



**Welcome to**

# **HARROW**

A guide for Hong Kongers

SUPPORTED BY  
**MAYOR OF LONDON**



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
**HARROW**

## Welcome to Harrow

This welcome pack is for people from Hong Kong who have been granted leave on the [British National \(Overseas\) visa \(BN\(O\) visa\)](#). This pack is intended to help you settle into life here, taking you step by step through how you can access the public services that are available to you. From what you will need to do find work here, to registering you and your family with a Doctor, or finding a school for your children.

In most places this pack covers specific services in England only. The information in this pack reflects the current position at the time. The pack will be kept under review and any changes will be reflected in an updated version of the pack.

For any questions about this document, please contact: [hkbnos@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:hkbnos@harrow.gov.uk)

## The Voice of Hong Kongers in Harrow

The London Borough of Harrow welcomes the opinions of all residents in the borough. We would like to hear from you if you think we can make improvements to this pack to make it more useful to new arrivals. We would also like you to register for the update/activity service.

To give us feedback on the Welcome Pack please email [hkbnos@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:hkbnos@harrow.gov.uk)

## Welcome message

On behalf of our Borough, I am delighted to be among the first to wish you the very warmest of welcomes to Harrow.

While there are few prospects more daunting than uprooting your family to start a new life on the other side of the world, I have no doubt that you are going to enjoy this country in peace and with friendship and support.

Harrow has a long and proud history of embracing those who arrive in our Borough and helping them to feel very much at home here. We aim to provide you with support and access to education, training, and employment opportunities to help you feel confident and prepared to settle into your new life in the UK. I know that we will learn so much from you and your experiences, and I am excited by your arrival in this wonderful Borough that we now share.

While Harrow and Hong Kong may be very different in many respects, the foundations that underpin life here will already be more than familiar to you.

I hope that this publication helps you to navigate life here in Harrow, from putting down roots, building a life, educating your children and so much more.

It's fantastic to have you here, and I hope this information makes your move as successful as it can be for yourself and for your family. Our country is stronger because of its diversity - thank you for helping to contribute to this.



**Cllr Jean Lammiman**, Cabinet Member for Community and Culture

## About Harrow

The UK is a country committed to freedom, liberty, tolerance, and mutual respect, where people from all backgrounds live and work together. Around 66 million people live in the UK. Some areas of the UK are more diverse than others, especially larger cities.

Harrow is one of 32 boroughs in London and is located in the North-West of the city. Harrow has an estimated population of 251,200 residents. It prides itself in being one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse boroughs in the country with people of many different backgrounds living side by side. 69.1% of residents classify themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic group. It is the richness of this diversity and our vibrant community that makes Harrow a great place to live and work.

The vision for London Borough of Harrow is for its residents to be proud to live in Harrow through:

- **A Council that puts residents first**
- **A Borough that is clean and safe**
- **A Place where those in need are supported**



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## The British-Hong Kong Community

The UK is home to large British-Hong Kong communities residing in different parts of the country. The contributions of these communities to Britain are immense. From the early migrants to today, the community has flourished in an impressive range of fields. In education, health, media, business and trade the British-Hong Kong community is at the heart of the success of our nation.

Whether we look to the world of film or look to science, we will always find great examples of the British-Hong Kong contributions to our country.

The British-Hong Kong community are making a big difference every day, in our communities as our teachers, small business owners, NHS staff, carers and Armed Forces personnel.

## Choosing where to live in the UK

As BN(O) status holders, you are entitled to live where you want in the UK.

There will be a few things you may want to consider when choosing where to live: This includes the availability of jobs in certain industries, schooling, housing, local or cultural connections including family and friends.

There are various regions across the four nations in the UK with brilliant industries and strengths – you can read more about two in the [North of England](#) and the [Midlands](#).

A network of 'Hong Kong Welcome Hubs' is being set up across the UK. These will be hosted by existing 'Strategic Migration Partnerships' (SMPs). There are 12 SMPs across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. SMPs have a coordinating and supporting role in delivering key national priorities on migration across the UK and will play an integral role in the delivery of the Hong Kong UK Welcome Programme. More information will be provided on the Welcome Hubs in due course on GOV.UK.

## **Life in the UK**

The UK is a country committed to British values, democracy, freedom of speech, liberty, tolerance, and mutual respect, where people from all backgrounds live and work together. Around 66 million people live in the UK. Some areas of the UK are more diverse than others, especially larger cities.

The United Kingdom is made up of four countries. England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The UK uses British spelling, which differs slightly to American English. There are many different regional accents across the UK. Welsh is also widely used and taught in Wales and there are other recognised regional languages such as Scots Gaelic, Scots, Irish/Gaelic and Cornish.

## **Weekends & Public Holidays**

The UK weekend falls on Saturday and Sunday when most offices close. Banks and post offices are usually open Monday-Friday and on Saturday morning, but close on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. However, most shops and restaurants remain open on Saturday and for much of Sunday.

There are a number of public holidays throughout the year. These are sometimes known as “bank holidays”. Some apply across the entire UK and some are specific to England and Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. Most businesses close, but shops, restaurants and leisure facilities usually remain open.

## **Services provided by the London Borough of Harrow**

Local government is responsible for a range of vital services for people and businesses in defined areas. Among them are well known functions such as social care, schools, housing and planning and waste collection, but also lesser known ones such as licensing, business support, registrar services and pest control.

In England, more than one million people work in local government across a range of different types of authorities, providing more than 800 different services to local communities.

Local councils, which is the most common type of local authority, are made up of councillors who are elected by the public in local elections.

Councillors work with local people and partners, such as local businesses and other organisations, to agree and deliver on local priorities. The decisions are implemented by permanent council staff, council officers, who deliver services on a daily basis.

### **London Borough of Harrow Website**

The Council website is an excellent resource where you can pay your council tax, apply for parking permits or find out about libraries, parks or what goes on in your local area. The website should always be your first action when you want to interact with the [London Borough of Harrow](#).

### **Waste and Recycling**

London Borough of Harrow is committed to reduce the use of landfill by encouraging and facilitating recycling wherever it is possible. There are 5 types of waste categories managed by the Council. We have listed these below with a short explanation of each. More information is available at [Bins, Waste and Recycling](#)

#### **Domestic Household waste**

It is important to recycle all household waste in Harrow and the bins for these are collected (usually every two weeks) by the Council. Residents can download an App



to keep track of collection days by getting notifications. The cost of collection is included in Council Tax and there are no other costs to residents for household waste. Therefore each household will have at least 3 types of bins:

Household waste covers three bin types including:

- General waste bin (green or grey)
- Recycling waste bin (blue)
- Food waste caddy (black)

Some residents who live in flats have communal bins including:

- a large general waste bin (grey)
- a large recycling waste bin (blue)
- a food waste bin (red)

## **Garden Waste**

Garden waste (brown bin) is our paid for subscription service offering collections of your garden waste bin every two weeks.

