

ABC OF BRENT INFO PACK



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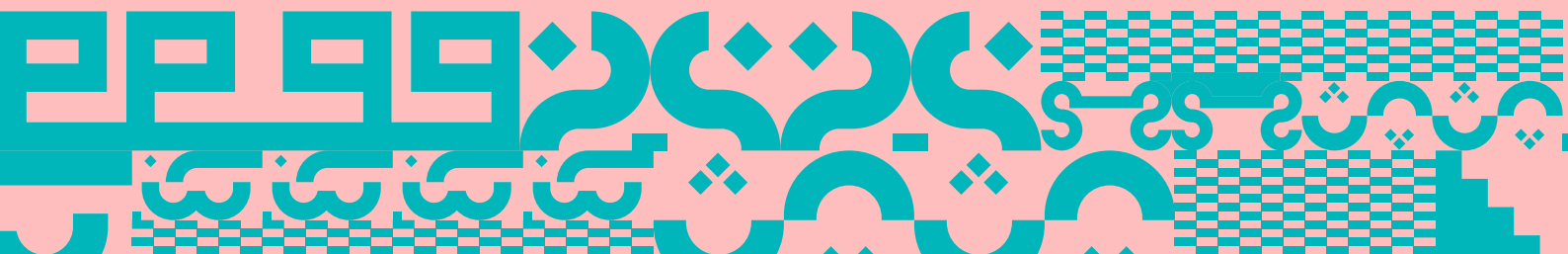
**CITY
OF
LONDON**



**Wembley
Park**



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Hello, I'm Charlie Tims. Two years ago I helped to write Brent's application to be London Borough of Culture 2020. In the time since I have got to know the borough quite well. I'm an interested amateur rather than an expert, but like you, I hope, I'm curious about this part of London and what has happened here. I Googled, checked Wikipedia and went to the archives and the museum so you don't have to (but you should!). This document broadly corresponds to the 'segments' in part B of the Brent ABC. Reading it will provide you with additional context and useful tools for tackling the exercises in the Brent ABC. But first of all I'd like to point you to five useful sources of information.

1. MAPS OF BRENT

Here is the shape of Brent on a London graphic; the borough boundaries and London Underground lines crossing the borough on Google Maps; an Ordinance Survey map of the borough; and a more complicated map with multiple pins picking out landmarks, culture and significant historical sites in the borough.

2. IMAGES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE FROM BRENT

There are two good places to look for images of famous people from Brent: the National Portrait Gallery's Collections, and the Getty Archive. So, here are portraits of England international footballer Rachel Yankey (b.1979, Malorees Junior School); footballer Raheem Sterling (b.1994, Copland Community School); author Zadie Smith (b.1975, Malorees Junior School); footballer Cyrille Regis (1958–2018, Cardinal Hinsley School); Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts (b.1941, Kingsbury High); The Who drummer Keith Moon (1946–1978, Alperton Community College); singer George Michael (1963–2016, Kingsbury High); cyclist Sir Bradley Wiggins (b.1980, St Augustine's Junior and High School); aviator Amy Johnson (1903–1941, learnt to fly in Kingsbury); leader of the Grunwick Strikes Jayaben Desai (1933–2010, lived in Wembley); actor Riz Ahmed (b.1982, grew up in Wembley); actor Sophie Okonedo (b.1968, grew up in Wembley); supermodel Dame Lesley Lawson (Twiggy) (b. 1949 Neasden); and singer Bob Marley (1945–1981, briefly lived in Neasden in 1972).

PLEASE NOTE:

If you would like to reproduce any of the images, songs, etc that are linked in this document, you will need to check the usage rights.

3. PHOTOS OF IMPORTANT PLACES

I find the photo sharing site Flickr useful for finding photos of buildings, landmarks and sites in the borough. You need to login with a Yahoo account, but it's worth it. Here's the Gaumont State Cinema, once the largest in Europe; some views of Wembley Stadium taken from Barn Hill; the River Brent; the Ace Cafe; Kilburn High Road; and various other images tagged London Borough of Brent. The image collection in the Brent Archives is another way to find historical images.

