

BARNET COUNCIL: INITIAL RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS



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Caring for people, our places and the planet

BARNET·ZERO·

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

FOREWORD

Tackling the challenge of climate change will be the most important thing our generation does, ensuring that we pass on a liveable planet to our children. That is why Barnet has declared a climate emergency.

Taking on climate change is not easy, which is why we must do it together. An agenda handed down from the Town Hall, as opposed to being generated by the community at large, will not work.

That is why the work of our Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change and Biodiversity, and our Young People's Assembly, has been so vital.

Residents from across Barnet joined together to help show the way to reach net zero – putting no more carbon into the atmosphere than we take out – by 2030 for the council and 2042 for the borough as a whole.

We are delighted that the council is accepting the recommendations of our Citizens' Assembly and our Young People's Assembly. This report sets out the work that is already underway and what more can be done.

Our children will judge us for how seriously we take climate change. They will not forgive us if we decide to delay or dither in saving their planet.

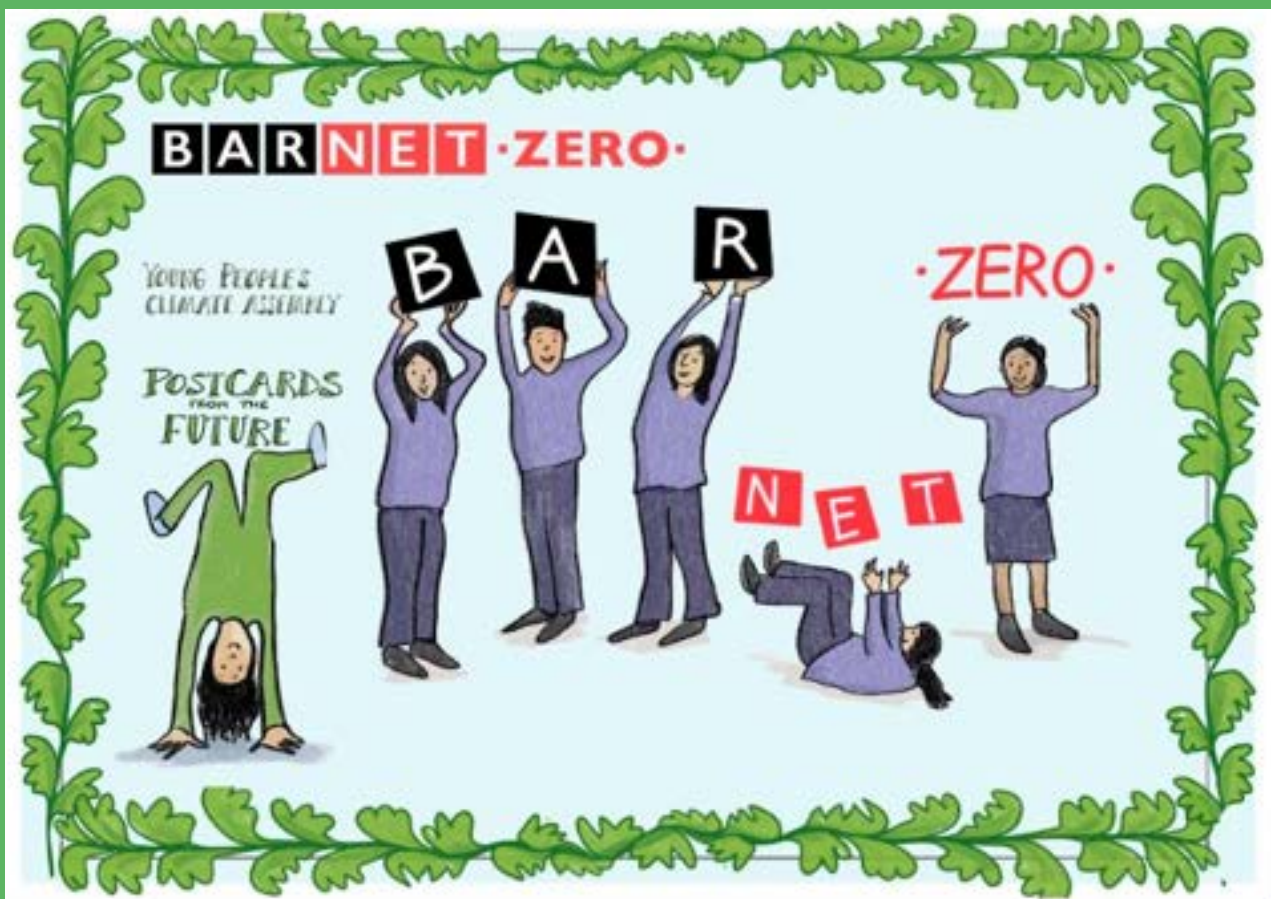
Barnet's residents, community organisations and businesses are rising to the challenge. We look forward to working with them and continuing this journey together as one borough.