You can find out how you can subscribe to Garden waste on our [Garden waste page](#).

## **Recycling Centre**

The Harrow Recycling Centre is located in Wealdstone and is where you can bring general waste and bulky items to be sorted and recycled.

Booking your visit to the Recycling Centre online allows us to maintain a steady flow of users to the centre and also reduces the chances of traffic building up in the surrounding areas. You can make a booking via [Book Harrow Recycling Centre](#)

You can submit two bookings per car registration per day and bookings can be made as far as 14 days in advance.

## **Bulky Waste**

Our bulky waste collection service includes collection of unwanted large or heavy items. These unwanted items are usually waste items that do not fit in your household waste bins. You can book one free collection of up to four items each calendar year. If you want to add more items to your booking or book extra collections, you will be charged additional fees. For details on how to book visit [Bulky Waste](#).

You can also donate your bulky waste items to a charity shop or community group.

## **Fly Tipping**

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of any waste on the street or road. Fly-tips can range from a few black bags of household waste placed next to a tree or litter bin, to larger items such as fridges, mattresses, builders' rubble and tyres.

You can report fly tipping through the council website [Report Fly tipping](#)

## **Parking and Parking Permits**

Parking charges in Harrow vary depending on the where you park your vehicle, either on a street or in Council operated [Car Parks](#).

### **Parking charges**

You can park for free for up to one hour in a paid for bay on a street in Harrow. To get the one hour free you will need to have a live parking session with PayByPhone.

If you do not have a mobile phone you can pay in any local shop that has the PayPoint sign. Details of the nearest one can be found on signage in car parks and near our on-street bays.

PayPoints offer ticketless parking, with no need to return to the car. You will need to quote your vehicle registration and the PayByPhone location number shown on nearby signage.

Some car parks still have Pay & Display machines. If you use a Pay & Display machine you need to put the ticket in a visible location within your vehicle.

Your one-hour free parking is only available on your first visit to any on street paid for parking bay per day.

The one-hour free parking is not available in resident permit holder bays unless stated on the signs for the particular bays.

## **Permits for Controlled Parking Zones**

A Resident Parking permit is available to residents of eligible properties living in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).

All Resident Parking permits are valid for one year and start on the first day of the specified month.

The permit does not guarantee a parking space will be available and cannot be used in any area where temporary parking restrictions are in place including suspended bays.

When a permit has been issued for a vehicle, that vehicle will be allowed to park within a residents parking bay in the specific CPZ the permit was issued for.

Apply for your permit [Resident Parking Permits](#)

## **Contacting London Borough of Harrow**

There are several ways that you can contact London Borough of Harrow:

- Online by visiting [www.harrow.gov.uk](http://www.harrow.gov.uk)
- In person by visiting Greenhill Library. For information about what our self-service team can help you with please see [Greenhill Library in-person assistance](#)
- It is easiest to access Council services through our website or by visiting us at Greenhill library but we can be contacted by telephone as follows:
  - 020 8901 2610 - Council Tax & Housing Benefit
  - 020 8901 2665 – Births, Deaths & Marriages

- 020 8901 2680 – Adult Social Care
- 020 8901 2690 – Childrens' Services
- 020 8863 5611 – Switchboard

## Health and wellbeing

### Doctors' services

It is recommended that you register for the National Health Service (NHS), including dental care, as soon as you have settled in an area. Familiarise yourself with emergency numbers and urgent access so that if you become unwell you are able to seek help (see below for details.)

The NHS provides health services to people living in the UK. Most of these services are free. In the UK, family doctors are called General Practitioners "GPs". A GP is the first doctor you will see when accessing healthcare. To receive medical treatment, you and your children must register with a GP as soon as possible.

A GP can offer medical advice, provide a diagnosis and prescribe medicines.

They might be your first point of contact for many physical and mental health concerns. The GP practice is also responsible for coordinating and managing your long-term healthcare and they can refer you if you need more specialised services.

These health services are **free for everyone**:

- **GP** advice and treatment
- Services that are provided as part of the NHS 111 telephone advice line
- **Accident and Emergency** services, provided at an A&E department, **walk-in centre, minor injuries unit** or **urgent care centre**
- Diagnosis and treatment of some **infectious and sexually transmitted diseases**
- NHS services provided for **COVID-19** investigation, **diagnosis, treatment** and **vaccination**
- **Family planning** services (contraception)
- Treatment for a **physical or mental condition caused by torture**, female genital mutilation, domestic violence or sexual violence

Specialist health services are also free for:

- Refugees Asylum seekers
- Victims or suspected victims of Modern Slavery dependants
- People whose application for asylum has been rejected may still have access to free NHS services.

### **Everyone has a right to register with a GP:**

You do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

You can register for a GP Practice by phone or online by [Finding your nearest GP Practice](#)

If you are having difficulty registering with a GP you can:

- [Download a GP Access Card](#) and show this to the GP receptionist.
- Phone the NHS England (0300 311 22 33) or Doctors of the World (0808 1647 686) for help.

For interactions with the NHS you can [request a translator](#).

### **Prescriptions & Medication**

Most GP practices are not co-located with a pharmacy. If your GP wants you to take a particular medication, he or she will provide you with a prescription that you will need to take to your local pharmacy or chemist. The GP surgery will be able to advise you about where you should go to collect your medicine. You can also find information about the location of local pharmacies online via [NHS Pharmacy Finder](#)

There is normally a small charge for prescriptions, which you will be asked to pay when you collect your medication at the pharmacy. However, prescriptions are provided free of charge if you meet certain requirements. There is some variation in what prescriptions are provided depending on where in the UK you are living, but in general, your prescription will be free if you are:

- Age 60 or over



- Age 16 or under
- Age 16 to 18 and in full-time education
- Pregnant (or have had a baby in the previous 12 months)
- An inpatient receiving care in an NHS hospital

This list is not exhaustive; free prescriptions may also be available if you have certain specified medical conditions or a continuing physical disability. If you think this may apply to you, you should ask your GP who will be able to provide you with advice.

