

Sustainability Annual Report 2025

CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY



Caring for **people**, our **places** and the **planet**

We are proud to present our sustainability annual report for 2025; we're continuing our journey to becoming one of London's most sustainable boroughs.



Last year, we released our first ever annual report, [Our journey so far](#), an account of progress towards net zero across the borough. Our story began in earnest in May 2022, with the declaration of a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency.

This took the first step in recognising the urgent action required to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss in Barnet, and the need to go further and faster than ever before, to foster a more sustainable, equitable, and healthy borough. Through the creation of a dedicated team to co-ordinate all the sustainability activities taking place across the council, we have set ambitious commitments and are leading action on climate change mitigation and adaptation, alongside our net zero targets.

We have committed in [Our Plan for Barnet](#) to care for People, our Places and the Planet – putting all three at the heart of what we do. It is our promise that we will work faster and harder than ever before to make Barnet one of the most sustainable boroughs in London.

In this year's report, we focus on our ambitious target to become a net zero borough by 2042. We share our updated commitments, highlight pioneering projects that are setting the standard, and detail our comprehensive pathway to achieving a net zero future.



We continue to be data driven; this year we have released our [Annual Carbon Report](#) and an interactive [Sustainability Dashboard](#) to help track our progress. We are making progress towards our net zero commitments, reducing carbon emissions within the organisation by 30.4% from 2018/19 levels, and within the borough by 33.5% on 2010-levels. Our work has been reflected in Climate Emergency UK's [Council Climate Action Scorecards](#), where we scored 59% and ranked 21st of all unitary authorities in the 2025 process.

We are on this journey together. We are working alongside our residents, businesses, and neighbouring boroughs, the Mayor of London, and agencies like TfL and others to get

there. We know there is much work happening across the organisation and by our local partners and communities across the borough as we progress towards our ambitious targets.

We recognise the need to act and build preparedness for the impacts of climate change, as well as to enable a low carbon future. Our next phase of work will be to strengthen relations, facilitate and support stakeholders across the borough in working together towards our target. Developing and implementing ideas in joint action across the borough will ensure Barnet's approach to sustainability moves at pace, is inclusive and meets the needs of our community.

Our Guiding Principles

As we look to the future, we embrace these principles to guide us throughout our journey, in everything we do:



We're embedding climate adaptation

We are incorporating climate adaptation across Council services to ensure Barnet's preparedness to future climate challenges.

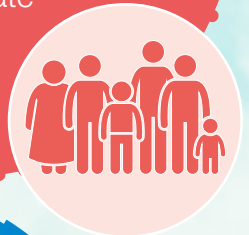
We're reducing our carbon impact

We are striving to become a net zero borough by 2042 and are fostering collaboration with residents, communities and partners to advance climate and biodiversity goals.



We're prioritising a Just Transition

We are prioritising equity, providing opportunities for all, and recognising unequal climate impacts.