4. MUSIC FROM BRENT

It is hard to justify what 'counts' as Brent music. Is it music recorded in the borough, music played live in the borough or music made by people who grew up in the borough? Is it all three of these things? We have a Spotify playlist called madeinbrent which gathers music with a connection to the borough. This very useful factsheet explains the relationship between 19 of these tracks and Brent. Each explanation includes a link to a Youtube video.

5. THIS IS BRENT POEM

This poem written by Chris Beschi (then an art teacher at Kingsbury High) led our Brent 2020 campaign. It continues to help the Brent 2020 team to see and think about the borough.

1. THIS IS OUR PLACE

Brent hasn't been here very long. Most of the rest of London doesn't know about us or where we are. This topic is all about the place Brent, places in Brent and what Brent looks like. Let's explore where Brent is and where it sits in relation to London, the country, the world and the universe. What does the world look like when viewed from here? Where are our borders? What are our landmarks? Do we have a landscape? What do we seem like to those looking in? Let's look from drones, hilltops and windows.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Brent has more tube stations than any other borough apart from Westminster.
- Brent has four small hills and sits at the very distant edge of the Chiltern Hills.
- Brent has an aqueduct in Stonebridge, where the Grand Union Canal crosses the North Circular.

LEAD TOPIC: THE ROAD

The outline of Brent looks like a slice of cake. One side looks crumbly, the other side is straight. The straight side tracks the route of the A5. Depending on where you are, it is known locally as Edgware Road, Kilburn High Road, Shoot Up Hill or Cricklewood Broadway. The road is the border between Brent and Camden (and Barnet on the north section). Accents, people and smells mingle on it. The Jarrow Crusaders marched down it. And on 11 July 2020, Brent 2020 will stage a street party on the section of it between Brondesbury and Kilburn High Road station.

The A5 runs the route of an ancient path paved by the Romans called Watling Street, which crosses the UK from south east to north west. If you keep walking south, you get to Dover. Walk North and you'll arrive in Holyhead. In the Middle Ages, the road marked the border between the Viking and Anglo-Saxon regions. Some linguists believe that English is spoken differently on either side of the road.

The writer Zadie Smith grew up near Kilburn High Road. Her novel NW has a short chapter devoted to it, and in 2012 she wrote an article for Time Out which captures its essence. Her famous debut novel White Teeth also begins further up the road, just off Cricklewood Broadway.



1. THIS IS OUR PLACE

The road has also inspired novels and essays by [Hanif Kureishi](#), sociologist Stuart Hall, and [Doreen Massey](#). It was the subject of a [film](#) by BAFTA award winning director Marc Isaacs. And in 1968, Sir John Betjeman made [Contrasts](#), a short film about buildings and sites of interest along Edgware Road. It features a poem about Kilburn High Road cut to footage shot from the top of a bus.

Kilburn High Road was once known as the music mile. The Smiths' live album Rank was recorded at The Kilburn National (a music venue which operated in the old Grange Cinema between 1976 and 1999). There's a good [recording of Nirvana](#) and [footage of Blur](#) playing there in the early 1990s. The Who's 'live at Kilburn' album was recorded at the Gaumont State Cinema in 1978. The road has its own 'rock school' in [The Institute for Contemporary Musical Performance](#), which has launched the careers of artists from Radiohead's Ed O'Brien to Clean Bandit's Luker Patterson. Rita Ora used to sing in The Queens Arms, where her Dad was the landlord.

Finally, the road was once the capital of London's Irish community. See '2. These Are Our Stories' below for more on this.

OTHER TOPICS

Landscape and Landmarks

The River Brent cuts a valley from the Welsh Harp reservoir in the northeast to Alperton in the southwest. On either side small hills rise up in Fryent Park (Barn Hill), Roundwood Park (Knowles Hill) and Gladstone Park (Dollis Hill). This [topographic map](#) shows the borough's hills.