As well as providing you with any prescribed medication, a pharmacist can also give you free advice on treating minor health problems, such as colds and coughs. Some very common medications, such as painkillers and cough medicines, are available for sale over the counter. You will not need a prescription for these types of medication, but you will have to pay for them yourself. You can also buy medicines for minor illnesses or first-aid material in a pharmacy or supermarket.

### **Emergency / Urgent Care / A&E**

If you are seriously ill and cannot travel you can call for an ambulance by calling 999. If you need treatment or advice that is not an emergency, but cannot wait until you next see your GP, you can obtain advice by calling 111. This is a service operated by the NHS. NHS 111 will be able to refer you to a doctor or to a local Urgent Treatment Centre or provide you other guidance, depending on your circumstances and needs. You can ask for an interpreter in your language by saying "interpreter please."

In many parts of the country, the NHS also provides Walk-In or Urgent Treatment Centres where you can receive treatment for minor injuries such as cuts, sprains and small fractures, or receive urgent medical advice, without having made an appointment. These centres are usually open during daytime hours.

Find your nearest [Urgent Treatment Centre](#)

Find out when you should go to [Accident & Emergency \(A&E\)](#)

## Sexual Health

A sexual health clinic provides advice and treatment about family planning, contraception, reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections. Their services are completely confidential.

Caryl Thomas Clinic:

Call 020 3893 8575 for both the contraceptive and sexual health service

Email: [LNWH-tr.HarrowSRH@nhs.net](mailto:LNWH-tr.HarrowSRH@nhs.net)

## Maternity

All maternity care, including all antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal services provided to a pregnant person, a person who has recently given birth, or a baby, is covered by the NHS for an Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) payer.

Due to the severe health risks associated with conditions such as eclampsia and pre-eclampsia, and in order to protect the lives of both mother and unborn baby, all maternity services will be treated as being immediately necessary. No one must ever be denied, or have delayed, maternity services due to charging issues.

Maternity services cover care from the beginning of pregnancy through to sign off by a midwife: this is usually around 10 days after the birth but can be up to 6 weeks postnatally. Midwives ensure that personalised care is provided throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. Much of this care will be provided directly by midwives, who will also coordinate the provision of obstetric or other medical involvement if necessary.

Anyone settling in the UK under the BN(O) visa should contact a GP or midwife as soon as you find out you're pregnant. It's important to see a midwife or GP as early as possible to get the pregnancy (antenatal) care and information you need to have a healthy pregnancy. Information on all you need to know about pregnancy, labour, birth and NHS maternity services can be found via [NHS Pregnancy](#)

## Protection against infectious diseases including Covid

NHS vaccinations are free to everyone and give the best protection to children and adults against infectious diseases such as meningitis, mumps, measles, and rubella. Speak to your GP if you think you or your child have missed any vaccinations and an appointment can be arranged.

If you are registered with a GP surgery in England, you can [book, cancel or change of Covid-19 vaccination appointment online](#). If you are unable to book online you can call 119 free of charge to make an appointment.

Travel vaccines can be obtained from travel clinics or chemists.

## Dentistry/dental care and services

If you are settling in the UK under the BN(O) visa you will be entitled to NHS dentistry, which is a universal service and does not require residency. NHS dentistry is not free except for patients in an exempt category, so anyone settling in the UK under the BN(O) visa will have to pay just as a UK resident would.

Free exemptions apply in the following cases:

- the treatment is free (for example to remove stitches, stop bleeding in the mouth, repair dentures)
- the person is under the age of 18, or under 19 in full-time education
- the person is pregnant or has had a baby in the last 12 months. A MAT B1 certificate or maternity exemption certificate (MatEx) must be shown to the dental practice.

If your tooth is painful you should call NHS 111 for Urgent Dental Care Services. You can search for local dentists and ask to register for an appointment. Costs for dental appointments depend on what treatment you are having.

You can find a dentist via [NHS Find a Dentist](#)

## **Eye care and hearing tests**

You can make an appointment with any high street optician to have an eyesight or hearing test or get help with your glasses, contact lenses or hearing aids. There may be costs unless you are eligible for a free [NHS eyesight test or optical vouchers](#).

## **Mental Health**

Mental health problems range from the worries we all experience as part of everyday life to serious long-term conditions. There are Mental Health Services available throughout the country that can help you if you are struggling. If you, or someone in your family, need help this is best arranged through making an appointment with your/their GP.

## **Meridian Wellbeing**

A health and wellbeing charity based in Hendon, in Barnet, which supports the Chinese community. They provide well-being activities as well as language support, mental health support, and career support. [Meridian Wellbeing](#)

## **Thrive LDN**

Has produced a series of resources to support Hongkongers in accessing mental health support and managing their wellbeing.

A conversation starter tool has been created to help you engage with friends, family, neighbours or those you support in your community or workplace about good mental health, wellbeing and financial worries. For support and signposting visit [Talking about Mental Health](#)

[Help yourself and others – Thrive LDN](#)

## **Barnardo's Boloh Helpline**

Barnardo's is a registered charity that runs a hotline and service dedicated to supporting Hong Kong BN(O)s, with Cantonese speakers and therapists available to answer queries. Hongkongers can request free counselling services through this hotline [Barnardo's Helplines | Helplines \(barnardos.org.uk\)](#)

## **Harrow Talking Therapies**

Free and confidential service suitable for people with feelings of low mood, anxiety, particular fears or problems coping with daily life and relationships. [Mind in Harrow](#)

If you are struggling but do not want to talk to a GP, there are a wide-range of support organisations that offer helplines where you can talk in confidence to a trained advisor.

These include:

- Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 to talk to a trained volunteer
- Mind Harrow: community based, mental health charities. [Mind in Harrow](#)

Further information on these and other support organisations and helpline services is available at [Mental Health and Wellbeing – London Borough of Harrow](#) and [NHS – Mental Health](#). To find support in your local area, you can also use the [Hub of Hope](#). You can access some services directly, without going to your GP for a referral first.

## **Alcohol Or Drug Use**

If you are worried about your own or someone else's alcohol or drug use? Free and confidential advice, care and support for people in Harrow aged 18+ is provided by VIA. [Harrow - via \(viaorg.uk\)](#) Via also provide stop smoking services.