*Councillor Barry Rawlings,
Leader of Barnet Council*



*Councillor Alan
Schneiderman, Cabinet
Member for Environment
and Climate Change*



INTRODUCTION

Barnet Council has a commitment to become a net zero council by 2030 and a place no later than 2042. As part of this, we want to bring our residents, businesses and communities on our journey to tackle the climate emergency with action that is equitable, fair and inclusive.

We launched our Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change on 21st February, which ended on 21st May 2023. The 40 residents aged 18+ in the Citizens' Assembly met for 30 hours, and 20 residents aged 12-17 participated in a parallel Young People's assembly, meeting for 18 hours. Both Assemblies came together to answer the question:

“ **Barnet has declared a climate emergency. What more can we do together to make Barnet more sustainable, now and in the future** ”

Assembly members explored the question through learning and deliberation, with focus on 5 key themes identified in Barnet's Sustainability Action Plan, with the most scope to reduce carbon emissions and which require borough-wide action:

- 1. Waste and Sustainable Consumption**
- 2. Learning, Communications and Partnerships**
- 3. Nature and Biodiversity**
- 4. Travel**
- 5. Housing Buildings and Renewable Energy**

The council accepts the recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly (including Young People's Assembly). This report outlines the council's initial response to the recommendations, how they will be supported by the Sustainability Action Plan and how they will be incorporated into future work that we do. [Further details on our Sustainability activity](#) can be found on the council's website.

This is just the beginning of the process to make Barnet more sustainable. We will continue to refine these responses and will work with a wider community and partnership group from across the Borough to embed them into our action plan going forward.

We recognise much work has already commenced in our journey to Net Zero and in some instances, actions against these recommendations may have already started. This does not diminish the power of the recommendations from participants, these initiatives have been endorsed by the residents of Barnet and demonstrates the importance of acting.

As well as delivering our own action plan, the council can work with partners, communities and businesses to develop these recommendations further, and mobilise new activities and programmes across the borough that tackle the climate emergency.

We will regularly review, monitor and feedback on our response to these recommendations and are developing an implementation framework, identifying actions that can be implemented, those that require further collaboration and those that require us to influence at a national level. We will maintain collaboration with those that live, work and study in Barnet to make these recommendations a reality.

WASTE & SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION



Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly



Waste & Sustainable Consumption

Sustainable consumption refers to how products and services are used in a way that minimises their impact on the planet. What we use and how we dispose of it is a key element of sustainability.

Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly:

- Improve waste management through easier recycling and by addressing fly tipping.
- Encourage and educate Barnet residents on how to reduce the amount of food waste.

What more can we do to deliver these recommendations?

- As part of the [North London Waste Authority \(NLWA\)](#) (along with Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest) we are developing a new Joint Waste Strategy. This will provide the framework for waste management in North London until 2040. It will focus on how we reduce and manage waste across the boroughs.
- We launched a free [community skips service](#) in 2022, to help residents get rid of large unwanted items. We have enhanced this service so that items in a suitable condition are sent to a Reuse shop run by the NLWA to be refurbished, and clothing and textiles are given to the Salvation Army.
- Implementing the actions from the [Barnet Food Plan 2022 - 2027](#) on reducing food waste will include a communications campaign, as well as messaging on supporting and sharing food waste reduction from partners including NLWA and ReLondon.
- Run a trial of enhanced waste and recycling collections in flats, including food waste, to inform how waste management services are provided in the future.
- Improve signposting on how to report fly tipping and enforcement against fly tippers.
- Educate residents on good recycling practice, including working with schools.
- Reduce the quantity of commercial business waste through incentive schemes to encourage recycling.



Response:

We will work across the council (including Barnet Homes) and with residents, businesses, and other organisations and partners to reduce waste, reuse items, and recycle as much as possible. We will also work to cut fly tipping. This will be supported by our Reduction and Recycling Plan for 2023-2025, which outlines our commitment to:

- Guaranteeing weekly bin collections
- Focusing on helping people reduce, reuse, and recycle waste
- Encouraging an increase in composting
- Bringing back the council's separate food waste collection service
- Working to stop single use plastic in Barnet both by the council and by encouraging businesses and residents to use alternatives.



