

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY – BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:



Newham's air quality and climate emergency annual report

Mayor's foreword



Climate change touches everyone and everything, It poses a dire threat to the future of humanity, disproportionality affecting the poor and the marginalised across the globe. It will displace millions of people and affect billions, so the action we need to take to address this critical issue – including decarbonising the global

economy – requires a step-change and an overhauling of our approach to the planet which has to be wide-ranging and all-encompassing.

Writing this in mid-2020, as the health aspects of the Covid-19 pandemic appear to be easing and attention is moving to the recovery of the economy, it would be easy for politicians to downgrade the priority given to tackling the climate emergency.

In my opinion, that would be entirely the wrong thing to do. We need not only to 'build back better', but to 'build back greener'. Addressing the global challenge of the Climate Emergency and building a sustainable future is a non-negotiable priority for Newham Council and myself, one which is shaping our policies across the Council and is central to our Community Wealth Building agenda and our Inclusive Economy Strategy.

Like many local authorities in the UK, Newham Council declared a climate emergency in the spring of 2019. Since that time, we have carried out a review of our current activities and taken advice on the actions we need to take over the longer-term. We have also adopted a comprehensive Air Quality Action Plan. In addition, in line with our commitment to participatory

democracy, we established an independent Citizens' Assembly. This met in early 2020 and made a number of recommendations, many of which are now reflected in our Climate Emergency Action Plan.

We have adopted the UK national government target of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 [i.e. a reduction in GHGs by at least 100% of 1990 levels by 2050], while setting a local target of making the borough 'carbon neutral' by 2030. These are immensely challenging targets. However, if they are not met, as the United Nations has said, there is a real risk that the world will experience irreversible ecosystem and biodiversity loss, water scarcity and climate-related poverty for millions of people.

This Climate Emergency Annual Report is the first we have produced. In future, I intend that an annual progress report should be presented to the Council and the people of Newham. It is clear from this report that there is a lot of work happening already that will contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. However the scale of activity needs to be increased substantially and rapidly. Our Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out a path for the Council to begin this period of sustained and radical change.

The report looks back to what has been done since we declared a climate emergency and outlines briefly what we plan to do next in a number of key areas - and, most importantly of all, how local people can play their part.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rokhsana Fiaz'.

Rokhsana Fiaz OBE
Mayor of Newham

1. Greening the borough

Our key goals

We will work to ensure that the borough's green spaces are accessible, safe and high quality places for leisure, recreation and exercise. We also want them to contribute to a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable environment, which reduces the high levels of CO₂ and other airborne pollutants in the borough and allows wildlife to thrive.

What's been done

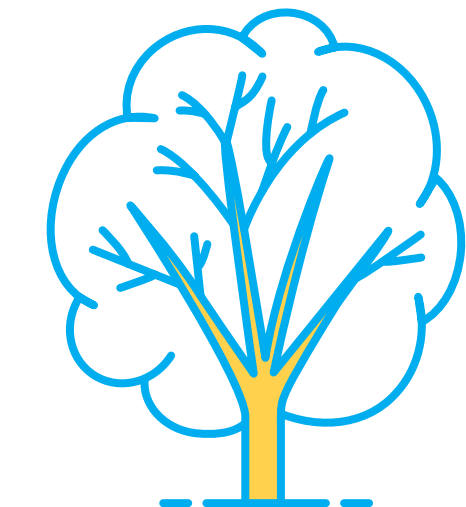
Our Parks and Open Spaces service was brought back in-house in January 2020. We are now transforming the services in this area with new priorities and ambition. We have developed plans for replacing our fleet with new electric vehicles and kit. We have also begun the process of improving parks and green spaces and the local environment more sustainable.

What we will do

We will be developing a 10-year parks and green spaces strategy and a tree and woodland strategy. Both of these will improve local amenities and promote greater biodiversity, whilst contributing to our climate emergency objectives of reducing CO₂ and providing additional shade cover in the borough. This is a key issue for us all, as summers are expected to get hotter in the decades ahead. We intend to reduce our reliance on harmful chemicals, lower our consumption of water, and improve biodiversity through reduced grass cutting and shrub management.

What local people can do

We are keen to work with communities to promote the responsible use of our parks as places for wellbeing, recreation, sport and play. We will be looking to increase the involvement of local people through initiatives such as community orchards, community gardening programmes, friends of parks groups and the adoption of neglected land.



Case Study:

Mass tree planting in Beckton District Park South

Trees help to tackle climate change and protect wildlife habitats by producing oxygen, absorbing carbon, creating shade and improving air quality.

