

Ealing Climate and Environmental Emergency: A community response

Ealing Transition Initiative have held a number of events over the past 8 months focussed on sustainability in our local community.

Following presentation of these community concerns to the Acton & Ealing Constituency Labour Party in February, we met with the Council Leader and requested he respond to the concerns we shared and which were becoming prominent nationally and internationally through the IPCC report in November 2018, the Youth Schools Strike Movement and the Extinction Rebellion actions. It was agreed that Ealing Council would support the passing of a Declaration of Climate Emergency and develop a Local Plan to address the pressing issues relating to reducing carbon emissions to zero by 2030 as well as address the serious concerns about loss of natural life systems detailed in the UN's recent report.

On 2nd April 2019, Ealing Council passed the Declaration of a Climate Emergency unanimously, with all-party support.

Ealing Transition initiative has subsequently been involved in engaging the local community to consider the practical steps now required to respond appropriately to this Declaration.

What follows are a schedule of actions proposed by members of the community attending ETI events and responding to our online information. We believe these represent valuable options and ideas for the creation of an effective local plan to address the climate and environmental emergency and commend them to the Council for consideration for inclusion in its proposed Local Plan.

Areas addressed

(1) Creating wide levels of engagement and acceptance of the Plan and its implementation

- Call & facilitate a local Citizen's Forum to enable wider public engagement.
- Set up a cross cutting committee within the in Council, including public representation from the Citizen's forum, with some 'teeth' and a remit to drive action on climate risk improvement.
- Deliver a wide education and information programme to raise awareness of the issues and necessary overall changes in schools, churches, resident's associations, university, colleges and public fora.
- Provide a comprehensive advice and support service to residents to enable effective change implementation of energy improvements, pro-natural environment restoration and sustainable living, including diet and healthy food sourcing.

- Hold 'Sustainable Living' fairs with wide ranging information, demonstration and advice resources to facilitate take up of appropriate actions.
- Consider how to ensure a real sense of ownership and responsibility by the community of this community, through promoting local investment through green bonds to fund local services and projects, co-ownership housing, cooperative enterprises, training in skills for local climate mitigation and nature restoration.
- Involve schools, colleges and universities in supporting innovation to achieve carbon goals.
- Set targets and publish key performance indicators, with public information adverts to show progress in reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and increased biodiversity.

(2) Transport

- Reduce fossil fuel use and local pollution by reducing the incentives for private car ownership through a comprehensive range of measures.
- Reclaim roads for public use from car parking role and to restore to pedestrian, play, recreation and wildlife habitat use. Prioritise cycling and other alternatives for local trips (e.g. provide safe parking for bikes, trikes, ebikes at shopping centres).
- Set a target to return 50% of carriageway in the borough to non-car use by 2030, with space restored for pedestrians, on street cycle parking, green growing space, tree growth, playspace & local food growing.
- Improve and increase cycling facilities, including segregated lanes, enforcement of no-stopping on cycle lanes, more and secure cycle parking.
- Licence and enable a cycle/electric rickshaw service in the 3 main shopping centres as an alternative to motorised transport for local shopping trips.
- Create car free zones in residential areas, initially with movement bans including deliveries during the day. Mini ULEZs.
- Establish car-free days on a regular basis in town centre areas (as in Edinburgh in May 2019).
- Ensure expansion of electric vehicle only car clubs for each neighbourhood.
- Encourage bus use by supporting free travel and increasing the cost of parking for resident & non-residents.
- Support introduction of taxi-bus services for accessing local services & businesses.

- Encourage and then require all local delivery vehicles to be zero emission.
- Encourage use of electric cars.
- Promote car sharing schemes.
- Creating parking control areas for the whole borough.
- Fix and limit the number of parking places and reduce incrementally year on year.
- Set resident and paid parking charges graduated to be more costly for larger and more polluting vehicles. Charges to increase annually and steeply.
- Enforce all parking and moving traffic offences with increased and increasing penalties.
- Discourage idling by vehicles.
- Press for endorsements in addition to fines for moving traffic and persistent parking offenders.
- Limit home deliveries to electric vehicles and limit size of delivery vehicles as well as the delivery access times to ensure completely traffic-free periods. Mini ULEZs.
- Limit HGVs on Borough roads.

(3) Energy saving and conversion to renewable sources:

- Every new development and planning consent should be carbon neutral or carbon negative in order to be permitted.
- New developments to include requirements for zero carbon energy, on site renewables generation, rain water harvesting and use and nature friendly resources on site.
- Enforce building regulations and penalise non-compliance heavily.
- Establish a council controlled renewable energy company, or join with other councils or the GLA, to develop and promote locally produced renewable energy and to invest in energy saving measures.
- Re-invest any surplus from the council energy company to insulate existing housing stock to the highest standards, beginning with local authority housing.