LEARNING, COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS



Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly



Learning, Communications and Partnerships

This theme of recommendations focuses on how we share information, learn more about sustainability and work together in partnerships to achieve change.

Recommendations:

- Educate children and young people on sustainability and climate change through curriculum delivery and after school activities.
- Integrate courses on climate change, sustainability and green skills across schools, businesses and apprenticeships. This should be available through online courses, local career speakers at schools and work experience opportunities that enable people to develop practical skills such as horticulture.
- Target education and communication using a wide range of channels that are accessible and appropriate to all diverse communities.
- Create different campaigns and raise awareness across social media with concise and direct videos that are comedic and relatable created by everyone, including influencers & policymakers.

Response:

The BarNET ZERO campaign, webpages and newsletter are available for residents and highlights the sustainability projects and opportunities for the community to participate in. The communications campaign launched in January 2023 has been one of the council's biggest communication campaigns to date. Shortlisted for Public Sector Campaign of the Year in the Mayor of London's Sustainability City Awards 2023, BarNET ZERO was created in partnership with our community, setting our journey to becoming a net zero council and borough, and will continue to evolve as we continue this journey.

In direct response to this recommendation, we are supporting participants from the Young People's Assembly to create fun and engaging content that would aim to inform communities on ways to behave more sustainably and act as a 'call to action' from young people across the borough. We will continue to work with young people from across the borough to develop this recommendation further over the coming months.

Delivering on our ambitious targets requires having the right skills and businesses across the borough to support our work. As a council, we are already supporting a variety of green skills and business initiatives, including a number with schools and higher education providers (but recognise there is more to do), such as:

- The BarNET Zero Challenge that launched in October 2023

- The West London Green Skills Hub with access to jobs and information through various workshops and events. As well as Middlesex University, Barnet Southgate College is partnering on this work.

Some of the ways we can work together to deliver these recommendations:

- Barnet is looking to develop a more comprehensive strategy for schools that would include resources (such as sustainability docuseries) to engage young people in climate education. This will include continuing working with [Barnet Education and Learning Service](#). You can read more about the work that BELS has been doing with head teachers on our BarNET ZERO webpages.
- Barnet and other West London Alliance (WLA) boroughs are supporting West London College and Spark (a youth employment charity) to set up and run a series of green skills careers workshops by the Mayor's Academy Hub for Green skills led by West London College.
- We will be supporting participants from the Young People's Assembly to create fun and engaging educational content that would aim to engage communities across the borough.
- We acknowledge that not all members of the community have access to digital resources. Hence, we look to connect with local people face-to-face, such as through messaging to businesses, community hubs and on-site learning sessions. Working with our in-house communications team, we will look at how these materials can be accessible for all ages, genders and ethnicities.
- Move forward plans for a Construction and Green Skills Training Centre in the borough.
- Partnership with the West London Green Skills Hub, with access to jobs and information through a variety of workshops and events – [more information here](#).

NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY



Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly



Nature and Biodiversity

Barnet is a very green borough, with the council having responsibility for around 30,000 street trees and 848 hectares of green spaces, which includes 164 hectares of woodland. Nature and biodiversity are key parts of becoming a sustainable borough and supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places.

Recommendations:

- Commit to planting more trees in existing and new green spaces to promote biodiversity and wildlife.
- Identify unused spaces and infrastructure across the borough (e.g. fields, old railway tracks, green walkways) to develop biodiverse green spaces and cycling paths for partnership between council and local community volunteers
- Encourage more school gardens, so that everyone has access to green spaces, and use the school gardens to grow food to use in school meals.
- Encourage and support local farming for fruits which will help create support for veganism and reduce the carbon emission for shipping.



Response:

The council will work with partners, residents and businesses in Barnet to enhance biodiversity in the borough, encourage and support education on local food growing and use of public green spaces for active travel. Current strategies that are in place to support the delivery of these recommendation are:

1. The Tree Planting Policy, which outlines how we will maintain and manage new and existing trees in line with our sustainability and biodiversity commitments. Our [interactive tree portal](#) is available with information on all the trees in Barnet on public land, including: tree species and dimensions, as well as the environmental and economic benefits that they provide.
2. Barnet's Food Plan, which aims to increase opportunities for community food growing through better information sharing, establishing a network and defining the process for residents to request land for community food growing.

What more can we do to deliver these recommendations?