In 2019, in collaboration with the charity Trees for Cities, the Council developed a new community orchard in Beckton District Park South. Traditional orchards in the UK are under enormous threat, declining by 90% since the 1950s. Besides giving us the opportunity to forage, orchards bring all sorts of benefits. By simply existing, they show us where fruits and nuts come from, how pollination works, and encourage us to use the harvest to make nutritious, delicious meals.

Residents were asked to vote for their favourite fruits and nuts, which made up the planting list for the orchard. They opted for apples, pears, plums, mulberry, gages, crab apples, hazel, medlar and quince. An initial 20 fruit trees were planted in the Spring, with the support of local residents, and plans were developed thereafter for a much larger scale planting project to be undertaken later in the year.

During National Tree Week in 2019, tree planting workshops were held with pupils from Gallions Primary, North Beckton Primary, Winsor Primary and Kingsford Secondary schools. On 1st December a mass tree planting event was held to mark the culmination of National Tree Week. The event was supported by an incredible 491 volunteers who successfully planted 9,000 new trees during the day. The mass tree planting project will contribute towards increasing London's tree canopy by 10 per cent by 2050 to help to maintain London's status as the world's first National Park City.

2. Reducing waste and increasing recycling

Our key goals

One of the main drivers of climate change is the fact that, as a society, we consume more goods than ever and throw away items that could be reused or recycled. We are committed to transforming our waste management services and working with local people not only to recycle more, but to reduce the amount of waste produced in the borough and reuse products wherever possible.

What's been done

The Council's Waste Management Service works with the East London Waste Authority (ELWA) to increase the proportion of waste that is diverted from landfill and feed into the circular economy for recycling waste. Over the last year we have been developing our plans for expanding the range of products that can be collected and recycled and finding ways to reduce the volumes of waste that cannot be recycled, such as kitchen waste, and reducing the contamination of recycling so that it doesn't go to waste. This has included engagement events in shopping areas and schools, community litter picking events, participating in Newham Junior Citizens events and one-to-one contacts through door knocking.

What we will do

We will be consulting on a comprehensive waste management strategy and rolling out new services such as additional weekly recycling collections, and increasing our support to residents who want to know how to recycle more or reduce their waste. As we expand our recycling services we will be looking to ensure that we purchase electric vehicles where we can, and optimise our collection routes in order to reduce the miles travelled by our refuse collection vehicles.

What local people can do

Reducing waste and increasing recycling depends on the active participation of local residents. There is much that they can do. There is regularly updated advice on the

Council's website and social media outlets. In addition, the Council participates in local events, where it shares information on how people can waste less, reuse more, recycle correctly and improve our street scene. Residents are encouraged to use the Love Newham App to report litter, fly-tipping and fly-tippers and use the various services available, such as the bulky waste and the Jenkins Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre, to recycle and dispose of their waste. The Council also encourages community participation in activities such as community litter picks.





Case Study:

Newham food waste pilot scheme

Discarded food constitutes almost half of Newham's domestic waste and more than half of all food waste is avoidable. Wasted food contributes to climate change, as it means more food than is necessary is produced, transported and sold. Collecting and disposing of food waste also creates unnecessary emissions and adds to the cost of the borough's waste management services.

In 2019, the Council therefore undertook a food waste trial in which local residents helped us to understand why and how people waste food and what can be done about it.

At the beginning of the project, participants reported an average of 2.98kg of food waste per week at an average cost of £7.23. Upon completion of the project, participants reported an average of 2.19kg of food waste per week - a 27% (0.79kg) reduction in the amount produced - and an average weekly cost of £4.99.

This trial proved that by changing some basic habits, food waste in the borough could be significantly reduced. It also gave us insights into what tips residents found most useful.

The Council will be running a borough-wide food waste campaign in 2020, using the findings from the trial. The team is also looking to run online events that show how people can reduce the amount of food waste they produce, including the possibility of providing online cooking courses with the Well Newham Kitchen. These classes would seek to reduce food waste, by teaching recipes that involve using up leftovers, whilst promoting other key food waste messaging, such as proper storage.

3. Cleaner, more sustainable transport

Our key goals

Our goal is to achieve cleaner, more sustainable transport by enabling and encouraging walking and cycling and the use of public transport where possible. While we appreciate there is a role for the private car, we are also committed to supporting a 'greening' of our vehicle fleet by incentivising lower and zero emission vehicles.

What's been done

We have delivered significant improvements to the cycling network, particularly around Stratford and on the Greenway, where there has been major investment in new connections, and the numbers of users have increased significantly as a result. We have also begun our low traffic neighbourhood programme, to take non-residential traffic away from residential areas and to create safe and quiet residential streets for walking and cycling.