Less than 100 years ago, large parts of the borough [were still fields](#), and this left space for things that wouldn't quite fit into the centre of London. The [Gaumont State](#) on Kilburn High Road was once the biggest cinema built in Europe ([video](#)). [Neasden Temple](#) is the biggest Hindu temple in Europe today, [Wembley](#) is the biggest football stadium in the country, and the [Ace Cafe](#) is probably the biggest biker cafe. If the money hadn't run out in 1899, Wembley would have been the location of (what would then have been) [the world's tallest tower](#). Today it is home to

USEFUL MEDIA:

- An aerial photo of [Kilburn High Road](#) (1928).
- Views of [Wembley Stadium](#) on Flickr.
- Images of the [River Brent](#) on Flickr.
- The Metropolitan Line map [now](#) and [then](#) (1939).
- Map of the [London Borough of Brent](#).
- John Betjeman [Contrasts](#) documentary with poems (1968).



1. THIS IS OUR PLACE

Britain's largest IKEA. And finally, Europe's biggest biscuit factory is in Harlesden.

Borders

Brent has its own borders, but there are also borders and boundaries *within* Brent: this map shows electoral wards, this map shows the border between NW and HA postcodes and Brent's seven neighbouring boroughs; this map speculates on where the supporters of QPR, Chelsea and Arsenal live in the borough. Some borders are physical: the West Coast Main Line Railway, the North Circular road and the Metropolitan Railway are all difficult to cross. Other borders are more imaginary. Migrants from all over the world have shaped the character of parts of the borough, particularly Gujarati Indians in West Wembley, the Irish in Cricklewood and people from the Caribbean in Harlesden.

Public parks & spaces

The Council lists 93 local parks in Brent. The London Parks and Gardens Trust maintains information on about 40 of them on its own website. The major parks are Gladstone, Roundwood, King Edwards, Barham, Woodcock and Fryent Country Park. Brent Council operates seven libraries, and the community operates a further three. There are 22 different allotment sites in Brent (list here), where people from different walks of life garden and grow alongside one another.

As a part of Brent 2020, the artist Jude Wacks is photographing and telling the stories of family businesses in the borough.



2. THESE ARE OUR STORIES

Brent is crossed by roads, canals and railways. Millions pass through every day, and some stay. The borough is not at the centre of London, and yet it is supremely connected. This has made it a good place for rebellious people and ideas. Brent 2020 looks for the stories of those who have struggled, loved, resisted and made life here. What stories from Brent's past need to be told? Whose shoulders do we stand on? Who has changed the way we see ourselves? What does it take to do your own thing?

LEAD TOPIC: JAYABEN DESAI AND THE GRUNWICK STRIKES

Brent has only been a borough for 54 years. If there were a list of important people from this period, Jayaben Desai (1933–2010) might top it. She led a strike at the Grunwick photo processing plant in Dollis Hill about working conditions, unequal pay, union representation and racism between 1976–78. Jack Dromey, a local trade unionist (and now an MP) also played a key role in organising the strikes. The strike was defeated and Desai never got her job back, but for the labour movement, the event is widely remembered as the point at which the interests of migrants became the interests of all workers and unions. Before Grunwick, many within trade unions saw migrants as a threat to the indigenous working class. The Grunwick strikes were a national political and cultural moment, and they have been documented in film, photography, TV and newsprint. Politicians and historians have used them to justify and explain how Britain changed in the decades afterward. For Margaret Thatcher, Grunwick was a symbol of unchecked union power. For the left, they were a sign of a new, more culturally diverse Britain coming together. Today Desai is an iconic figure for feminists, anti-racists and all those concerned with social justice. She is frequently included in lists of Britain's greatest women. She symbolises women, migrants and Brent standing up for itself. A mural outside Dollis Hill station commemorates the strike.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Future England international Rachel Yankey, from Willesden, shaved her head aged 8 in 1987 and called herself Ray so she could play for a male football team.
- In 1968 a man called Michael Meaney lived in a box under a road in Kilburn for 61 days.
- Twiggy, arguably Britain's first supermodel, grew up in Neasden in the 1950s.