- Within our target of planting 5,00 trees (Tree Policy 2023-28), Barnet will look to plant more fruit trees across the borough, especially in schools, without using pesticides so that they are safe to eat.
- Work with developers to incorporate more green design, such as trees and community gardens in their developments through planning applications, including considerations and delivery of biodiversity net gain.
- We have commissioned Land Use Consultants (LUC) to support the development of a new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Barnet. We will be working with the community and key stakeholders to assist in shaping both strategies, through consultation and engagement.
- As part of the vision of becoming a 'Borough of Fun', Barnet is working on a plan to hold a series of events, including markets and fairs, to promote sustainable living and local sustainable businesses. Barnet has developed Healthy Heritage walks, which takes in buildings and sites of interest, and, where possible, using green spaces and footpaths.



TRAVEL



Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly



Travel

Carbon emissions from transport in Barnet are responsible for nearly a third of the borough's total. It is also a significant contributor to air pollution.

Recommendations:

- Have an integrated sustainable transport plan for the borough.
- Develop a strategy to make roads safe for active travel, with an emphasis on cycle lanes.
- Move towards more accessible, more frequent and cheaper electric bus routes for people to use across Barnet (accessible to all people including disabled people)
- Encourage investment in green, public transport to improve the environment, safety and wellbeing.

Response:

Barnet will take an integrated approach to transport, working in partnership to strengthen sustainable transport in the borough. The council is currently refreshing the Barnet Transport Strategy which will aim to link different modes of public transport more efficiently with each other and take a more joined-up approach to delivery. It will also encourage people to take up more sustainable forms of travels.

Much of what's needed to improve transport links falls under Transport for London's remit. Barnet will continue to work with TfL, suggesting and implementing improvements where possible. With the West London boroughs including Barnet, TfL is also developing the West London Orbital - a proposed extension to the London Overground railway system in London. In addition, TfL has awarded funding for the borough to implement more bus lanes as part of its initiatives to introduce 25 kilometres of new and improved bus lanes throughout the whole of London by 2025.

TfL has also announced the [Superloop](#), a new fast service bus network, with two routes in Barnet which will start operation in late 2023. The council has also worked with Network Rail to open a new station at Brent Cross West. It is part-funding the rebuilding of Colindale Underground station so it is fit for purpose into the 2030s, providing access to the tube for all.

The UK government is planning to [end the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles in 2035](#). Whilst existing petrol and diesel vehicles will still be road legal after this date, the goal is for all new cars and vans to be fully zero emission (ZEV) at the tailpipe from 2035. The government has put in place ZEV mandates for manufacturers, requiring 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold to be zero emission by 2030, increasing to 100% by 2035. We are working with a range of private

charge point operators to provide an ever-expanding network of EV charge points across the borough. This will help residents who do not have access to off-street parking to transition to owning an electric vehicle. We recognise, a 'one size fits all' solution would not be viable if we are to deliver the behavioural change required, and therefore our programme of delivery focuses on installing a suite of charging solutions across the borough. By the end of April 2024, the borough will aim to have:

- Over 700 residential lamp column charge points.
- Over 1,250 Trojan Energy charge points across 98 sites. The Trojan Energy 'flat and flush' solution delivers charging speeds of up to 22kW AC on residential streets where lamp column charging would not be suitable.
- Up to 120 JOLT charge points within town centre locations, delivering speeds of up to 25kW DC, as well as up to 7kW of free charging per user per day.
- 16 freestanding 7kW charge points within town centre car parks

Barnet will continue to rollout innovative charging solutions, providing residents and users with the option to charge conveniently and safely both at home and at destination. This will enable residents without driveways to charge their EVs easily and locally and embrace a move towards cleaner transport.

What more can we do to deliver these recommendations?

- TfL have proposed to build a state of art, electric bus station at Edgware Station, which will be further developed as part of our work on the development of Edgware town centre, subject to planning permission and meeting relevant safety standards.
- Continue work with schools such as delivery of Bikeability Training, rollout of School Streets, and taking part in national awareness campaigns such as Car Free Day and Cycle to School Week.
- The A1000 cycle and bus lane was opened in November 2020. The scheme has seen the creation of 3.2km of new cycle lanes in the Finchley / Golders Green areas of Barnet borough, providing a safe and direct green corridor for commuters and leisure cyclists alike. As part of our Transport Strategy refresh, we are looking to develop a programme of cycle routes around Barnet.