We also run an excellent cycle training programme for all ages and abilities, which is free to the user, and are increasing the availability of bikes to our residents through 'Try Before You Bike' and bike hire schemes. We have also launched the Healthy School Streets programme, which delivers safer streets with improved air quality outside school entrances at arrival and departure times while also encouraging a shift away from the private car for parent drop-offs and pick-ups. Also, the Council's programme of electric vehicle charging points has resumed following a pause due to Covid 19, with 40 new double-charging units being installed.

What we will do

Our improvements to walking and cycling networks will continue apace, with new routes and improvements to existing routes. There will be a focus on strategic cycle routes linking to Stratford from the North (the Leyton Road corridor), South (Manor Road/ West Ham

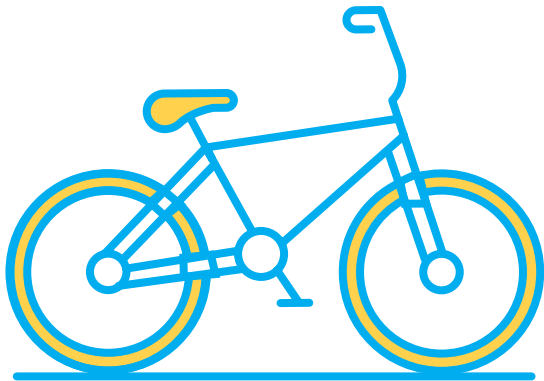
Lane corridor), East (Romford Road corridor) and West (Westfield Avenue/ Montfitchet Road corridors). Our cycle training programmes will continue and a new all-ability offer will be provided to residents with differing abilities. Brompton Bike Hire will be expanded and three more docks are planned this year - more if external funding is available.

Try Before You Bike was launched fully this year, providing a low cost bike ownership option with the opportunity to buy the bike afterwards. The low traffic neighbourhood programme will accelerate, with new schemes planned for Forest Gate North and South, Custom House, Stratford Village, East Ham High Street North and Manor Park. These will help reduce traffic and encourage and enable more local journeys by foot and by bike.

Healthy School Streets will continue, with a further tranche of schools to be added this year, and more schools are already interested beyond that. To incentivise the greening of our vehicle fleet in the borough we intend to introduce emission-based charging for both residential and business parking permits early in 2021. More electric charging points will be delivered (including some rapid charging units) and we will also roll out car club bays across the borough, giving many residents a viable and much cheaper alternative to owning a car of their own.

What local people can do

While we appreciate that not everyone can or wants to walk and cycle, and that these forms of transport aren't suitable for certain types of journey, we all need to think carefully about how we move around the borough, and the effect it has on the environment. Air quality impacts, health impacts, noise impacts and congestion all arise from using a car, and there is also a significant personal health benefit in choosing more active modes of travel. Many people have rediscovered walking and cycling during the recent Covid-19 restrictions and we





want to support people to continue with more active ways of getting around. We also know that many people consider walking and cycling is safer than using public transport for work and shopping journeys post Covid-19, and that this has resulted in high levels of walking and cycling as lockdown is lifted. We have secured emergency Transport for London and central government funding to deliver urgent walking and cycling schemes to support this switch to sustainable modes, but we ask people to bear with us while we deliver these improvements and to keep travelling sustainably in the meantime.

To summarise, we would like everyone to think about if they need to own a vehicle, and if so, what sort of vehicle they need and how polluting it is. Even if you do own a vehicle, we would like you to consider not using it for certain journeys that can easily be undertaken by bike or on foot, and to not use your vehicle automatically – for the benefit of our own and everyone else’s health and the environment more generally.



Case Study:

Healthy School Streets

The Healthy School Streets scheme was introduced at five schools in late 2019. It involves closing roads around particular schools during drop-off and pick-up times in order to create safer street environments for walking and cycling, as well as providing better conditions for social distancing and improved air quality, particularly near the school gates.

Healthy School Streets has changed the way people travel to and from these schools, and many parents and school children now walk and cycle. Air quality monitors which have been installed outside the schools show that there have been improvements in air quality, particularly during morning drop-off and afternoon pick up periods, when only residents are allowed access to the streets.

As part of the Council’s wider approach to improving the health of local people nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes were installed outside of 99 Schools in Newham in August 2019 to monitor average NO2 concentrations throughout the year.

Overall, the feedback received has been positive, with schools, residents and businesses crediting schemes for creating better and safer street environments with less traffic and congestion during drop-off and pick-up times.