For people aged 10-24 who need support around their own or another person's drug or alcohol (substance) use, there is a free, confidential service provided by [Compass](#)

## Crime and the Police

The Police Service for London is known as the Metropolitan Police and is often referred to as “The Met”. The Met is the largest UK police force with more than 48000 police officers and staff. There are numerous teams based in Harrow and a police station in South Harrow, Wembley, and Bushey. The addresses for these local police stations are below:

- South Harrow: 74 Northolt Rd, South Harrow, Harrow HA2 0DN
- Wembley Police Station: 603 Harrow Rd, Wembley HA0 2HH
- Bushey Police Station: Shady Ln, Watford WD17 1DD

The London Transport Network benefit from a dedicated police force known as the British Transport Police and they look after crimes and cases committed on the trains, stations, and London Underground. The nearest Station address for the British Transport Police is Wembley Police Station: 603 Harrow Rd, Wembley HA0 2HH

You can report a crime in a number of ways:

- If you are in immediate danger and need help urgently, call 999
- For non-urgent report and enquiries call 101
- Report a crime online following the link below
- Visit a police station

[About the Met: what we do and how we do it | Metropolitan Police](#)

Crime and crime detection is important to all people. As well as protecting Londoners and detecting crimes in all its forms, The Metropolitan Police are specifically working to reduce:

- Violent Crime, abuse and exploitation
- Serious organised crime
- Online crime, abuse and exploitation
- Terrorism



- Hate crime

If you would like to report a crime anonymously, you can do so to Crimestoppers by calling them on 0800 555 111 or by using their [website](#).

### **Being a victim of crime**

The police will record any crime as a hate crime where the victim or any other person perceives it was motivated by hostility or prejudice towards their identity. Targeting someone because of their race or any other protected characteristic is completely unacceptable and should not be tolerated and we encourage anyone who suffers hate crime, or receives a serious threat against them to report it to the police, either by calling 101, 999 in an emergency or online at [Report It](#).

You can find out more information about support if you are a [victim of crime](#). There is also information and support if you are a victim of [Covid-19 related Hate Crime](#)

## Statutory Education and Support for Children

### Childcare

You could get free hours childcare when your child is aged 2 to 4. You might be able to apply for:

- **Universal 15-hour entitlement:** available for all 3 and 4-year-olds living in England, regardless of immigration status.
- **15-hour entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds:** available to 2-year-olds considered to be disadvantaged. Eligible households include parents who are in receipt of government support such as Universal Credit or Tax Credits and earn below a certain income threshold. In addition, children who are looked after or have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) are eligible. Households with no recourse to public funds can access the 2-year-old entitlement as long as they meet the income requirements (earn less than £15,400 a year) and have a child in need or because they are the main carer of a British citizen.

The Government has provided a [step by step guide on Childcare](#) and for more local information you can also contact the [London Borough of Harrow Families Information Service](#)

### Children's Centre and Yearly Years Support

A range of services is available through the Early Support hubs. All services are delivered either by Early Support staff or in partnership with other commissioned services. On this link you can find a detailed list of the programmes being offered via [Early Support Childcare and Early Years](#).

The Harrow Early Years Team supports an integrated approach to early learning and care. This means it gives all our professionals a set of common principles and commitments to deliver and support a quality early education and childcare experiences to all children.

Seeing a child through from birth and early years is a huge responsibility, so you can expect the highest standards from staff that have a long history of working in the sector.

You can also access [Harrow Local Offer](#) for more information about services for Children and young people 0-25 with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities.

### **Statutory Education aged 5 to 18**

It is compulsory for all children to be in education or training from 4 or 5 years of age (depending on the child's birthday) to the age of 18. Education is free for all children and young people.

Generally speaking, the UK compulsory education system is divided into 3 types of age-appropriate education:

- Primary schools for children aged 4 or 5 to age 11.
- Secondary school for children aged 11 to 16
- Further Education (also sometimes called 6<sup>th</sup> form) for young people aged 16 to 18.

In most cases, children arriving from overseas have the right to attend schools in England. It is the responsibility of parents to check whether their child has a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a school before submitting an application. View more information about [applications for families arriving from abroad on the Government website](#)

The local authority where you live or that is supporting you and your family will assist you with accessing this.

This can either be:

- within a free state-funded school
- within an independent school (otherwise known as a private school or public school), which will normally charge fees for your child's education; or
- you can choose to home-educate your child.

Information on how to apply for a primary school place and details of school admission arrangements for each school can be viewed in our [guide to primary schools 2023-24](#).

If you need an immediate primary school place for the current academic year, please complete the [in-year application form](#).

Information on how to apply for a secondary school place and details of admission arrangements can be viewed in our [guide to secondary schools 2023-24](#).

If you need an immediate secondary school place for the current academic year, please complete the [in-year application form](#).

It is compulsory for young people to be in education or training until the age of 18, but that doesn't mean you or your child have to stay in school if it isn't right for you/your child.

There are plenty of different routes to go down when a young person turn 16, whether that's going to college to do [A Levels](#) or a vocational course like a [T Level](#), or starting to earn while learning as an [apprentice](#).

These are the options for young people aged 16 to 18, from school and college, to apprenticeships and traineeships.

Legally, you can leave school on the last Friday in June if you'll be 16 by the end of the summer holidays. However, by September, you will need to be in official education or training.

These are your options:

- stay in full-time education, e.g. at a college, doing A Levels, T Levels or other academic qualifications,
- start an apprenticeship,
- work or volunteer for 20 hours or more a week while in part-time education or training.

## Adult Education, Training and Employment Support

### Employment Support

Xcite is a training and employment programme for people in Harrow. We provide a full range of support to help Harrow residents back into work.

We help you find work with emphasis on identifying and overcoming any barriers that are currently in your way.

Talk to us about:

- apprenticeships
- improving your skills
- job search
- writing CVs and applications
- performing at interviews
- getting into construction
- business mentoring
- vocational skills

Contact Xcite

Email: [xcite@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:xcite@harrow.gov.uk)

Book an appointment: [Meet an Xcite Advisor](#)

### Adult Education and Training for people over 19 years of age

There are many options for learning, training including reskilling and upskilling in Harrow. Below you will find a list of the adult education providers located in Harrow but do bear in mind that as a Londoner you are also able to attend other Further Education Colleges and Adult Education providers in other London boroughs.

1. HCUC (Harrow College and Uxbridge College) [www.harrow.ac.uk](http://www.harrow.ac.uk) with campuses in Harrow on the Hill and Harrow Weald

2. Stanmore College [www.stanmore.ac.uk](http://www.stanmore.ac.uk) with a campus in Stanmore
3. Learn Harrow, London Borough of Harrow Service [www.learnharrow.ac.uk](http://www.learnharrow.ac.uk) with a campus in Kenton
4. Westminster University [www.westminster.ac.uk](http://www.westminster.ac.uk) Northwick Park campus

For information, advice and guidance you can contact any of the providers and discuss suitable courses. As a BN(O) visa holder, the eligibility criteria are that you must be a London resident (please contact your local providers if you live outside London), you must be over the age of 19 and have the right to live and work in the UK



## Housing

### Renting your home

As a BN(O) visa holder you have the right to rent in the UK. You will be able to use your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or your digital status to evidence your immigration status in the UK, including your right to rent. To prove your status digitally to a landlord or letting agent you can use the [online service](#).

