a good indication of the attributes employers are looking for and allow us to ensure we are equipping individuals with the skills needed to meet this demand.

We must work with providers offering work placement or work trial programmes to ensure we have a good understanding of the organisation's offering these, what is involved and their success rates so we can best utilise this resource.

Employment and skills devolution, which is currently being explored by London Councils, could give Redbridge greater control and influence over skills.

4.13 Other policy and strategy

Other Council and external policy and strategy will need to be considered when implementing the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Plan, particularly where they refer to employment and skills.