2. THESE ARE OUR STORIES

OTHER TOPICS

Irish pubs

For much of the 20th century, Brent was a place for young Irish men to come and find construction work. The area still has many Irish pubs, particularly in Kilburn, Cricklewood, Willesden, Neasden and Harlesden. These pubs were a place to find work, drink, sing and cash cheques. A place where those living a life in limbo – between a distant home and the work they had come to find – could find a community. Many came to London intending to return after a few years, but ended up staying. These bittersweet lives were depicted in Jimmy Murphy's play 'The Kings of the Kilburn High Road', which was later made into the feature film Kings. Pubs were and still are places for music and folklore.

In 1968, an Irish labourer Michael Meaney lived under a street near the Kilburn High Road for 61 days. He was fed food through a pipe and guided through exercises by Kilburn hardman and boxing promoter Michael 'Butty' Sugrue (who, according to legend, once pulled a bus up Kilburn High Road with his teeth whilst simultaneously pushing a pram).

Irish politics followed the community. In 1975 Bidy Milligans on the Kilburn High Road was bombed in one of the only attacks by loyalist paramilitaries on the British mainland. The previous year 3,000 people had lined the Kilburn High Road for IRA hunger striker Michael Vaughan.

The Irish were the original Brent migrants. In their footsteps, many other national groups found ways to make community in the borough.

The Ace Café

The Ace Cafe is a transport cafe next to the North Circular in Stonebridge. It opened in 1938, closed in 1969, and reopened in 2001. There are now six branches worldwide. The Cafe is a hang-out for bikers and motor enthusiasts of all kinds. An extraordinarily wide range of car and bike-based groups meet up there. Here is their huge events calendar: there are groups for scooters, supercars, mopeds and motorcycles. In the 1950s and 1960s, motorcycles played a central role in emerging youth cultures. Mods (who rode Vespa scooters) and rockers, each

USEFUL MEDIA:

- Getty's photographs of the Grunwick Dispute.
- Getty's photographs of Keith Moon.
- Images of the Ace Cafe on Flickr.
- National Portrait Gallery's images of Twiggy.
- Michael Meaney comes out of his coffin (pathe/youtube).



2. THESE ARE OUR STORIES

with their own taste in fashion and music, both used the Ace Cafe as a meeting point. Both groups consisted of young people with disposable income, who were independent of their parents but yet to start a family of their own. They marked the beginning of the post war youth cultures which continue to assume new forms today.

The Counterculture

Brent made its own contribution to the counterculture of the 1960s. The Who's original drummer Keith Moon (1946–1978) attended Alperton Community College and grew up in the Wembley area. He drummed as he lived, brilliantly and chaotically. Perhaps more than anyone else, he embodied the excesses of the 1960s. In 1978, he tragically died of a drug overdose aged 32. Charlie Watts, who has been the Rolling Stones drummer since 1963, also grew up in Kingsbury. Moon and Watts appeared in the Rolling Stones TV concert Rock and Roll Circus, which was recorded at the TV studios in Stonebridge Park in 1968. The concert featured John Lennon playing with Eric Clapton and members of the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

The composer Sir John Tavener was also born in Wembley. He was an acquaintance of the Beatles, whose Apple Label released some of his music in the 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, punk and New Wave continued the spirit of rock and roll. The Slits played their first gig in Harlesden; Madness' video for Our House was shot in Willesden; The Jam made one in Queens Park; the video for Dexy's Midnight Runners' song 'Celtic Soul Brothers' was filmed around Cricklewood; and Ian Dury formed his first band Kilburn and the High Roads nearby. There is hardly a significant pop, rock or punk act that has not played a concert in Brent since the 1960s.