Letting agents are free to carry out any referencing checks within the law as they deem appropriate before accepting a new tenant. This may include income requirements or the need for a guarantor, dependent upon the decision of the individual landlord. If providing references proves challenging for you, we would encourage you to discuss your personal circumstances with the letting agent or landlord about alternative forms of reference that might be acceptable.

Rented housing can be found through local lettings agents and on property listings websites. The types of privately rented housing available is different across the country.

When you find a house or flat you will probably need to pay a deposit. You will then need to sign a 'tenancy agreement'. This is a legal contract between you and the landlord. Your tenancy agreement will set out how much rent needs to be paid and how often, a list of repairs and maintenance that are your responsibility and which are the landlord's responsibility, and any other rules or restrictions e.g. smoking restrictions.

The tenancy will usually be for a fixed period of 6 or 12 months. The landlord must allow you to stay in the property for a minimum of 6 months. If you want a longer initial fixed period, you can ask whether the landlord is willing to agree to this. You will be obliged to pay the rent for the duration of the tenancy.

You can find out about your responsibilities and rights as a tenant in the [Government's 'How to Rent Guide'](#)

## Buying Your Home

There are no restrictions on Hong Kongers, resident in the UK, buying a property to live in. You must carefully research the area, type and size of property, affordability and proximity to the things you care about (schools, areas where many Hong Kongers live for example).

The process of transferring legal ownership from the seller to the buyer is known as conveyancing in the UK. You will need to find a solicitor or professional conveyancer to do the conveyancing for you. The seller and buyer each pay their own legal fees for the conveyancing. Upon completion of a purchase you must pay “Stamp Duty Land Tax” according to the value of the property. You can search the Internet for “Stamp Duty Calculators” or see the rates in the Government’s [Stamp Duty Land Tax: Residential property rates](#)

## Homeless Prevention and Support

In England, your local authority must help if you become legally homeless or at risk of homelessness soon.

There are different types of support your local authority could offer you. For example, they may offer you advice, emergency housing, support to find longer-term housing or help so you can stay in your home. The type of help that is offered depends on your eligibility for assistance, if you’re in “priority need”, and what caused you to become homeless.

If you become at risk of homelessness, you should contact your local authority as soon as possible. Your BN(O) visa has a “no recourse to public funds” condition attached, which will limit the support the local authority can provide. However, if you become unable to meet your essential living needs or do not have adequate accommodation, you can apply to have this condition lifted.

If you have successfully applied to have the “no recourse to public funds” condition attached to your leave, you may be able to apply for council housing in England.

**Find out more about “no recourse to public funds” on Page 32 of this Welcome Pack.**

You can apply for council housing through your local council. You'll usually have to join a waiting list and you're not guaranteed to get a property.

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness, Harrow Council can help you. You can contact the Homeless Assessment Team by filling in the online homeless enquiry form at [Harrow Homeless enquiry form](#)

### **Council Tax**

You are liable for paying Council Tax for your property. This is a set amount for the financial year which runs from April to March, and you can pay this monthly.

Council Tax is a tax which goes to your local authority for local services such as care, social services, police and local facilities.

People who have no recourse to public funds are not entitled to receive local council tax support. However, you might be entitled to a discount or exemption, for example, if you are living alone. Your local authority will be able to let you know. Advice on the types of discount and exemption is available via the Government's [A Plain English Guide to Council Tax](#)

## Working in London

### Pay and Conditions

It is important to understand your status and to know your rights to help you stay safe.

In the UK, all economically active people can have the following 3 statuses (or a mixture of these) for tax and employment purposes; employee, worker or self employed and you should be aware that your rights will vary in those 3 categories:

<b>Employment Rights Based on Employment Status</b>			
Employment Rights	Employment Status		
	Employee		
Protection from discrimination	✓	✓	✓
Safe working environment	✓	✓	✓
Minimum wage	✓	✓	
Contract and itemised payslips	✓	✓	
Protection from unlawful deductions of wages	✓	✓	
Rest breaks	✓	✓	
Paid annual leave	✓	✓	
Statutory sick pay	✓		
Maternity/ paternity pay	✓	✓	
Maternity/ paternity leave	✓		
Redundancy pay	✓		

Tax Responsibilities	Employment Status		
	Employee		
Income Tax and NI contributions paid for you by your employer	✓	✓	
Have to pay your own Income Tax and NI contributions			✓

The Government have set out information on the rules governing people who are [Self Employed and Contractors](#)

### National Minimum and Living Wage

The hourly national minimum wage depends on your age and whether you are an apprentice.

National minimum wage by age	
Age	Hourly wage
Under 18	£5.28
Apprentice	£5.28
18 to 20	£7.49
21 to 22	£10.18
23 and over	£10.42

The London Living Wage is an hourly rate of pay, currently set at **£11.95**. It is calculated independently to reflect the high cost of living in the capital, giving a worker in London and their family enough to afford the essentials and to save.

However, organisations must **choose to pay** their employees the London Living Wage - higher than what they're required to pay by law.

### Opening a Bank Account

There are a range of banks, and you can choose one that suits you best. There are also online-only providers which you can use. To open a bank account in the UK, you usually need to show proof of ID such as passport, biometric residency permit, driver's licence, or recognised identity card. You also need proof of permanent address. The Government is working with major banks to find a solution to enable you to open accounts without the usual permanent address requirement. Several UK banks already have a system for opening accounts where you do not have a permanent UK address. You may need to get the help of a local charity or your local authority to help you do this.

You should always do your own research and find a bank that meets your specific needs. The following list is a range of suggestions, but there are many other options available.