A second tranche of 10 schools is being added to the initial five and, subject to funding being made available, it is hoped that further schools will be added.

4. More energy efficient housing

Our key goals

The Council plans to invest heavily in our housing stock over the next five years to bring energy efficiency levels up to modern standards. This will include installation of new roofs, windows and cladding. In the long term gas boilers will be phased out and replaced by sustainable heating systems. However, as a short term measure, all gas boilers with a rating of "G" or worse will be replaced with 'A' rated boilers. We are also replacing old-style sodium lamps with efficient light-emitting diode (LED) lighting in blocks of flats are to reduce energy consumption and running costs.

What's been done

Currently, 85 blocks have had LED lighting upgrades carried out, with more than 2,200 LED fittings installed. Several Council offices have also been upgraded to LED lighting.

In addition, specialist consultants have been appointed to review our street housing stock, which includes Victorian properties, and they are working with energy providers to develop proposals to improve these older homes. A pilot project involving roof replacement and insulation upgrades is expected to commence on site later this year.

What we will do

A rolling programme of improvements is being planned across our low rise stock and is fully funded within the approved Housing Capital Programme. Over time, we want to see all our properties as energy efficient as they can be, using sustainable energy sources that do not produce greenhouse gases.

Case Study:

Energy efficient LED lighting upgrades

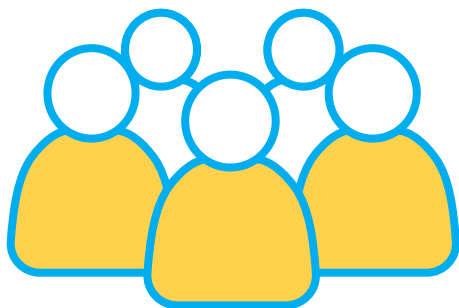
Reducing CO₂ emissions can often be painless and straightforward and save money as well as energy.

Over the last five years we have been installing a revolutionary energy efficient lighting system into its low rise and high rise blocks. This system monitors the lighting levels within each block and adjusts the brightness of the lighting accordingly. It can also reduce lighting levels during non-peak hours, which reduces energy consumption and running costs.

LED lighting produces a more natural, brighter light than standard compact fluorescent lighting. The lifespan of an LED light is approximately 50,000hrs. (A standard 28 watt fluorescent light lasts for only about 10,000hrs.) An LED light running for 12 hours per day, 365 days a year should last in excess of 10 years, compared to just over two years for a comparable fluorescent light. In addition, all component parts of an LED light fitting are recyclable by the manufacturer.

The estimated running costs of a 15 watt LED light fitting per year is £8.50, compared to £15.90 for a more traditional 28 watt fluorescent light fitting (figures based on 12hrs per day, 365 days a year). On the basis of the 2200 LEDs already installed, the estimated savings in running costs to the Council and its tenants is £16,280 per year.

5. Involving and Empowering our Community



Our key goals

The Council's climate emergency objectives will only be met if people get involved and begin to change the way they live. The Council can provide residents and businesses with the information they need to make informed choices, but we want to learn from local people what they think will work best.

Therefore we intend to organise a programme of 'Newham Climate Conversations' that will allow us to capture the voices of Newham on this key issue that affects us all.

What's been done

Early in 2020, we sponsored the independent Newham Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. 36 randomly selected local people met over three evenings and a weekend to develop recommendations in response to the question: 'How can the Council and residents work together to reach the aspiration of being carbon zero by 2050 at the latest?'

Assembly members received 14 presentations from a variety of local and national experts and produced a detailed report to which the Council Cabinet responded in July 2020. Many of the Assembly's recommendations are now included in our Climate Emergency Action Plan.

In addition, we have worked closely with young people to help them give their views on the climate emergency. This work and how we plan to take it forward is set out in the case study below.

Other resident engagement and involvement events have included the Newham Climate Now Forum held in September 2019, which brought together leading experts and local and national campaigning groups, and the Council's Peace event in the autumn of 2019, which was organised as an alternative to the DSEI exhibition being held at the Excel Exhibition Centre in the Royal Docks, Newham, which had a central focus on green, sustainable economics with participation from leading economists and campaign groups in the field.

What we will do

We will use existing mechanisms and networks, such as our Community Citizens' Assemblies, community networks and the Youth Empowerment Service to ensure that all sections of the community can get involved in tackling the major challenge of our time. We are also proposing to hold an annual event of interested stakeholders to develop further ideas and solutions to the complex challenges that we all face. In 2020-21, we plan to hold a Climate Change Youth Conference, which will involve schools, colleges and voluntary and community sector organisations. We will also strengthen our online engagement with local people and will look to develop additional networks to engage with new audiences.