3. THIS IS OUR HOME

Much of Brent's creative and cultural life takes place behind closed doors: over fences, behind walls and through gates. It happens in kitchens, gardens, sports clubs, gyms, allotments, cafes, libraries and community organisations. This is a borough of many cultures, each with their own way of thinking and feeling.

Brent 2020 is supporting projects that uncover, reveal, and explore the cultures of families and friends across the borough. What kind of culture does Brent make? How do different communities express themselves? Is there such thing as local 'Brent culture' – a Brentness? Or is culture always from somewhere else?

LEAD TOPIC: REGGAE

In the 1960s, Brent played a vital role in introducing Britain to reggae music through record shops, rehearsal rooms, recording studios, and was amplified by record labels and distributors. Island Records started life in a Kilburn basement. Bob Marley briefly lived in Neasden in 1972. Trojan Records was the borough's most iconic record label, founded in Kilburn in 1968 and run from a now-demolished warehouse on Neasden Lane known as Music House.

During its heyday in the late 1960s and 1970s, Trojan popularised ska, rocksteady, reggae and other forms of Jamaican music. In 1970 alone, Trojan released 500 records. The music connected the Windrush generation with Jamaica, and gave numerous new subcultures across the UK a soundtrack. The popularisation of Trojan's music owed much to the budget-price Tighten Up compilation series, which was available in high street shops across the country. Here is a Spotify playlist of classic Trojan releases, and also three classic releases from 1969: *Return of the Django* by The Upsetters; *54-46 Was My Number* by The Maytals; and *Liquidator* by Harry J Allstars. The *Liquidator* is used as the run-out music by the Premier League football teams Wolverhampton Wanderers and Chelsea.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Bob Marley lived in Neasden in 1972.
- In 1997, Zadie Smith (from Willesden) received a £250,000 advance for the first 80 pages of her novel *White Teeth*.
- In 2015, a fruit and veg wholesaler called Fruity Fresh with a large outlet in Wembley lead a campaign against the EU's ban on the import of Indian Alphonso Mangos.



3. THIS IS OUR HOME

Last year a [documentary](#) was released to mark the 50th anniversary of Trojan Records.

Trojan and other labels and distributors in Brent imported music from the Caribbean to the UK. In the years that followed, these sounds would combine with other influences in Northwest London to create original genres of London music. In 1979, Janet Kay from Harlesden scored a Number 1 hit with [Silly Games](#). The song was the most commercially successful example of a form of London music known as 'Lovers Rock', which blended 1960s pop ballads with reggae rhythms and was sung by predominantly female vocalists. The song was later covered by Lindy Layton in the early 1990s, with Kay on backing vocals. Zadie Smith describes the joy of seeing Layton – another West London girl – on Top of the Pops as a teenager [in this article for Time out](#).

Around this time in the early 1990s, Reinforced Records based in Dollis Hill began to release music by Goldie and 4Hero, combining loops of edited breakbeats. This music would later become known as Jungle and Drum 'n' Bass. You can hear elements of this in 4Hero's first release [Mr Kirk's Nightmare](#), and Goldie's early release [Darkrider](#). Both of these artists would later work on Goldie's track [Inner-City Life](#). In 1994 General Levy from Harlesden released [Incredible with M Beat](#), which to this day remains the most commercially successful Jungle track ever made. You can see how it still resonated 20 years later with the younger generation of Grime MCs Lethal Bizzel, Tempa T and Dizzee Rascal in this episode of BBC Radio 1Xtra's [Fire in the Booth](#).

3 OTHER TOPICS

Family Shops

Despite the 'crisis on the high street', Brent remains a borough of high roads lined with shops, many of which are family businesses which have been open for generations. These shops cater to a mix of practical needs and cultural desires. This is why they became such a big part of the campaign [video](#) for Brent 2020. These shops are also part of the universal Brent experience: everybody knows someone in the borough who runs a shop, and



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most of us go to them. [Fruity Fresh](#) for example, are a family-owned fruit and veg wholesaler who have been trading since 1976. They have a major retail outlet on Ealing Road in West Wembley.