We're being financially sustainable and responsible

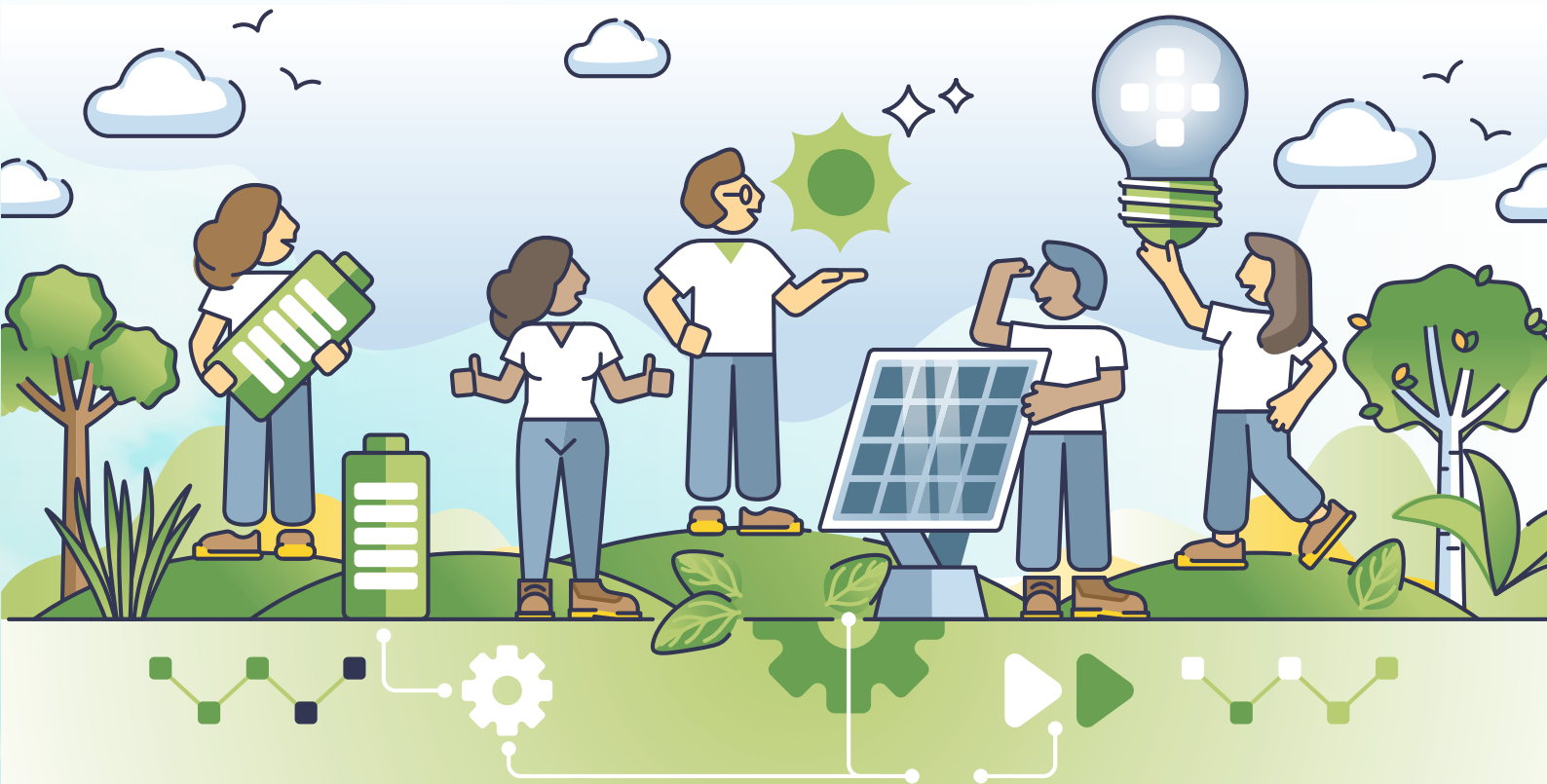
We are making realistic, responsible decisions, seeking innovative funding, and using data-driven approaches for continuous improvement.

We're working in partnership

We're delivering together, making a positive impact for residents and our community.



We're on our journey, will you join us?



Our journey to 2042; how are we going to get there?

In this year's report, we are proud to share our refreshed commitments and showcase some examples of the work we've accomplished this year.

As we strive to meet our goal to become a net zero borough by 2042, we are concentrating on key areas that will drive positive change and enable a more sustainable future across Barnet. We have refreshed our delivery plan and have nine key themes, each with a set of objectives, and each representing a crucial part of our collective efforts as an organisation and borough to drive our targets/goals.



Communities and Partnerships



Warmer Homes



Green Energy Future



Sustainable Transport



Climate Adaptation



Natural Environment



Business and Skills



Waste and Recycling



Influencing Change

Communities and Partnerships



We are committed to working in partnership to achieve our net zero ambitions



We will do this by:

- **Keeping the community engaged through BarNET Zero; providing support, sharing guidance and highlighting community case studies.**
- **Exploring innovation through academic research, and through partnerships and collaboration with others across the sector and beyond.**
- **Continuing to collaborate with schools, faith groups and community leaders, as we continue our long term commitment to embed sustainability and support the community.**

Through our [Sharing Best Practice](#) initiative, we aim to showcase and provide case studies of the work that education settings have accomplished in the areas of climate change and sustainability.

We have also been collaborating with faith groups across the borough, to support them in taking climate action within their own communities.

We are proud to highlight our award-winning [BarNET Zero](#) brand, which goes from strength to strength and underscores our commitment to achieving our Net Zero targets.