What local people can do

There are many ways to get involved. One way is through the borough's wide range of voluntary and community organisations, some of which have an explicitly environmental focus. People can also contact activeNewham, a leisure trust with charitable status, which works in partnership with the Council to deliver leisure, sports and volunteering opportunities in the borough. The Air Quality Health Champions described below is another positive and practical way people can get involved.





Case Study:

Empowering young people

All over the world young people have led the way in challenging political and business leaders about the damage being done by climate change.

In September 2019, we invited young people from across the borough to share their thoughts about climate change, and over 100 young people, aged 9-21, came to attend a meeting at Stratford Town Hall.

They told us that they felt frustrated a perceived lack of action and apathy, not just from government, but also from their peers. They said that they wanted Newham to work on raising awareness through social media and poster campaigns, and to support the #FridaysForFuture climate strikes. They also wanted the Council to work with schools and businesses to set targets for things like recycling and reducing air pollution.

Young people also took the views of the Youth Assembly to the Council's Cabinet. As a result, we agreed to give the next Newham Show a Climate Change focus.

Involvement in the Youth Assembly has led young people to be involved in two environmental social action projects, one picking up the issue raised in the Climate Assembly about a perceived lack of action amongst their peers, while the second focused on raising awareness through social media. It is hoped that other initiatives involving young people will recommence when the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions are eased. These include the Keeping it Wild participation project, which supports young people to take part in initiatives that improve the natural environment,

6. Health

Our key goals

It is important that we fully understand the links in Newham between climate change and ill health. We will work with residents to improve health and reduce health inequalities linked to climate change. In particular, we will tackle high levels of air pollution, deal with poorly insulated homes and the fuel poverty often associated with poor insulation, while supporting residents to change behaviour that contributes to climate change. We will also work together with local people to address the implications of extreme cold weather in the winter and hot weather in the summer - issues which are likely to get worse in years to come.

What's been done

There are very clear links between poor respiratory health and other long-term ill health conditions among Newham residents and the high levels of air pollution in the borough. Tackling them is a top priority of our Air Quality Action Plan and '50 Steps to a Healthier Newham', Newham's health and wellbeing strategy.

Improving air quality is not something the Council can do alone. The active involvement of local residents is of crucial importance. We have therefore recruited local people as Air Quality Health Champions, who act as community advocates and shape and design local interventions. The champions have been recruited through numerous engagement events and have received training and support to act in their local neighbourhoods.

What we will do

There are already many different activities underway, including initiatives to increase the level of walking and cycling ('active travel') and increase the use of our parks and open spaces among those who live and work in Newham. We will support these initiatives among schools, local businesses and in local communities. We will also continue to recruit Air Quality Health

Champions and use them to help maintain the levels of walking and cycling that have been achieved in the borough during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

We will also work to tackle fuel poverty in the borough, using data to target our most vulnerable residents.

Finally, we will work with our partners in the Health and Wellbeing Board to bring forward a Newham wide adaptation plan relating to climate change.

What local people can do

Improving the health of our communities, and at the same time reducing the impacts of climate change requires the involvement of local residents, businesses, schools and other partner organisations. Businesses and other employers can lead by example in the workplace, while residents can become local champions in their communities. First steps might include people making a personal commitment to reduce their carbon footprint and engaging in more active travel, walking and cycling and also thinking more about the kind of food they eat and the distance it has travelled.





Case Study:

Air Quality Health Champions

The Newham Air Quality Action plan particularly highlights the need to increase awareness and drive behavioural change in communities and to work in localities to develop local initiatives that improve air quality and health. For this reason, we launched our Air Quality Health Champions scheme in September 2019.

Health Champions are volunteers who help to raise awareness on air quality and the impact it has on respiratory health, while building and supporting health improvement in communities. This model is widely reported to be successful and can demonstrate real local health benefits while also helping to gain momentum for the implementation of our Air Quality Plans locally.

There are many tasks that volunteers can take part in: for example, anti-idling campaigns, or helping schools to improve awareness and understanding of air quality issues and how they can be tackled, or as volunteers raising awareness among businesses wanting to implement changes within the workplace. The scheme also provides a great opportunity for

young people to become involved as volunteers in their local communities.

Active Newham is responsible for the volunteer management side of the programme. Currently, Air Quality Health Champion volunteers are deployed on a neighbourhood basis, to provide local information and to complement and develop current activity already taking place.