The photographer Jude Wacks has been awarded a community grant by Brent 2020 to [document family-owned businesses](#) around the Borough. She is currently photographing and writing about them.

Metro-Land

Much of Brent was developed and sold to house-buyers in the 1920s and 1930s as 'Metro-Land': a way of living near to the city in space and countryside. Most of the housing was semi-detached and developed in vast estates along the Metropolitan Line. Houses had a front and back garden, with pieces of timber set in whitewashed render to make it look as though the houses were made from a wooden frame. This is often called the 'mock Tudor' style. It was copied across suburban London and remains popular to this day. The surroundings of Kingsbury, Neasden, [Wembley Park](#), Sudbury Town and Harrow are dominated by this kind of residential architecture. A prime example is Northwick Park circle, which was mostly developed in the 1920s. Here are two pictures taken [before](#) and [after](#) the estate's development.

Metro-Land was heavily marketed in [memorable posters](#) which evoked the rural ideal. There are obvious parallels in the current effort ([join the rental rebellion](#)) to encourage Londoners to live in the new accommodation being built around Wembley stadium: both are pitched as new ways of living, and aimed at middle class Londoners with stable but modest incomes. Although not on the Metropolitan Line, the architect Charles Holden designed important Metro-Land stations at [Sudbury Town](#), [Sudbury Hill](#) and [Alperton](#). There are also some [very unusual examples](#) of suburban housing in Kingsbury which were designed by the architect Ernest Trobridge.

Zadie Smith

If anyone has a sense of what home means in Brent, it's the writer [Zadie Smith](#). Born in Willesden in 1975, Smith went to Malorees Junior School and Hampstead Comprehensive School

KEY MEDIA

- Zadie Smith being [interviewed](#) about *White Teeth* (circa 2000).
- The trailer for *Rudeboy* (2018).
- [Metroland posters and ephemera](#) from the London Transport Museum.
- Janet Kay sings [Silly Games](#) on Top of the Pops.



3. THIS IS OUR HOME

in Camden. She currently splits her time between New York, where she teaches, and Willesden, where her mother still lives.

Her novels and essays for *The New Yorker* take inspiration from many places in the borough. Smith is often held up as a spokesperson for 'multiculturalism', although this is a role she rejects in interviews. Her writing addresses universal questions about aspiration, class and freedom, and is often set in Northwest London. She is noted for accurately capturing London slang, dialogue and speech patterns. She is perhaps best known for her novel *White Teeth* (a novel she began while still at university and which has since been adapted for film and stage). However, NW is the novel she remains most proud of.

Here is a map which speculates about which part of the borough certain quotes from her novels might be referring to.



4. THIS IS OUR FUTURE

KEY TOPIC: RAHEEM STERLING

Raheem Sterling is a brilliant footballer from Brent who transcends the game he plays through his activism and by being a strong role model for young people. Born in Jamaica in 1994, his estranged father was murdered when he was two. He emigrated to Brent aged five and lived on St Raphael's estate in Neasden. He attended Oakington Manor Primary school, Vernon House School and Copland Community School (now Ark Elvin Community School) before leaving the area aged 16 to play for Liverpool. A year later he became the fifth youngest player to play for England. Now aged 24, he is the most capped player in the current national team. In 2015, Manchester City paid Liverpool £49m for him: the highest ever transfer fee paid for an English footballer at the time.

Sterling's personal life has been unfairly ridiculed in the tabloid press. In summer 2018 he was criticised for having a gun tattooed on his leg. Rather than glamorising violence, Sterling said the tattoo expressed his desire to transcend the violence that killed his father by excelling at football. In Autumn 2018, after allegedly being racially abused by a fan, Sterling used Instagram to criticise negative tabloid portrayals of successful young black players. Nike created an advertising campaign to support him, which reached millions with a powerful message of how speaking out is the first step towards positive change. In March 2019 Sterling, with other black players, was racially-abused while playing for England in Montenegro. Afterwards Sterling (who also scored during the game) called for Montenegro to play games behind closed doors.

