

Haringey

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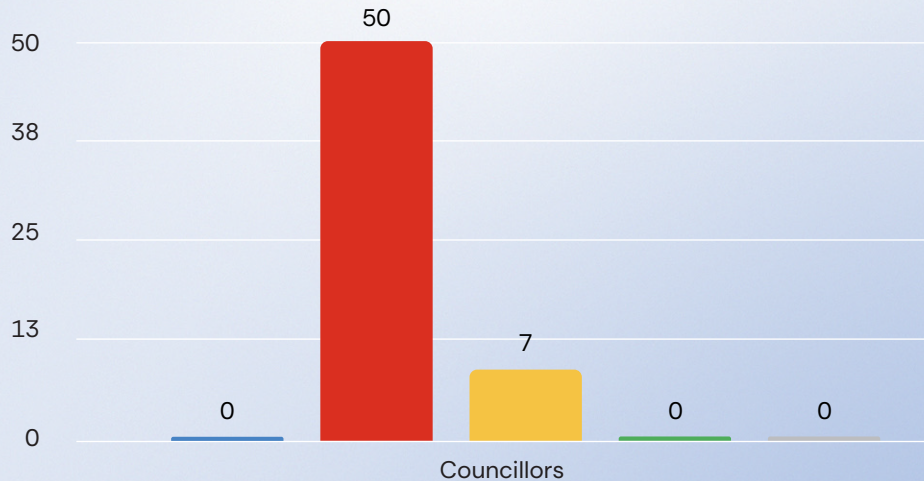
Since 2022

Labour Defence

Labour strengthened its already dominant position in 2022, taking its total up to 50 seats under new ward boundaries and leaving the Liberal Democrats to console themselves with the remaining seven. No other party attracted even 10 per cent of the popular vote, let alone any seats. As with other Labour strongholds, interest this year lies in the potential for serious challenges to the status quo and where they might come from.

There have been six by-elections in Haringey since May four years ago. Labour successfully defended the first five without great drama. But the most recent, held in April 2025 and the only such contest to take place since the general election, saw them turfed out of a St Ann's seat by the Greens. The latter already had substantial support in the ward, but their margin of victory was big. For Labour, it was a worrying straw in the wind.

Haringey Council result May 2022 | Total seats: 57



By-elections since May 2022

09 MARCH 2023	TOTTENHAM HALE	LAB HOLD
29 JUNE 2023	HERMITAGE AND GARDENS	LAB HOLD
04 OCTOBER 2023	SOUTH TOTTENHAM	LAB HOLD
04 OCTOBER 2023	WHITE HART LANE	LAB HOLD
04 JULY 2024	HORNSEY	LAB HOLD
10 APRIL 2025	ST ANN'S	GREEN GAIN FROM LAB

There have been defections from Labour too, some of them significant: the victor of St Ann's joined three others in a breakaway Green Socialist Alliance group formed in 2023. Two others sit as Independents, one after deciding to leave Labour, the other after being expelled. A cabinet member resigned from his job and his seat in January, leaving a vacancy. Labour is now down to 43 seats. Will the shrinkage continue? If so, by how much?

Local landscape

Haringey is sometimes designated part of Inner London and sometimes part of Outer London: the Local Government Act 1963 that created London's boroughs does not deem it "Inner" as it didn't form part of the old County of London; the Office for National Statistics, however, does.

The wide variations in Haringey's character reflect this ambiguity. Its eleven square miles encompass very affluent higher ground areas to the west, such as Highgate, Crouch End and Muswell Hill, and also Alexandra Palace, a historic culture venue whose grounds once contained a horseracing course and which, in 1936, became the original base for the BBC's then brand-new television service.

Haringey has been unusual among London boroughs in seeing slower recent population growth than England as whole. The average age of its people has increased a bit faster than London's and, at 36, is a little higher than the London average too. Over 260,000 people live there.

The east side of the borough, pretty much literally on the wrong side of the main line railway tracks that link King's Cross station and Edinburgh, bisecting Haringey along the way, comprises the Wood Green commercial centre and Tottenham and its environs, one of the capital's

Haringey Council elections since 2002						
Year	Con	Lab	LD	UKIP/Ref	Green	Other
2002	-	42	15	-	-	-
2006	-	30	27	-	-	-
2010	-	34	23	-	-	-
2014	-	48	9	-	-	-
2018	-	42	15	-	-	-
2022	-	50	7	-	-	-

poorest places and sadly as closely linked in some minds with rioting and crime as with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. The council says nearly 14 per cent of Tottenham residents endure fuel poverty and there are high levels of Universal Credit claimants. In the Tottenham

parliamentary seat, more than 10 per cent of people have no academic qualifications.

Local landscape

The borough's geographical divide tends to be mirrored politically, with the east forming a Labour bedrock and the west being more fruitful to varying degrees for the Lib Dems.

The current Labour administration has been less obviously tempestuous than what some termed the nation's first "Corbyn Council", elected in 2018 following a ruthless pre-ballot deselection campaign by Momentum activists and others.