By mid-June 2020, 81 residents had become Air Quality Health Champions and had already provided 526 hours of volunteering. 29 Champions have obtained L2 Accreditation in Understanding Health Improvement, while four Champions have set up their own individual projects. Projects include the East Ham Cycling Club, Windsor Road Anti-Idling Event, School Street Project, and the child-friendly 'Cool' AQ Messaging.

We want to build on the successes of the last year, by ensuring that there is representation in all communities and that champions can develop local responses that address the particular needs of their neighbourhoods.

7. Food

Our key goals

Food is a major driver of climate change. For instance, a meat-heavy diet produces almost twice as much CO₂ as a diet based primarily on plant-based foods. Also, every tonne of food saved from waste and eaten removes approximately four tonnes in CO₂. If food waste were a country it would be the world's third largest greenhouse gas generator! Food miles are another important consideration: importing large amounts of food from the other side of the world, particularly by air, is a major source of CO₂.

We are keen to work with local people to increase the consumption of plant-based food and decrease the consumption of higher carbon foods, particularly red meat. We also want to encourage the consumption of more fresh seasonal and local produce, as using what is seasonal and local first will significantly reduce the food miles of what we eat. Decreasing food waste makes sense for economic and environmental reasons and we will help people to reduce the amount of food they throw away. Finally, we will encourage companies and consumers to reduce the amount of food packaging, particularly that which is non-recyclable.

What's been done

Key steps in 2019-20 so far concentrated on what we ourselves can do to reduce the amount of CO₂ created relating to food products. So, for example, building on our initial Smarter Cafe at The Gate Library, with its plant-based menu, we have successfully launched two further cafes on the same model at East Ham Library and Canning Town Library. In addition, the Council's own staff canteen contract stipulates that a certain percentage of meals must be vegetarian or vegan. In every three week period, 24 out of 45 meal options will be vegetarian or vegan. Where meat is used, we stipulate that meat which has a lower carbon footprint is our preference.

Help Newham food boxes during the Covid pandemic been procured to be meat free, in order to reduce their carbon footprint, as well as maximising their suitability for a broad range of cultural and religious needs. Our broader Covid-19 relief partnership with the voluntary and community sector has been focused on the redistribution of surplus food that would otherwise go to waste. By mid-June 2020, 150 tonnes of surplus food had been utilised in this 'Newham Food Alliance', with a CO₂ saving of over 550 tonnes.

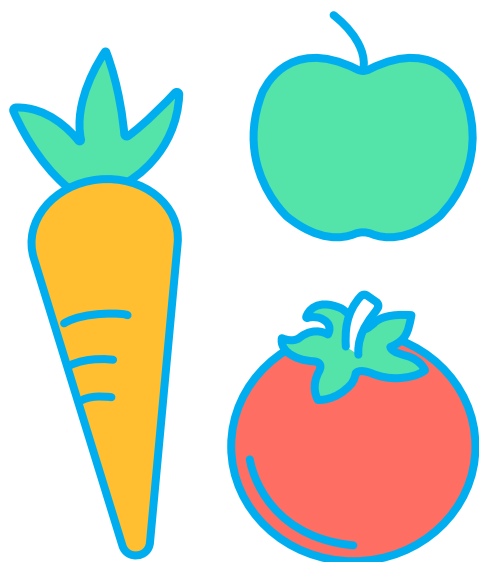
What we will do

We will build on our Covid-19 surplus food distribution work to develop the Newham Food Alliance and reduce food poverty while reducing the waste of edible food. It will also be an active partner in helping to meet the national need for an agricultural workforce that can pick our fruit and vegetables in 2020. Brexit and the Covid-19 lockdown means that 60 000 or more seasonal jobs that have been filled by an EU workforce historically now may need to be filled by a domestic workforce. Our teams are exploring how we can make jobs historically filled by migrant labour in Essex, Hertfordshire and Kent attractive to a Newham workforce.

We are also seek to develop schemes to encourage reusable food packaging on Council-controlled sites, setting a lead that others can follow. We will also continue to include a broad range of 'Eat-Lancet' standards into our emerging Good Food Retail and Health & Wellbeing Plans.

What local people can do

We need community leaders and food champions to create a social movement in the borough that understands and owns the borough's food strategy: people who can convey clear messages from food and climate experts to other local people in a way that reflects the diversity of food cultures already in the borough.





To help to make the country more resilient during the Covid-19 pandemic, local residents are also being encouraged to consider becoming essential workers in the local food system and ensure that, as a country, we reduce the 280 000 tonnes of agricultural waste that gets grown and then ploughed back into fields. We are also encouraging people to prepare and store more surplus food at time of gluts, in order to reduce the amount of food wasted and to reduce the amount of food the country imported from far away countries. Residents should also seek advice from, and engage on, webpages, social media and local events which support residents to waste less food.