How we're delivering on these

This year, we launched the [Barnet School Strategy for Sustainability](#), to support educational settings in promoting sustainability and guiding climate action. The strategy aligns with the Department for Education's (DfE) sustainability requirements and includes [The Barnet School Charter](#), which allows schools to sign up and commit to a shared local vision and the [Climate Action Roadmap](#), which provides a detailed, step-by-step guide to implementing effective climate action within individual settings.



Our [BarNET Zero newsletter](#) reaches over **1000** residents; updating them on the Council's sustainability efforts and other green initiatives across the borough.

To enhance our efforts, we have been leveraging partnerships with academic institutions such as Middlesex University (MU), London School of Economics (LSE), University College London (UCL), and the University of Derby (UoD), to help deliver and support community research and projects.

Warmer Homes



We will enable residents to have warm, healthy homes, that are comfortable, cheap to run and fit for the future

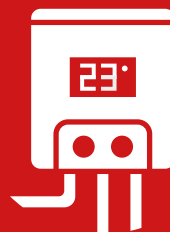
We will do this by:

- Providing clear and impartial information to residents on how to reduce energy use and emissions in their home, and signpost to available grants and funding opportunities.
- Launching a neighbourhood pilot programme that makes homes and places more sustainable and resilient.
- Supporting our housing and infrastructure development schemes to be as sustainable as possible.

How we're delivering on these

As part of our commitment to provide residents with home energy efficiency advice across our [BarNET Zero website](#), this year we have collaborated with [MapMortar](#). Together we have launched an online energy efficiency advisory platform for residents looking to undertake retrofit projects. The platform supports residents to better understand carbon reduction options and their costs; a second phase of work is ongoing to further develop the tool.

We also partnered with Green Doctors on delivering [Barnet's Free Home Energy Fix](#), to provide free tailored home energy support to residents from across the borough.



We referred over **500** residents to help them save money and reduce energy use.

This included free home energy audits, energy-saving equipment, bill-saving advice, energy efficiency tips and guidance on accessing financial support schemes.

We are working closely with the Greater London Authority and other London boroughs to deliver the [Warm Homes: Local Grant](#).

The grant will support private low-income households across London with low energy efficiency ratings by funding home improvement measures including insulation, low carbon heating, and solar panels. The grant will help to reduce energy bills, tackle fuel poverty, and improve energy efficiency in homes that need it most.

Green Energy Future



We are preparing the borough for a green energy transition

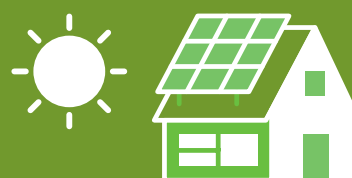
We will do this by:

- **Laying the foundations for Barnet's green future, by exploring opportunity areas for clean energy within our system, including Local Area Energy Planning and heat network feasibility.**
- **Working with residents, communities and businesses, to increase uptake of solar panels across the borough.**

How we're delivering on these

This year we have launched our first [Community Energy Fund](#), pledging £50,000 to support the growth of community energy throughout the borough. The fund is open to a wide range of community-led organisations, including charities, voluntary groups, faith organisations, and social enterprises, and aims to reduce carbon emissions in the borough with demonstrable impacts. We expect these projects to boost renewable energy generation in Barnet, enhance collaboration within communities to tackle climate change, and create lasting impacts to address fuel poverty, through innovative energy reduction initiatives.

Working with other West London boroughs through the West London Alliance (WLA), we are continuing to develop our [Local Area Energy Plan](#), which will support us to transform the borough's energy system, by understanding feasible options at a local and sub-regional level.



As part of this programme, we are looking at opportunities around solar power and energy system flexibility, as well as looking at feasibility for Heat Networks in Hendon and Finchley



Sustainable Transport



We are transforming the borough so we can move safely and sustainably throughout it

We will do this by:

- **Encouraging active travel (walking / wheeling and cycling), so they are transport methods of choice.**
- **Ensuring Barnet's public transport network (buses, underground / mainline rail and interchanges) meets the needs of residents and visitors travelling to and across the borough.**
- **Boosting the adoption and use of ultra-low emission vehicles.**

How we're delivering on these

This year we have continued to roll out over 800 public [electric vehicle charge points](#), including 50 JOLT charge points, and have proposals to install a further 500 next year. Through partnering with JOLT, whose charging solution provide an innovative onstreet digital advertising display with a fast 25kW DC charge point, we have already delivered over 10 million miles of charge, saving on carbon emissions and improving air quality.