Since then, some of the ideologues have gone and others have engaged with the practicalities, partnerships and compromises that are integral to getting things done in local government. New housing has been built with City Hall support on a former hospital site, most of it "affordable". A big regeneration project on the High Road is slowly moving towards fruition, despite some determined far-Left opposition. A revived "Latin Village" has been created at Seven Sisters, thanks largely to the commitment of Transport for London, which owns most of the land there, and a spirit of collaboration that

enabled something hopeful to happen after the site became a stuck "anti-gentrification" cause célèbre.

Even so, most of the departures from the Labour group have been of a very Haringey type. The first one went at the end of 2022, a Momentumite expelled from the party for saying a rabbi had been paid for criticising Jeremy Corbyn. The Momentum faction had a prior history of wrangling over definitions of antisemitism. Both Haringey's leader Peray Ahmet and the Lib Dem group urged the culprit to resign from the council, without success.

Three more went in the autumn of 2023, citing the national leadership's stance on Gaza. It was they who dubbed themselves the Green Socialist Alliance and saw their number rise to four at Labour's expense thanks to the St Ann's by-election result.

A fifth followed after the general election, in November 2025, saying she was unhappy with Labour over climate policies, immigration, benefits, trans rights and more.

She has continued to serve as an Independent, having already decided to stand down in 2026.

The Lib Dem septet, meanwhile, has carried on, seemingly unfractured and no doubt hoping to profit from local disapproval of the Labour national government, though the Greens will compete with them for that same windfall in parts of the west of the borough. The Lib Dems have criticised Labour's financial management, notably its need to make cuts and depend on "exceptional financial support" from the government in order to get its last two budgets to add up.

Matters would have been worse but for a boost for Haringey from the government's Fair Funding Review. Ahmet has expressed gratitude for that, but warned that "rapidly increasing demand and costs for key services" mean that "extreme budget pressures" will continue.

 HARINGEY

Electoral prospects

The solidity of Labour support on the Tottenham side of Haringey has kept the party in the majority since the borough was formed, except for 1968–71. The Lib Dems came close to a majority in 2006 by winning all the seats west of the railway line and only just falling short in three border wards on the east side. They should make some gains in the split west side this time, as should the Greens in one or two other places.

Muswell Hill and Highgate

10 seats

Haringey’s section of Highgate village and the pleasant suburbs among the woodlands and parks to its north and east sit with Hampstead and East Finchley in the heart of north London’s affluent liberal residential belt. All the wards are majority owner-occupied with very little social housing. All are majority White British. All have high proportions of residents with degree-level education. These things particularly apply to Highgate ward, which is part of the Camden-based Hampstead & Highgate constituency.

Fortis Green, bordering Barnet, is nine per cent Jewish by religion and all the wards have significant Jewish communities, mostly drawn from the same liberal established background as in Finchley. The wards skew heavily liberal-left. The Tories topped 10 per cent only in Highgate in 2022. They lost most of these seats in 1994 and were eliminated from their last stronghold, a Highgate seat, in 2002.

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Alexandra Park	Lab	LD	x	6.1	39.1	38.3	15.8	-
Fortis Green	LD	Lab	Lab	6.6	37.0	38.0	18.4	-
Highgate	LD	LD	LD	11.2	29.8	38.3	20.6	-
Muswell Hill	LD	Lab	x	7.7	34.1	41.6	16.5	-

The Lib Dems have taken up the mantle of opposition to Labour in western Haringey, and remain strong in this core territory. They won eight out of 12 seats (on the previous ward boundaries) even in mid-coalition 2014, and 12 out of 12 in 2018. The 2022 elections were very good for Labour here. It won four seats to the Lib Dems’ six, shared representation in three of the wards and fell only 81 votes short of taking a seat in Highgate.

Turnout in these wards in 2022 was particularly high (although lower than it was in 2018). Labour’s vote is likely to fall back with the Lib Dems the default beneficiaries, although the Greens had a respectable vote in 2022.

Crouch End

9 seats

The three other wards west of the main railway line are similar to those of Muswell Hill in being mainly inhabited by educated liberal professionals. But they differ in having more rented (private and social) housing and a younger, more mobile population. The flavour of the locality emerges from the Census finding that Stroud Green is the most atheist ward (51 per cent) in London, with Crouch End not far behind.

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Crouch End	Lab	Lab	LD	5.0	39.1	35.0	20.9	-
Hornsey	Lab	Lab	Lab	6.5	63.6	15.1	14.8	-
Stroud Green	Lab	Lab	Lab	2.9	45.4	27.4	23.1	-

At their peak, the Lib Dems dominated this area but they lost eight of the nine seats in 2014. They regained two in Crouch End in 2018 but lost them again in 2022. Labour held Hornsey in the by-election held on general election

day, with the Greens finishing in second place with 25 per cent. The contests here are likely to be between three varieties of centre-left candidate.