Case Study:

Reducing food waste and directing it to those who need it most

Every morning since the start of the Covid pandemic, the Council sends vehicles to collect up to five tonnes of fresh food from FareShare London, as part of our work with the London Food Alliance. The food provided by FareShare to Newham is mostly surplus – food that has been diverted from waste – and has been supplied to 27 voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations. Other big movers of food have included the Carpenter’s and Docklands Centre and Community Food Enterprises, which have drawn down additional surplus from other sources outside of the London Food Alliance.

A tonne of food has an approximate retail value of £3,000 and produces around 2,400 meals. It also represents an estimated 3.8 tonnes of carbon removed from the atmosphere.

Three months into the pandemic response, Newham has used 200 tonnes of London Food Alliance food. Across the borough, it is estimated that over 350 tonnes of surplus food have been used by 71 VCS and faith sector partners giving



direct food support. That’s over 1.6 million meals, with over £2 million retail value and over 1.5 million kg of CO₂ saved!

Rachel Ledwith of FareShare London has described Newham as a leading example of good practice, praising the borough’s whole systems approach. There has been an active process of working with VCS partners to ensure that everyone in the direct food support network has NHS guidelines on food labels, so that they are confident to take products that are past their ‘best before’ date. A supportive and encouraging approach from our Food Safety team has also helped to foster confidence in our partners, while ensuring that best practice is built in.

Daily e-mail communication with partners getting food to end users has focused on maximising understanding and awareness of how different foods can be used across different communities. Recipes and ideas shared by different communities have also increased take-up of the food available.

Innovations such as a community WhatsApp group have encouraged internal coordination and stock transfers among the VCS that have enabled them to dispose of every item as effectively as possible.

Rachel Ledwith outlines just how much scope there is to grow: “At FareShare we estimate we take as little as 10% of what we could accept if we had faster and more efficient distribution channels, like the one Newham has created. Week to week during the crisis, FareShare London has been able to increase the amount of food it accepts from the industry because of the speed with which we have been able to move it through Newham, and the Council’s understanding of what it will need and when.”



Food waste also occurs at or near the point of retail. The retooling by the Council of VCS partners with fridges and freezers has enabled organisations to accept and distribute food from local retailers that is at or near its 'best before' or 'use by' date. The amount of food from retailers to Newham organisations logged on the FareShare Go app alone stood at seven tonnes and this is a just a fraction of the waste.

The Council has been active in encouraging VCS and faith partners to sign up to apps and other tools connecting retailers with surplus food to organisations that can distribute it to those who need it most.

We are continuing to build this vital service to local people, which has the added benefit of reducing CO₂ emissions. The emergence of a Newham Food Alliance, which promotes collaboration between suppliers of surplus food, the Council, VCS and faith organisations into a long term Community Wealth Building asset has been one of the great successes of the Covid pandemic.



8. Air Quality

Our key goals

Newham has the highest death rate attributable to air pollution in England and poor quality air disproportionately affects the borough's poorest residents, who tend to live on the most heavily used roads. In November 2019, we adopted an ambitious five-year Air Quality Action Plan and the whole borough is now formally designated as an air quality management area.

The action plan seeks to reduce pollution in and around schools, and extending school audits; improve walking and cycling infrastructure and supports regular car free days and temporary road closures in high footfall areas. It also includes actions such as ensuring that the redevelopment of local areas is aligned with 'Air Quality Positive' and 'Healthy Streets' approaches; installing 'Ultra Low Emission Vehicle' (ULEV) infrastructure; reducing emissions from our own fleet, by using cleaner fuel and converting to electric vehicles wherever possible; supporting alert services, such as airTEXT, and promoting the Mayor's air pollution forecasts and promoting and enforcing smoke control zones.

What's been done

Newham now has the largest air quality monitoring network of all local authorities in London and was the first Council to provide nitrogen dioxide pollution monitoring outside all its 96 primary and secondary schools. Our aim is to use our monitoring data to identify actions that will lessen the health impacts of air pollution on our residents. We have provided data to identify schools for the 'Healthy School Streets' programme and identified ways in which air quality can be improved outside schools. Fifty-nine of our schools are now part of the TfL STARS schools accreditation scheme, which inspires young Londoners to think differently about travel and its impact on their health, wellbeing and the environment and encourages students to walk and cycle to and from school.