Bank	Phone Number	Website
HSBC	0345 740 4404	<a href="http://www.hsbc.co.uk">www.hsbc.co.uk</a>
Barclays	0345 734 5345	<a href="http://www.barclays.co.uk">www.barclays.co.uk</a>
Lloyds Banking Groups	0345 300 0000	<a href="http://www.lloydsbank.com">www.lloydsbank.com</a>
Santander	0800 912 3123	<a href="http://www.santander.co.uk">www.santander.co.uk</a>
Natwest	03457 888 444	<a href="http://www.natwest.com">www.natwest.com</a>
Royal Bank of Scotland	0345 724 2424	<a href="http://www.rbs.co.uk">www.rbs.co.uk</a>

## Equality and Discrimination at Work

Employers must treat everyone fairly at work, and in the way they recruit people for jobs. It is illegal to discriminate against anyone applying for a job or at work on the basis of sex and gender reassignment, race, religion, being married or in a civil partnership, disability, age, sexual orientation or if they are pregnant. If you think you have been unfairly discriminated against you can get information and support from a website called the Equality Advisory Service: [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com) If you are being forced to work or your employer is not respecting your rights, you can also get advice from the Modern Slavery Helpline by calling 0800 0121 700.

## Tax and National Insurance

### National Insurance

You pay National Insurance contributions to qualify for [certain benefits and the State Pension](#).

You need a [National Insurance number](#) before you can start paying National Insurance contributions.

You pay mandatory National Insurance if you're 16 or over and are either:

- an employee earning above £242 a week
- self-employed and making a profit of more than £12,570 a year

You do not pay National Insurance, but still qualify for certain benefits and the State Pension, if you're either:

- an employee earning between £123 and £242 a week
- self-employed and your profits are between £6,725 and £12,570 a year

Your contributions are treated as having been paid to protect your National Insurance record.

You may be able to [pay voluntary contributions](#) to avoid gaps in your National Insurance contributions.

You can find out more about how to [Apply for a National Insurance Number](#)

## Tax

All UK residents have a 'personal allowance'. This is the amount we can earn without paying any income tax. This is currently £12,570 per annum.

If you earn more than your personal allowance, you pay tax at the applicable income tax rate on all earnings above the personal allowance, but the allowance itself remains untaxed.

There are some variations if you earn more than £100,000 or if you are blind.

Anything earned above the personal allowance will be subject to income tax. For the 2023/24 tax year, if you live in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, there are three income tax bands – the 20% basic rate, the 40% higher rate and the 45% additional rate (also remember your personal allowance starts to shrink once earnings hit £100,000).

<b>EARNINGS (IF YOU LIVE IN ENGLAND, WALES, OR NORTHERN IRELAND)</b>	<b>RATE</b>
<b>Under your personal allowance (PA)</b> <i>For most, £12,570</i>	No income tax payable
<b>Between PA and PA + £37,700 (basic rate)</b> <i>For most, over £12,570 to £50,270</i>	20%
<b>Between PA + £37,701 and £125,140 (higher rate)</b> <i>For most, over £50,271 to £125,140</i>	40% (1)
<b>Over £125,140 (additional rate)</b>	45%

There may also be tax due under different tax schemes.

Council Tax; this tax is based on the local authority and size of the property you live in and your personal circumstances. For example, if you live alone or are disabled or an older person. For the Council Tax rates in Harrow see the [Council Tax Band and Charges](#)

Capital Gains, Dividends, Inheritance and other tax may be charged against sale of properties or if you are a company director or inherit money. You should get professional advice on how and how much you are liable to pay.



## Legal Rights and Responsibilities

### Rights and freedoms

Every person in the UK has the same basic human rights and freedoms, which are protected in law. These underpin how people live in the UK. For example:

- Every person has a right to liberty.
- Every person has freedom of thought and the right to practice their religion.

However it is illegal if, as part of this, you take part in activities which break UK laws. It is against the law to discriminate against or persecute someone because of their beliefs.

Based on the rights and freedoms protected in law, everyone living in or visiting the UK is expected to adhere to a set of shared values and responsibilities:

- Respect and obey the law
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions
- Treat others with fairness

### Marriage

There is a distinction between civil and religious marriages. Religious marriages are not recognised unless they are registered by the state. Some religious marriages are not recognised in the UK and couples entering into them must have a civil marriage as well.

The legal minimum age to marry in the UK is 16. In England you need parental consent to marry between the ages of 16 and 18.

In England it is legal and accepted for men and women to marry, for women and women to marry and for men and men to marry. All of these marriages are protected by law.

A marriage should be entered into with the full and free consent of both people involved.

If you would like to get married and you have set the date, you and your partner must give notice of marriage in your local Register Office, whether or not you wish to marry in that district. If you and your partner live in different places, you'll both have to go to your own local Register Office to give notice. [Arrange your wedding or civil partnership ceremony](#)

### **Register a birth or death**

These Government web pages give advice on the steps to take to register a birth or death in the family:

- [www.gov.uk/register-birth](http://www.gov.uk/register-birth)
- [www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies](http://www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies)

## The democratic rights on Hong Kongers in London/ England

As a Hong Konger in London/ England, you can register to vote if you are a qualifying Commonwealth citizen.

To register to vote you can head to [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) and fill in the online form. It only takes a few minutes. All you need is your National Insurance (NI) number. Your NI number is used in the registration process as a unique identifier, the easiest and quickest way to confirm who you are. But don't worry if you don't know or don't have an NI number – just leave your contact details during the online registration process, and your local council electoral services will get in touch.

To be able to register to vote in London/ England, you must be:

- Aged 16 or over
- Be a British, Irish or EU citizen
- Be a qualifying Commonwealth citizen\*

\* If you are a BN(O) status holder, you will be a qualifying commonwealth citizen with leave in the UK, and therefore will have full voting rights. For further information check out [Civic and democratic participation | London City Hall](#)

When registering to vote, you will be asked for your date of birth (to assess the age requirement), National Insurance number and current and previous addresses (to check Government records and assess lawful residence).

Where a match cannot be found, potentially because you have recently moved to London/England or to a new local authority, council (borough) electoral services will send a request for further evidence. Supporting evidence could be:

- One 'primary identification document', (for example passport) or
- One 'trusted government document' (for example current photo driving licence, birth certificate) and two 'financial/social history document' (for example bank statement, council tax statement, utility bill, benefit statement),  
or
- Four 'financial/social history documents'

This evidence should be provided as copy, not the originals, and should be submitted as preferred by your local council and identified in their request for evidence (for example by email, by post or in person).

There is a deadline to register to vote and that usually is at least 12 working days before an election. **The next Mayor of London and London Assembly elections take place on Thursday 2 May 2024.**

Individuals who have successfully registered can then vote in person. But the way we vote has changed due to the Elections Act (2022). Eligible voters now need to show an accepted photographic identification (photo ID) to vote in person at the polling station. [You can find the list of accepted photo Voter ID.](#)

If you do not have any of these accepted photo Voter IDs, you can [find out more information](#) and apply for a [free Voter Authority Certificate](#).