Sterling is one in a long line of brilliant players from the borough who have faced subtle and overt racism throughout their careers. The list includes Jason Roberts, Luther Blissett and Ian Wright (he lives in the borough now, but wasn't born here). Most famously of all, the late Cyrille Regis (1958-2018) played for England, West Bromwich Albion and other West Midlands teams in the 1970s and 1980s against a torrent of racism, bigotry and abuse. He was the first iconic black British player and inspired many others to follow in his footsteps.

KEY FACTS

- 2bn people watched Euro 2016, 600m watched the final.
- The £49m Manchester City paid Liverpool for local boy Raheem Sterling in 2015 was the highest ever transfer fee for an English footballer at the time.
- Two women from Harlesden – Warsan Shire and Carla Marie Williams – wrote lyrics and words for Beyonce's Lemonade album.



4. THIS IS OUR FUTURE

Sterling met his fiancé Paige Milian at a youth club in Brent, and they both attended Copland Community School. He lived on St Raphael's estate in Neasden, which is also where George the Poet grew up. Newspaper [reports](#) suggested earlier this year that he is interested in launching a football academy in the borough and locating it at Bridge Park leisure centre in Stonebridge. Nike [recently put up a series of murals](#) around the borough celebrating him.

OTHER TOPICS

Poets and song-writers

The words of Brent's young poets might be one place to look for signs of the future. [Warsan Shire](#), who grew up in Harlesden and discovered poetry at a youth club in Wembley, became London's first Young People's Poet Laureate in 2013. Last year Momtaza Mehri from Kilburn also took the award. Beyonce is a fan of Warsan Shire, and recites lines from her poems on her hugely successful *Lemonade* album. Here are three of them: [Denial / Redemption / Anger](#). The track [Freedom](#) on Beyonce's *Lemonade* album was written by the songwriter Carla Marie Williams, who also grew up in Harlesden.

[Zia Ahmed](#) (also a nominee for poet laureate) is another poet who grew up in Brent. In his poem '[Western](#)' he paraphrases David Bowie: 'Immigration control to major Tom, these guys wanna know where I came from: *Cricklewood*.' [George the Poet](#) grew up on the St Raphael's estate. He has a highly successful [podcast](#) exploring poverty, injustice and racism, and he wrote a [poem](#) for Meghan and Harry.

As part of Brent 2020, Carla Marie Williams is working on [an anthem](#) for the borough.

England in Euro 2020

Next summer Wembley Stadium will host group games, the semi-finals and the final of the European Football Championships. This is a tournament that Gareth Southgate's youthful, exuberant team, inspired by the borough's most famous son, Raheem Sterling, has a genuine chance of winning. The initial stages of the tournament will be played across 12 European cities: if England make it to the final stages at Wembley, it will seem like football really is *coming home*.

USEFUL MEDIA:

- Promotional film showing development of [Old Oak Common](#), where Crossrail will meet HS2.
- [Match schedule](#) for UEFA Euro 2020.
- Proposed route of West London Orbital railway.
- Images of the [masterplan for Wembley Park](#).



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Set against a backdrop of Britain's departure from the European Union and the possible break up of the United Kingdom, this moment will be used, by all sides, to tell stories about what kind of country we belong in and where we are going. Last time England played in the semi-finals of the European Football Championships The Mirror put a picture of Wembley-born Stuart Pearce in a World War 2 tin hat on the front page.

What story would Brent tell about the England team and the tournament? Brent is a borough made through migration, and so is the England football team. Here is an article by Musa Okwonga celebrating the backgrounds of different England players. The tournament will also bring Europe in Brent to life. Most countries in the tournament will have supporters in the borough and will enjoy games in cafes, pubs and restaurants.