What we will do

We will introduce regular play street days and low traffic neighbourhood schemes throughout the borough. We will continue to target car idling, which is a major source of air pollution in the borough. We will also provide more electric vehicle and charging infrastructure for our fleet vehicle and trial GTL bio-fuel for our larger trucks.

What local people can do

Our Newham Climate Now and Air Quality web pages contain the latest advice on reducing air pollution exposure and your carbon footprint. To get the latest pollution alerts for free join up by texting 'airTEXT Newham' to 78070.

There are many ways local people can improve air quality. Here are three simple measures that will have a significant impact:

- Walking and cycling more and using public transport, taking into account Covid 19 restrictions could cut down half of the car journeys made in Newham.
- Not to leave cars idling, especially outside schools or on busy high streets, as this can produce 150 balloons-worth of toxic pollution emissions in just one minute.
- Not to burn rubbish or have bonfires, as this greatly increases localised particulate pollution affecting the health of your neighbours.





Case Study:

Anti-idling project - engaging with schools and drivers

Newham is part of a three-year London-wide anti-idling project. One key area is working with local schools on anti-idling campaigns. The Mayor of London's Air Quality Fund provides a London-wide project manager, who works with Newham's Environmental Control officer to explain what air pollution is, its causes, and what can be done about it.

The first engagement session took place with the student Council at St John Heron School in Manor Park. Students made posters with anti-idling messages, some on which were turned into a banner which can be hung outside the school to remind drivers not to idle their engines. The student Council then delivered a presentation to their fellow 450 Key Stage 1&2 pupils and teachers. The assembly allowed the students to discuss why clean air is essential and how they can avoid and reduce their exposure to pollution and encourage others not to contribute to pollution.

Speaking with drivers and asking them not to leave their engine on whilst outside the school was highlighted as an effective way to make a difference and all students were asked to pass the message on to their families.

An idling action event also took place outside the school's two main entrances with Councillor Beckles, Councillor Lofthouse and air quality health champions. At the Idling Action event, 100% of drivers switched off when asked, 70% of drivers spoken to already had their engines switched off and 33% pledged to switch off in the future.

As well as the organised activities and events in Year 1, the Council produced communications resources both for Council staff and Newham residents. These included:

- two types of flyers to give away to drivers - 10,000 copies were printed;
- 50 standard anti-idling banners for schools and high streets;
- five kiddie lollipop anti-idling signs;
- 200 action event posters;
- one giant and 10,000 small air quality themed snake & ladders games to give away to students;
- 1000 car stickers to give to drivers pledging to switch their engines off;
- eight Council workshops delivered to 62 enforcement officers and 2 fleet managers.





Switch off engines for cleaner air

@idlingaction #noidling

DON'T IDLE!

NO POLLUTION

NO IDLING ALLOWED!

Idling is bad for people. The air pollution can affect people's brains, lungs and hearts. Turn off engines when you are not using them. Air pollution around us can make people have asthma and air pollution can make people really struggle with asthma.

NO IDLING

NO POLLUTION

No IDLING

It is bad for our lungs, heart and brain. We don't want air pollution because we can't breathe properly.

Switch off your Engine!

SIR JOHN HERON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Try walking, scooting, cycling or even park and stride. Active travel is a great way of looking after our hearts, lungs & brains.

I'm no idler

Newham London

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



9. Procurement

Our key goals

Newham spends over £300m per year with its suppliers. We will use this expenditure to make sure that our contracts deliver our climate change objectives. This will go beyond traditional areas, such as energy, to cover services involving transportation and logistics (reducing vehicle emissions) and implementing measures with our suppliers to reduce travel. In particular, we will focus on increasing the use of local suppliers in our procurement.

What's been done

This year we have restructured our procurement team so that it is better able to deliver against our goals. Staff can now build in environmental and social considerations into our procurements, as well as commercial and economic ones. We are also making it easier for local suppliers to obtain work from the Council, either directly or indirectly. So, for example, in some cases, we require that sub-contracting opportunities are directed to suitable local suppliers. To help

us measure the success of these initiatives, we also now track how much is spent on local suppliers.

What we will do

We will ensure a greater focus and scrutiny on sustainability. For example, before we go out to tender there will be a need to show that we have properly considered the whole life costs of the contract and that appropriate evaluation criteria have been developed (e.g. through the use of emission scoring criteria that favours providers which can provide low- or no emissions vehicles on the contract). We will also revise our procedures to make it a requirement that local providers are invited to bid when we seek quotations.

Alongside our contract managers, we will also review our existing contracts to identify opportunities to reduce the environmental impacts of the goods or services being supplied to us, by reductions in waste, packaging, etc. We will also work to improve the number of existing providers using sustainable means of transport.