Wood Green

8 seats

Wood Green is in the north-centre of Haringey on the Piccadilly Line. Unlike the wards to the west, it is a thoroughly diverse slice of London. Its most prominent local community is Cypriot: the Cypriot Centre opened in Woodside ward in 1979, a co-operative endeavour by both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Bounds Green	Lab	Lab	x	7.3	54.0	23.0	15.8	-
Noel Park	Lab	Lab	Lab	11.8	68.4	19.8	-	-
Woodside	Lab	Lab	Lab	9.6	57.2	12.5	20.6	-

Although Wood Green was previously part of the Hornsey & Wood Green constituency that the Lib Dems won in 2005 and 2010, it was the weakest part of the seat for them.

At their local election high point in 2006 they won four of the (then) nine seats but lost them in 2010 to Labour, which has since consolidated its position.

North Tottenham

9 seats

North Tottenham is the main “council estate” area of Haringey with social housing accounting for 40 per cent of households across the area. It is also, particularly Bruce Castle and Northumberland Park, an area with a high proportion of black residents. The former is in the top 20 of London wards for Black Caribbean ethnicity (13.4 per cent). In contrast to the fortress of atheism in the west of Haringey, this is an area where both Christianity (nearly 50 per cent) and Islam (20 per cent) are strong.

It is a mainly working-class area with few managerial and professional types. Tottenham Hotspur, incidentally, play in Northumberland Park ward rather than White Hart Lane.

Politically, this is a very solid Labour area. Other parties have failed to mount an effective challenge since 1986

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Bruce Castle	Lab	Lab	Lab	9.9	68.0	6.2	15.9	-
Northumberland Park	Lab	Lab	Lab	9.4	70.9	7.0	12.7	-
White Hart Lane	Lab	Lab	Lab	11.6	58.6	8.5	-	21.2

and 1990, when a backlash against social change and the late Bernie Grant’s leadership of the council enabled Conservatives to win seats in White Hart Lane. Labour successfully defended a seat there in the October 2023 by-election. It is still the most marginal of these wards, but that is not saying much.

There looks to be an electoral arrangement between the Greens and candidates of the Haringey Socialist Alliance (HSA) for Bruce Castle and Northumberland Park. In both, the HSA is standing two candidates and the Greens, one.

Central Tottenham

9 seats

The band of three wards in the centre of Tottenham has been solidly Labour except in the Conservative landslide of 1968. They are highly diverse in social, housing and ethnic terms, but politically pretty united in most elections.

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Tottenham Central	Lab	Lab	Lab	7.7	61.9	8.3	22.1	-
Tottenham Hale	Lab	Lab	Lab	8.4	67.7	7.9	16.0	-
West Green	Lab	Lab	Lab	10.2	78.1	11.7	-	-

The majority rent their homes from private or social landlords. Tottenham Hale has seen major transformations in recent years as high-density housing has sprouted around the station there.

There is some potential for the Greens here and they polled respectably in Tottenham Central in 2022, but

it will take either effective targeting or a general and massive Labour collapse for anything to change around here. The deal between the Greens and the HSA struck for two of the North Tottenham wards also applies to West Green.

South Tottenham

12 seats

South Tottenham is a diverse strip of territory along the boundary with Hackney and shares many features with the north of that borough. Stamford Hill's Chasidic Jewish community, very distinct from the established and mainly middle-class Jewish community around Fortis Green, extends into the South Tottenham and Seven Sisters wards.

Ward-level results (2022)	Councillors 2022			Vote share percentage 2022				
	1	2	3	Con	Lab	LD	Green	Other
Harringay	Lab	Lab	Lab	3.7	42.9	24.6	20.1	8.8
Hermitage & Gardens	Lab	Lab	x	6.7	66.0	7.6	19.6	-
St Ann's	Lab	Lab	x	-	53.3	6.9	39.8	-
Seven Sisters	Lab	Lab	x	9.2	65.4	5.3	20.1	-
South Tottenham	Lab	Lab	Lab	14.7	64.0	5.2	16.2	-

Labour did well in the by-election in South Tottenham in October 2023. The Conservative allegiances south of the borough boundary do not seem to extend into Haringey. Harringay ward is mostly the "ladder" of parallel terraces north of Finsbury Park and is 50 per cent private rented, a youthful place for early career professionals.

The Lib Dems have had seats in Harringay in the past and achieved a reasonable second place in 2022, but St Ann's is the most competitive ward. It was a target for the Greens in 2022 and their gain from Labour in the in the April 2025 by-election was convincing. They should take the other St Ann's seat in 2026 but would need a big swing to break through in the other wards.



HARINGEY

What to watch for

As in many boroughs where Labour has a large majority, the question is whether a generalised collapse will see Green and other candidates winning without making much effort on the ground, or whether seats will be determined by targeting. As the 2006 elections showed, it is difficult to dislodge Labour in Haringey even when the party is struggling nationally.