To be able to vote in elections in London, you must be aged 18 or over on the day of the election. Polling stations will be open from 7.00 am until 10.00 pm.

You can apply to [vote by post](#) because you're away on holiday on election day or because your work schedule means you can't get to your polling station. Or you can choose to vote by post simply because it would be more convenient for you.

If you know that you won't be able to get to the polling station on polling day, you can ask someone you trust to cast your vote for you. This is called [voting by proxy](#).

You **will not** need to show a photo ID in order to **vote by post or by proxy**. Your proxy will need to show their photo ID at the polling station when voting on your behalf.

For up to date, reliable information on voter registration, photo Voter ID, accessible resources and more, including in community languages, [check out the GLA Democracy Hub](#).

[Find further information and questions about election and voting here.](#)

## **Child Maintenance**

If a parent is unable to arrange to receive child maintenance directly with the child's other parent, they may be able to apply for payments through the Government's Child Maintenance Service.

Child maintenance is not classed as a public fund for immigration purposes so a parent can apply for this regardless of their or their child's immigration status, including when the parent is subject to the 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) condition.

However, the parent who is caring for the child, the non-resident parent and the child must all be habitually resident in the UK. A person can be habitually resident regardless of what type of immigration status they have

See the Government information about [making a child maintenance arrangement](#).

## **Help, Support and Care**

There is help, support and care available for Hong Kongers living in the UK with "no recourse to public funds" restrictions. There is lots of detailed information on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or [NRPF Network](#)

## **Protecting Vulnerable Adults**

Social services (or Adult Social Care) at a local council can provide various types of assistance to adults living in the community who have care and support needs and can also take action when an adult with care needs is at risk of abuse or neglect.

Types of assistance that social services can provide include:

- Care packages
- Direct payments so that a person can arrange their own care
- Aids and Adaptations to the home to enable independence
- Safeguarding inquiry and plan when an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect

Social care services are not classed as a public fund for immigration purposes and can be accessed by person regardless of their immigration status, including a person who is subject to the 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) condition.

Where it is necessary to meet an adults care and support needs under the Care Act (2014), a council may also provide accommodation and financial support to an adult with no recourse to public funds. Restrictions may apply depending on the adult's immigration status. See our information about [social services' support for adults with no recourse to public funds](#).

Home Office guidance on [asylum seekers with care needs](#) sets out the process that needs to be followed when an asylum seeker who is being accommodated by the Home Office requires care and support. If a particular type of property is required to meet the asylum seeker's care needs, this should be sourced by the asylum accommodation provider. The Council will usually only be responsible for providing accommodation to an asylum seeker when residential care is required, such as a care home placement, or whilst a needs assessment is being carried out when the person is not already accommodated by the Home Office.

## **Protecting Vulnerable Children**

A local council can provide various types of assistance to children and families to promote the health, development and wellbeing of children, and can take action to protect children who are at risk of neglect or harm.

Types of interventions that a council can provide include:

- Early help (or early intervention) to children, their parents or families to help improve outcomes for a child
- Voluntary accommodation of a child (under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, in England)
- Child protection plans setting out how a child will be kept safe from harm and how their welfare will be promoted
- Care proceedings where a child is at serious risk of harm

Services provided by Early Help or Children's Social Care are not classed as a public fund for immigration purposes and can be accessed by a child or parent regardless of their immigration status, including a person who is subject to the 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) condition.

Children's Social Care can also provide accommodation and financial support to a family where this is necessary to meet the child's needs, for example, when a child's parents have no recourse to public funds and do not have enough income to meet the family's living and housing costs. See our information about [social services' support for families](#).

### **Free School Meals**

The UK government funds free school meals for children in England who are attending a state school, free school or academy.

The child's school year and local arrangements will determine whether free school meals are provided universally or are only available to eligible children.

Free school meals are not classed as a public fund for immigration purposes and can be accessed by a child regardless of their immigration status. However, when free school meals are not provided universally, a child will need to meet eligibility criteria based on their parent's immigration status or benefit entitlement. This means that not all children in low-income households will qualify.

### **Destitution**

Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders are subject to the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) condition. Although the Home Office has [introduced a Change of Conditions process](#) to enable a Hong Kong BN(O) visa holder to apply for the NRPF condition to be lifted when they are destitute or at risk of destitution, there is still a risk that the person or family may become homeless or have insufficient income to provide for their daily living needs whilst the Change of Conditions application is being made. As a consequence, people with no recourse to public funds who are on this visa route may approach their local council for homelessness prevention advice, accommodation and financial support, or other assistance to address their situation

of destitution. **Find out more about “no recourse to public funds” on Page 32 of this Welcome Pack.**

If you are homeless or have insufficient funds for living, please contact the Citizens Advice Bureau (information listed below).

## **Foodbanks**

There is help available if you cannot afford to buy food.

In order to provide the most appropriate help for your circumstances we work with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis.

Agencies include: Citizens Advice, housing support officers, children’s centres, health visitors, social services and some local charities.

Food, baby and hygiene banks are listed on the website below as well as information on how you can obtain a voucher.

[How to get help | Harrow Foodbank](#)

## **Citizens Advice Bureau**

This network of independent charities offers [confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person](#), for free for any problem

You can use these links and telephone numbers to access their services:

[citizensadviceharrow.org.uk](http://citizensadviceharrow.org.uk) England: 0800 144 8848

The Citizens Advice Bureau also operates a free specialist telephone service for people with [consumer problems](#) and a specialist [Universal Credit \(UC\) advice line](#) that explains all about the UC benefit and offers a benefits check and help in the early stages of making an application.



## **Harrow Law Centre**

Harrow Law Centre provides a free and independent legal advice service to people who live or work in the London Borough of Harrow. [Harrow Law Centre](#)

To make the best use of our resources they provide specialist legal advice where another community organisation would be unable to assist. Examples of this include where the client needs a solicitor's letter, or representation in court or tribunal, or for advice on bringing a judicial review.

The Law Centre can also offer second tier advice to local community groups to assist their clients and to the voluntary sector if they feel they have been treated unfairly in funding applications administered by a public body.

## Culture and Leisure

There are lots of opportunities in Harrow for culture leisure and sports and excellent transport links into central London to enjoy the national museums and places of interest. Your local area will likely have a range of local facilities and amenities.

Large cities and towns will have a local post-office, pharmacy, supermarkets and food shops that cater for a range of tastes. Your local neighbourhood will have a leisure centre or gym where you can play sport or exercise, local parks and libraries where you can borrow books and access the internet if you do not have it at home. Libraries and parks are free to everyone and leisure centres are often cheap to use.