We have also opened Barnet's first [cycleway](#), connecting neighbourhoods in Burnt Oak and Colindale. The cycleway provides a shared pedestrian and cycle path to encourage cycling, walking and running, and is the first



part of the Barnet Loop; a 17-mile network across the borough, that aims to reduce traffic congestion, alleviate pollution, and contribute to a cleaner, greener borough.

We continue to support the renewal of [Colindale Station](#). Improvements on the station are due to complete by autumn 2025, and will provide step-free access for everyone to London Underground services.



Improvements to Colindale Station include updates to the infrastructure, additional cycle parking, and a sustainable roof drainage system.

We continue to work with Transport for London (TfL) and other West London boroughs, to take forward the case for the West London Orbital overground rail services, linking Barnet with key destinations across West London.

Climate Adaptation



We are adapting to future impacts of climate change in our communities

We will do this by:

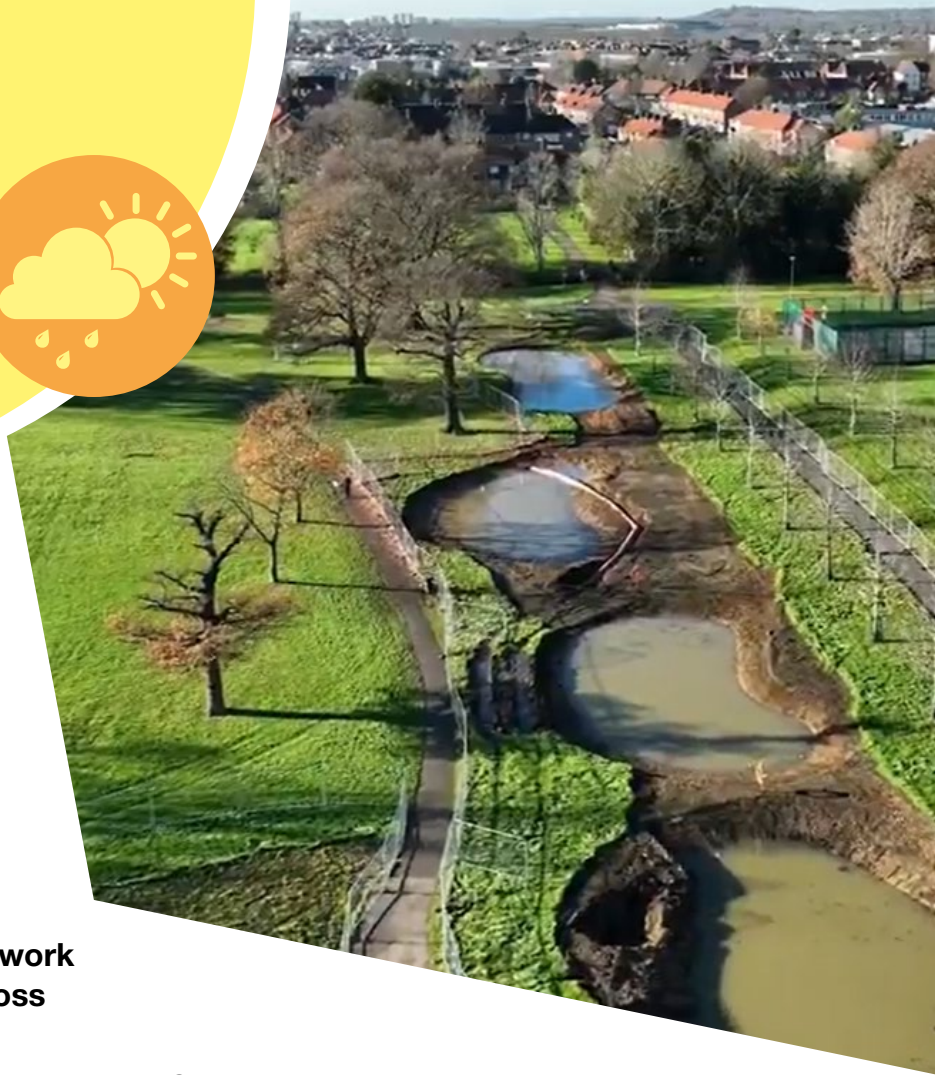
- Establishing an adaptation framework with partners to guide action across the borough.
- Improving water and [flood risk management](#), through policies and infrastructure such as [Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes \(SuDS\)](#).
- Enabling and working with the community to undertake engagement and coordinate a response to Extreme Heat.