HOUSING, BUILDINGS AND RENEWABLE ENERGY



Recommendations from the Citizen's Assembly



Housing, Buildings and Renewable Energy

According to the carbon emissions baseline calculated in 2021, emissions from heating and powering buildings in Barnet is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendations:

- Retrofit council properties and provide grants / subsidies for people in private housing to make buildings net zero
- Incorporate green and sustainable design processes in all new builds / infrastructure
- Make housing more sustainable by installing solar panels and providing subsidies to improve appliances.

Response:

Barnet is the second most populous borough in London, and we expect it to grow even more over the next few years. To accommodate this anticipated growth within the borough, our draft Local Plan sets out:

- The target of delivering c.35,000 new homes by 2036, which will be supported by delivering social infrastructure through new schools, parks etc., as set out within our Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- A review of planning policies with regards sustainability to ensure that net zero is embedded within our strategic approach to delivering growth.

Embedding sustainability in existing council homes and new build development is also a key objective of Barnet's new Housing Strategy 2023-28. As a council, we have already committed to achieving EPC band B for all new build homes, with an aim that by 2030 all new homes and infrastructure commissioned will be net zero, and have lobbied the government for the Future Homes Standard to set ambitious targets to deliver net zero developments.

Alongside securing Government grants for council homes, we are also actively supporting the decarbonisation of eligible private homes through channelling funding from the Government's Sustainable Warmth Competition, co-ordinated through the West London consortium.

Since the close of the Citizens' Assembly, we have launched a [crowdfunding scheme](#) for ideas that reduce carbon emissions, such as improving community buildings, neighbourhoods, or parks. We encourage communities, residents and businesses to apply for this fund should they have projects to decarbonise their buildings, such as solar panel installations in community buildings.

What more can we do to deliver these recommendations?

- Continue to actively support retrofit and energy advice programmes with the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Councils and other groups to provide tailored insight, guidance and advice, to help private homeowners retrofit their homes, including signposting to Government grant funding opportunities as part of the BarNET ZERO communications campaign. Through this campaign we will also maintain information on how local sustainability initiatives would be supported.
- In addition to our current actions, Barnet strives to implement sustainable architectural practices in buildings in the council's portfolio. These practices include, but are not limited to, solar panels, low carbon heating solutions (such as Air Source Heat Pumps), double glazing and insulation, green roofs, cycle storage.
- Review existing planning policies and guidance and seek to update those where possible to strengthen support for the delivery of low carbon, sustainable and future proof developments.
- Explore longer term investment opportunities in infrastructure and design to support building decarbonisation, including district heat networks.
- Deliver pilot projects which focus on elements of sustainable construction to gather insights and learnings to improve project delivery in the future. We will share learnings, and associated cost where possible with the community.
- Signpost green and sustainable resources (such as advice, funding and local businesses) to those people who are undertaking works to their properties.
- Signpost any funding resources that are available, such as through government / GLA grants and the council's [crowdfunding scheme](#).





NEXT STEPS

The Citizens' Assembly had been a remarkable journey for Barnet as we actively engaged with residents to contribute to our journey in becoming one of London's most sustainable boroughs. The actions that we are working on are aligned with Our Plan for Barnet 2023 to 2026, one that puts Caring for People, our Places and the Planet at the heart of everything we do.

We hope that this report on the Initial Response to the Citizens' Assembly Recommendations will confirm the seriousness in which we hold the actions that the assembly participants have asked us to undertake.

As part of the launch of Our Plan for Barnet, on 17 July 2023, we facilitated conversations with our partners, who demonstrated the current actions they are already undertaking that will support these Recommendations, as well as pledging new actions for the future.

Barnet is continuing to work with TPXimpact in developing next course of action, especially in continuing to work with residents, communities and businesses, and how we might actively work together on our journey to becoming a net zero borough by 2042.

And, in November 2023, we launched this response to the Citizens' Assembly, that begins the next phase of our work: the Community Response.

The initial goal is to develop a process that leads to the creation of a community action plan, which will outline and demonstrate how residents across the borough can play an active role in delivering on recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly and in helping us reach our goal of becoming a net zero borough by 2042. This action plan will be owned and driven by the community, with the council acting as a connector of partnerships that can help deliver community ambition. Between now and spring 2024, action groups will begin to meet and support the delivery of these recommendations across the borough. More information about this approach can be found on the [BarNET ZERO webpages](#).

As the Citizens' Assembly has generated a groundswell of momentum for sustainable actions in the borough, the council will continue to harness this force to make Barnet more sustainable, now and in the future.