- Requisition the right to install solar panels on any suitable roofs in the borough, the owner being compensated by a share of the tariff income.
- Re-introduce the Zero emission standard for all new buildings and conversions.
- All planning permissions to require Zero Carbon Emission/Passiv Haus or equivalent standards, for any and all building works and conversions.
- Require registration of privately rented accommodation requiring high standards of insulation and energy efficiency, including appliances and sourcing energy from renewable sources.
- Create and administer a local grant scheme to achieve the above in privately owned properties, costs to be recovered through loan repayment via Council Tax or a charge on the property.
- Council to issue 'Green Bonds' to finance and enable retrofitting and insulation of local housing stock.
- Subsidy scheme for retrofitting and installation of air sourced heat pumps to replace gas heating.
- No gas connections to be permitted in future to domestic and commercial premises.
- Spot fines for shops & businesses which leave their doors open with heating running or use unnecessary night time lighting, doubling for each subsequent infringement.
- Promote and encourage solar generation of heat and power on local roofs and support energy storage for local renewable generators.
- Support the creation of local micro-grids where local generators can supply neighbours.
- Support innovative financing for local green projects, e.g Green Bonds, Local Authority Bonds & shareholding in social benefit green businesses.
- Explore urban wind generation, ground source and air source heat technology, grey water systems and advise on and promote effective technologies.
- Encourage switching to renewable providers and support energy storage for local renewable generators.
- Support the development of anaerobic digesters for energy generation.

(4) Food

- Promote meat-free eating.
- Promote healthy seasonal food eating, facilitating healthy cooking & nutrition in schools and the wider community.
- Facilitate communal greenhouses & polytunnels to enable year round local food growing.
- More allotments and support for local food growing. Create an annual prize(s) for the best vegetable/food plot.
- Establish improved communal and neighbourhood re-cycling of food waste.
- Facilitate distribution of surplus food from events and businesses with planned pre-event arrangements being part of licencing.
- Facilitate learning and practice of composting.

(5) Environmental restoration & mitigation

- To remove air pollution, mitigate flash flooding and temperate rises, improve watershed viability and restore biodiversity.
- All roads around schools closed to all traffic at beginnings & endings of school day. Mini ULEZs.
- Green walls/vines & ivy planting around school boundaries to mitigate particulate air pollution.
- Plant and maintain shade trees around schools, playgrounds and public buildings.
- No wood burning, oil or solid fuel burning systems to be permitted in future.
- Bonfires no longer to be permitted in general, because of their contribution to air pollution, especially given the lack of control of what material is burnt and how.
- No use of herbicides and pesticides on pavements and parks by the Council.
- Create and promote local street warden network of volunteers tasked with facilitating residents taking responsibility for re-greening streets and creating biodiversity.

- Food waste composting to be enabled on a street by street basis via volunteer 'wardens'. Compost to be shared and used for community growing spaces.
- Encourage and advise residents in use of non-poison related approaches to garden and environment management.
- Provide advice, expertise and grant aid for biodiversity restoration in private gardens.
- Use parks as 'bridgeheads' with more trees, hedgerows & wild planted areas for restoring biodiversity of insect life in particular as a cornerstone lifeform. Parks to become focal points for nature restoration as well as recreation.
- Create a habitat and wildlife plan to integrate parks, gardens and open spaces to facilitate effective wildlife ranges.
- End paving of gardens with impervious materials.
- Use street warden scheme to facilitate return of paved gardens to plants with volunteer and neighbour support. 'Re-Greening Ealing'.
- All car wash facilities to be phased out to reduce water use and local pollution.
- More monitoring of air pollution and publicising levels.
- Encourage community gardens, permaculture and wildlife gardening.
- Every new development and planning consent should be carbon neutral or carbon negative in order to be permitted.
- No further building on green spaces. Such spaces to be designated essential for community wellbeing.
- Establish Environmental Visitor service to advise and assist householders on energy saving and pro-environment living. (Parallel to Health Visitor service).
- Establish an extensive network of drinking water fountains.
- Seek out and follow best practice in all areas of Climate Change prevention and nature restoration.
- Plant many more street trees which provide shade, rather than ornamentals, are suitable as nature/insect friendly species able to support year round wildlife, plus fruit and nut trees and shrubs for local foraging and food education. Shade trees,

rather than ornamentals, to be planted and maintained in all streets to grow a cooler and less flood prone environment (re-greening Ealing.)

- Proscribe plastic bags and wrapping from all council facilities and events.
- Set and achieve targets in terms of restoration of biodiversity by enabling the successful re-introduction of keynote insect, bird and animal species, e.g. bees, butterflies & moths, swifts and swallows & hedgehogs and toads.

Implementation

- Set timescales and targets for implementing plans with graduated move for 'carrots' to 'sticks' in terms of incentives & penalties.
- Lower Council Tax charges for households making pro-environment and climate mitigation changes (e.g giving up car, insulating home etc.).
- NB Some of these proposals may appear to duplicate others and have multiple beneficial outcomes across different objective areas.

Ealing Transition Initiative - May 2019