How we're delivering on these



This year, we installed **2 rain gardens in Muswell Hill** and **2 rain gardens and tree pits in schools**.

These sustainable water drainage systems (SuDS) feature specially selected plants, shrubs, and other greenery; designed to absorb rainwater to help stop sewer systems becoming overwhelmed, reduce the risk of localised flooding and the impact of excess water on roads and pavements.



Our [new wetland area in Halliwick Recreation Ground](#) is the first of its kind in Barnet. The £1.3m SuDS will divert rainwater runoff into a newly built water storage basin, reducing the extent of downstream property and road junction flooding. The planting of specialist plants that reduce pollution were installed in the new wetlands to not only help treat rainwater but also provide valuable habitats for wildlife.

We are continuing to work with Bloomberg Associates, who created Barnet specific [Climate Risk Maps](#). We used these to host three workshops alongside Public Health and Emergency Planning colleagues, to raise awareness and start discussions about how we can become more resilient to climate change; informing our wider Adaptation work.

With extreme heat becoming more common, this year we are working to understand how it's affecting the borough and how we prepare and respond. We are increasing our registered [Cool Spaces](#) and working with the CivicLabs team at the University of Derby to develop our response to being more resilient to rising temperatures.

Natural Environment



We are supporting our green infrastructure, so it can continue to support us



Where areas have been reseeded, a mixture of over 20 species of wildflower and 6 species of meadow grass have been sown.

We will do this by:

- **Improving biodiversity across the borough; replacing the biodiversity which may be lost through construction and by prioritising green spaces in new developments.**
- **Continuing to manage our green spaces in a more carbon-conscious way; mowing less, trialling environmental cuts, and always using peat free compost.**
- **Planting 900 trees and expanding canopy cover across the borough.**

How we're delivering on these

We want to improve the [quality of Barnet's grassland](#) by changing the management of suitable areas, and by adding more locations to the list of Barnet's No-Mow May sites. Mowing less reduces our need to use fuel and increases biodiversity, so we trialled halving the number of times we cut amenity grassland areas, as well as most road verges; resulting in no noticeable negative impacts reported on the appearance or functionality of these spaces. So, we're going to continue this beyond the trial and look to expand where we can.

We reseeded more locations with wildflower meadow seed mix, which contain a range of native flower and grass species, typically found in meadows.

Barnet's first ever '[Tiny Orchard](#)' was seeded with help from local residents; it will provide a new community space for people to enjoy nature, learn new skills and grow food, as well creating new habitats for wildlife. It includes a mix of fruit trees and bushes which have been specially selected for this site.

In partnership with Earthwatch Europe and Pure Data Centres, we brought together hundreds of volunteers to plant 1,800 trees, creating three new '[Tiny Forests](#)' in [Mutton Brook](#), East Finchley. Each forest, consisting of 600 trees in an area the size of a tennis court, will provide nature-rich spaces which connect to an existing Tiny Forest and urban wildflower meadow. They will provide a dense oasis for nature, each one capable of attracting over 500 animal and plant species. The green sites will also serve as a living laboratory for local citizen scientists, coordinated by Earthwatch, to harvest data and investigate techniques to promote faster tree growth. Each plot will use a slightly different planting system to improve understanding of soil condition, carbon sequestrations and drainage.

This project, alongside the other 925 trees planted last year, helps Barnet to become a greener, healthier, place and improves access to nature-rich spaces in urban areas. Learn more about trees in Barnet by visiting our [tree portal](#).

Business and Skills



We are turning
Barnet into a
green economy

We will do this by:

- **Providing sustainability support to local businesses in Barnet, that helps them baseline and improve their carbon footprint.**
- **Teaching green skills to residents in partnership with local employers to help put people straight into work.**
- **Working with charities and community initiatives to shorten supply chains and reduce waste, such as unwanted electronics and surplus food, in the borough.**



The sustainability programme has delivered financial savings to these businesses, as well as reducing carbon emissions in the borough by almost 12,000 kilograms of CO₂e, 58,000 kilowatt-hour of electricity being used, and over £8,700 in running costs.