Many social media channels will have community groups run by local people or local councils which will provide information about local amenities.

## Libraries

It is free to join a library in Harrow and borrow books.

You can join:

- if you live, work or study in the borough
- at any age (if you under 16 years old, your parent or guardian must sign your application form)

You can join a Harrow library by visiting in person, or you can join a [Library online](#)

After you have completed the registration form you will be able to collect your library membership card from any of the libraries in Harrow.

To collect your card you will be required to provide:

- proof of your signature and address e.g. driving licence or bank card
- proof of a disability if applicable e.g. a Blue Badge

Find more information about [Library services in Harrow and opening times](#)

With your library membership you can access a wide range of [online resources including national and world digital newspapers and magazines, and thousands of eBooks and eAudio books.](#)

For those interested in finding out [more about life in the UK you can access a range of resources free](#) with your library membership.

## **Sports**

Harrow Council in partnership with London Sport have developed the 'Get Active' directory - an online one-stop shop of all sport and physical activity in the borough.

Get Active is an activity finder website, powered by open data, which makes it simple to see what is happening near you, which also includes clubs, venues and sporting activities across the whole of London.

Access Get Active Here: [Home - Get Active](#)

## **Culture and Harrow Arts Centre**

Harrow Arts Centre (HAC) in Hatch End is the only professional performing arts venue in the London Borough of Harrow and is committed to providing a journey of a lifetime enjoying the arts for people from every background.

HAC delivers year-round entertainment programming. The Elliott Hall seats up to 500 people and is used for concerts, plays, comedy, circus, dance and musicals. HAC also boasts a number of meeting rooms, rehearsal spaces, art rooms and two dedicated dance studios. These spaces are available for hire Mon-Sun, 8am-10pm.

You can see the full event programme, book rooms and book tickets online on the [Harrow Arts Centre website](#) or by calling the Box Office on 020 3773 7161.

Throughout the year there are festivals of art, music and culture, such as the Notting Hill Carnival in London and the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland.

The UK is home to some of the world's top museums and art galleries – many of which are free to visit – music venues and theatres. Outside the cities there is beautiful countryside and many castles, historic houses, parks and gardens.

[Visit Britain](#) - The official tourism website of Great Britain, which gives an overview of opportunities to enjoy British arts, culture, outdoor activities and more.

[National Trust](#) - A national charity which looks after nature, beauty and history for the nation to enjoy. They care for miles of coastline, woodlands, countryside and the hundreds of historic buildings, gardens and precious collections across the UK.

[BBC British History](#) - An overview of British history through the ages.

## **Headstone Manor Museum**

Discover the intriguing tales and fascinating facts of Harrow's local History with free museum entry and a host of changing temporary exhibitions, family activities, adult courses and community events at Headstone Manor & Museum!

Whether you've recently moved to Harrow, are just visiting, or have been a resident all your life, you can discover all the historical tales about the local area, Harrow's people and place both past and present through objects and archives on your doorstep. After your visit, why not visit the café and shop or explore the newly restored park and wetlands.

For more information visit [Headstone Manor Museum](#)

## **Harrow Parks and Green Spaces**

Approximately 20% of our borough's land is identified as either a park or open space. Our green spaces are formed of more than 80 areas, including parks, allotments, nature reserves and cemeteries.

You can find details of some of our commons, gardens and open spaces below. You will also find information about how you can visit our green spaces beneath each map via [Harrow's green spaces](#)

## **Volunteering**

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and learn about your area. This could be a charity, voluntary organisation or associated fund-raising body or statutory body. Find out more about volunteering.

## **Voluntary Action Harrow**

Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative works with the local community to ensure they have the skills, resources and support to achieve their objectives.

Voluntary Action Harrow collate a list of local volunteering opportunities. To access this you can:

[Join the Volunteer Network](#)

[See the latest opportunities](#)

## British National (Overseas) status

### What is 'No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)?

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) is an immigration condition which means you will not be able to claim most benefits, tax credits or housing support. This applies to people from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) who:

- Do NOT have Leave to Remain
- Have NRPF stamped in their Biometric Residence Permit or on their visa
- Have applied for leave to enter or remain when someone has agreed to pay for accommodation and support
- Is waiting for the outcome of an immigration appeal.

### What support is available?

- Children in need: if a family is homeless or does not have enough money to cover basic needs (food and clothing)
- Homeless adults who are disabled or elderly

You may be able to get support that is not listed as a 'public fund', such as:

- Education
- Childcare
- Healthcare
- Free school meals

### Can I get the NRPF condition removed?

More information and support You MAY be able to make an application for recourse to public funds if you have Limited Leave to Remain in the UK and you have an NRPF stamp on your visa. You can complete the 'Change of Conditions' application for free and you do not need a lawyer.

To apply for a change to your conditions, you will need to complete and submit a form to show that you are eligible for this change [Application form and further](#)

[information for change of conditions of leave to allow access to public funds if your circumstances change](#)

You will be asked to provide sufficient evidence to show you meet the terms of the policy, including evidence of your financial circumstances and/or living arrangements.

### **More information and support**

#### **Project 17:**

[www.project17.org.uk](http://www.project17.org.uk)

#### **The Unity Project:**

Making a Change of Conditions application: Get help — The Unity Project ([unity-project.org.uk](http://unity-project.org.uk))

## **Hong Kong BNO Specific Activities and info / Chinese community**

**Hong Kong Aid** is a non-profit organisation that offers assistance to asylum-seeking Hongkongers

**Hong Kongers in Britain** is a civil-society organisation established in July 2020, and is a registered Company Limited by Guarantee in the UK currently applying for charitable status.

It is the first Hongkongers expat/diaspora and community-building group set up in the UK since the UK announced the introduction of a Welcome Programme for Hongkongers.

HKB's primary objectives are to provide assistance, advice and support for the Hongkongers community coming to/arrived in the UK; enabling them to settle, integrate, and contribute towards the UK society.

**Faith Action** is a national network of faith-based and community organisations seeking to serve their communities through social action and by offering services such as health and social care, childcare, housing and welfare to work.

**Café Connect** Café Connect is a new programme from FaithAction to welcome British Nationals, and their dependants, arriving in the UK from Hong Kong. The programme will help participants to settle in their local area.



# Welcome to **HARROW**

This document has been developed by London Borough Harrow to support people from Hong Kong who have been granted leave on the British National (Overseas) visa. The information in this pack reflects the current position at the time.

For any questions about this document, please contact [hkbno@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:hkbno@harrow.gov.uk)