How we're delivering on these

The new [Skills Centre](#) in Edgware opened its doors in June 2024; offering a gateway for residents looking to start or grow a career in construction and gain green skills.

As part of a pilot sustainability support programme in North Finchley, we provided 50 high street businesses who signed the [BarNET ZERO pledge](#) with detailed audits, covering a range of business activities that have an impact on sustainability such as transport, waste management, cooking, heating / ventilation, refrigeration, and lighting. Businesses received tailored support and recommendations via an action plan, with 17 awarded grants to implement measures such as LED lighting and energy-efficient refrigeration.



Waste and Recycling



We are improving how we manage waste and promoting a circular economy

We will do this by:

- **Prioritising reducing food waste, by collecting separate organic waste from every household across the borough, supporting local community food growing projects and delivering community food leader training.**
- **Reducing the quantity of waste produced by commercial business, by encouraging and supporting businesses to recycle.**
- **Educating and supporting residents on good recycling practice through continued communications campaigns.**

How we're delivering on these

This year we are continuing to prioritise the 4Rs of waste management: reduce, reuse, recycle and recover for household waste.



Through the hugely successful Community Skips programme, 452 bikes, 592 white goods, 1801 items of furniture, 1018 children's toys, and 582 textile items have been sent for recycling or reuse



With support from the North London Waste Authority, we have also secured funding to deliver Repair Cafés in the borough, extending the life of clothes and electricals, and diverting waste from landfill. These fun and eco-friendly events allow attendees to bring their broken items and learn how to fix them with the help of skilled partners. Together, we are working to reduce waste and promote sustainability in our community. Through the success of these pilot Repair Cafés, we have secured additional funding to deliver more Cafés this year.

Residents and communities came together to grow their own food. The [Ready Steady Grow](#) project provided community food growing leadership training, sharing knowledge and experience on how to establish and run a community food growing space. Seven existing community food growers in Barnet held sessions on how to establish and run a peri-urban food growing project. 54 people completed the programme and 4 new community food growing sites are thriving and appreciated in Montrose Park, Basing Hill, Church Farm Open Space and Hollickwood Park / Freehold Community Centre. This project is being expanded this year.

Influencing Change



We are influencers of change, transforming how we operate as a Council and across our supply chain

We will do this by:

- **Reducing our own impact on Barnet's changing environment by decarbonising our buildings, fleet and operations.**
- **Recognising our sphere of influence by working with our partners and making our supply chain more sustainable.**
- **Educating all council employees about the council's wider sustainability objectives through training modules and other communication methods.**
- **Enabling strong governance, carbon reporting, and embedding emissions reduction and local adaptation into existing decision making and reporting.**

How we're delivering on these

This year we have developed and released our [Annual Carbon Report](#) sharing our progress in reducing emissions. The Council has seen a reduction of 30.4% in total gross emissions from our baseline year (18/19). The change in emissions can be attributed to a reduction in gas heating emissions in council buildings, driven by delivery of energy efficiency measures and behavioural change, reduction in electricity, driven by transitioning all our Street Lights to

low consumption LED bulbs and a reduction in transport emissions, as a result of changing organisational cultures and reduced business travel.

We have installed energy efficiency works to reduce energy use and carbon emissions across 19 council buildings and schools. Energy Efficiency measures delivered, funded by the [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#) grant, include heat pumps, solar PV, and LED lighting, with annual carbon savings expected of up to 754 tCO₂e.

We are also working closely with our partner, Barnet Homes, to retrofit council homes, creating warmer and more comfortable homes for residents whilst reducing energy demand and costs.



This year we are improving the energy efficiency of **238** council homes with funding from the [Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund](#)



We're on our journey, will you join us?

We are proud of the distance we've travelled since declaring a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in May 2022. Working across the organisation, with our partners, residents, communities and businesses, we've accelerated our progress towards becoming one of London's most sustainable boroughs. We recognise there is much more to do, and we can only do that if we work together across the borough and wider; join us on our journey.

To find out more about what you can do to get involved and keep up-to-date on sustainability related news, activities and initiatives, visit our [webpage](#).



Caring for people, our places and the planet

BARNET-ZERO-

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH