

Foreword

This is Brent Council's 'Green Charter', written in consultation with local residents and other stakeholders, with the aim of reducing the council's impact on the environment and helping residents reduce theirs.

Making Brent a greener borough needs to be done collectively with our partners, people who live, work and study here, public and private sectors and voluntary groups and I would like to acknowledge the contribution already being made by schools, voluntary and faith groups as well as individuals.

Everything we do, whether at work, at home or travelling has an environmental impact. As a council, we need to have policies in place to reduce that impact as much as we can and to create a better vision for the future. This Green Charter brings together all the work the council is doing to improve, enhance and protect the environment and asks those who live, work or study in Brent, to be more sustainable in their way of life. It also makes suggestions how this can be achieved.

This charter sets out how the council takes the environment into account in all of its work and sets out a vision of how residents and the council can work together. In this way we can best respond fully to the challenge of climate change and reduce our carbon footprint.

Cllr James Powney

Introduction

The Green Charter sets out what the council does to improve the environment when delivering its services. The charter also provides suggestions on what people can do who live, work or study in the borough.

Brent Council has made some ground-breaking commitments. It was an early signatory to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and produced London's first ever borough-wide climate change strategy and Action Plan.

2010 saw the introduction of the new Household Waste Strategy, with its aim to increase household waste recycling and composting to 60 per cent by 2014.

In April 2011, we introduced an emission-based resident parking permit charging regime and the electric vehicle infrastructure is beginning to take shape with the first two "PodPoint" electric vehicle charging points installed in Wembley and Harlesden.

In 2013 Brent Council will have completed its new civic centre, which will be the greenest public building in Britain. On its own, this will make Brent Council an exemplar local authority and a flagship borough. The combined heat and power (CHP) facility the civic centre will use could potentially be used as a district heating system for Wembley in the future.

The council's Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan is on target to deliver a saving of 25 per cent in council emissions by 2014.

As a contributor to the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme, the council continues to calculate its carbon baseline and to provide energy data on all council offices and schools, helping us to be more aware of where we need to cut our energy costs.

As well as these obvious areas of work, we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint in all our activities. All service plans reflect our environmental aims. The number of departments becoming ISO14001 certified is growing and this helps ensure that our work is carried out in as environmentally friendly ways as possible. Whilst we are setting our policies, aims and initiatives high, we are asking the community to do their bit in their personal and work life.

We can assist and provide resources, information and to give practical tips on how to save energy and be more self sufficient. You could grow your own vegetables, set up solar panels on your roof, volunteer, decide to use public transport twice a week or some other personal action. Whatever it is, we hope that you find this information useful and that it inspires you to continue the good work that is already taking place in this part of North West London.

The Green Charter

What the council will do	How we help the public	What we ask you to do
<p>Reduce carbon dioxide emissions</p> <p>The council aims to reduce its CO2 reductions by 25 per cent in council emissions by 2014 and encourage and support schools to adopt a similar target.</p> <p>The council has a Carbon reduction commitment and is monitoring and reporting its energy use and carbon emissions in line with the national CRC EES (Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme).</p> <p>The council undertakes energy efficiency upgrades to its buildings based on the Council's Energy Strategy's hierarchy of principles: 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green'. The aim is to reduce the energy used in each building to its absolute minimum by using simple controls and passive features (Be Lean).</p> <p>Behaviour change is encouraged and monitored. This includes simple actions by staff and site managers and the use of efficient heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) equipment (Be Clean) and by complying with the Be Lean/Be Clean checklists.</p> <p>The council uses internal communication channels to encourage all staff to turn off lights, computer screens and IT equipment when not in use. Use energy monitoring technology and carry out regular energy audits</p> <p>These type of actions enabled Gwenneth Rickus building's Display Energy Certificate (DEC) rating to be</p>	<p>The council funds and supports Energy Solutions (North West London) Ltd to provide advice on energy saving, renewable energy, insulation advice and obtaining funds from the Feed in Tariff.</p> <p>A Scrutiny Committee Task Group on Fuel Poverty was set up and recommends that Brent Council, with partners, develop an affordable warmth strategy for Brent to enable the borough to develop a coherent and focussed plan to tackle fuel poverty within existing resources.</p> <p>Provide energy monitoring devices for people to borrow from libraries.</p> <p>Publish information on the council's website about saving energy and combating the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Work with schools to assist them to reduce energy.</p> <p>Work with businesses to be more energy efficient. This includes invitations to free carbon reduction events and offers of free energy checks.</p>	<p>Turn off lights and appliances when not in use. When buying new appliances, buy the most energy efficient. Find out about the energy efficiency of your own home.</p> <p>Fit energy saving light bulbs.</p> <p>Reduce heating by at least one degree to save energy costs.</p> <p>Use energy efficient fittings and appliances.</p> <p>Install insulation in lofts and cavity walls.</p> <p>Take advantage of the government's Feed In Tariff. This means you will be paid for any electricity you create that can go to the National Grid.</p> <p>Plant trees and other large plants to naturally cool the air and provide shade.</p> <p>Refurbish your home to the best practice standards - draught proofing; double-glazing.</p> <p>Join the Brent Green Champions Network for residents.</p> <p>Complete the Sustainable Business and Resident Climate Change pledges.</p>

reduced from an E to B.

The council uses alternative sources of renewable energy such as solar panels and continuously analyses the council's use of energy and the new civic centre will be the greenest public building in the UK.

The council implements the borough's climate change strategy and action plan which was launched in December 2009 and its environmental policy, which was updated in October 2009

Some schools are investigating taking advantage of the government's Feed In Tariff and the council is also making enquiries.

The council created sustainable Business and Resident Climate Change pledges for residents and businesses to pledge to.

As part of its contract maintenance programme, the council's street lighting contractor has begun to remove the old fluorescent bulbs from street signs and ministry posts, which tend to be lit 24 hours a day, replacing them with photo-cells that only come on as and when are necessary, thus reducing carbon emissions.

Since the publication of the first air quality action plan in 2005 the council has effectively controlled pollution using measures such as the control of dust from

Set up your own Green Champions Network at your place of work.

construction, placing stringent controls on industrial operations to ensure they do not pollute the air, and limiting exposure to poor air quality by planning and nuisance controls.

However, the concentrations of two key pollutants - nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter- remain above national standards in certain areas. We refer to these areas as Air Quality Management Areas. Pollution here is more difficult to tackle because they are associated with traffic emissions, often on roads outside the council's direct control.

Maintain its internal Green Champions network with updates/awareness raising schemes for staff

The councils IT department is working on the introduction of 'Oneprint'. This is a managed print service which uses multi-functional devices (MFDs) to print, scan and photocopy to ensure that printing across the organisation becomes more efficient.

In the coming years, council officer will no longer have desktop PCs but something called thin client technology. These paperback book-sized devices have a much lower power consumption and a longer shelf life.

Lower Waste

Implement sustainable household waste management. This incorporates:

Reducing the amount of household waste generated by residents by using the national waste hierarchy of

Reduce – Reuse – Recycle - Dispose

Implementing the new waste strategy will mean the council will reuse, recycle and compost 40 per cent of household waste by 2011/12, rising to 50 per cent by 2014/15 and aiming to divert 60 per cent of waste from landfill by 2014 /15.

Recycle 95 per cent of green waste from parks.

Prosecute those who litter and fly-tip

The council has phased out paper towels and is replacing cloth towels with hand dryers.

Our internal recycling scheme is compulsory and waste bins are centrally located and nobody has a bin under their desk.

Send unwanted and out-of-date IT equipment to a local re-use scheme.

Toner cartridges are recycled internally via the council's facilities management service.

Have in place an internal communication plan to

Introduce a new and improved waste collection service for all residents in Brent from autumn 2011 designed to:

- increase the range of materials accepted for recycling
- expand and improve the food waste collection service
- expand the recycling service to include all suitable blocks of flats

Communicate effectively to ensure residents understand the purpose and operation of the new waste collection service.

Continue to provide a Christmas tree recycling service.

Increase the amount of items reused in Brent, whether through charity shops, re-use schemes or recycling.

Provide a Streetwatcher scheme including events, training, days out

Make home compost bins available to residents.

Increase residents' awareness of the amount of food waste that is thrown away.

Promote the Mailing Preference Service and encourage people to return unwanted

Take full advantage of the new waste collection service from autumn 2011. There will be a high profile campaign explaining the changes.

Use the new waste bins effectively.

Get a subsidised home compost bin and use it for uncooked compostable food and garden waste and buy and cook only food that you need.

Recycling more and press shops to accept back excess packaging that is recyclable.

There was an increase in numbers of Streetwatchers in Brent, to 229. The work of these residents is vital to maintaining the cleanliness of the borough, as they act as the eyes and ears of the council as they go about their daily lives. Consider joining them.

Report fly tippers

Take part in clean up days and campaigns.

Brent Council, in partnership with Community Payback (the London Probation Service) and other partners, such as the police, residents groups and volunteers, participated in 41 projects associated with improving local environmental quality. These ranged from rubbish clearing, graffiti removal, painting rooms in communal parts of buildings, overgrown

increase the council's own recycling levels.

junk mail to the sender.

The council offers to collect up to five bulky items of household waste free of charge up to three times a year.

Increase awareness and use of the Reuse and Recycling Centre at Abbey Road.

Provide an effective network of recycling bins in public places located across the borough.

vegetation removal, garden clearances and tidying up children playground areas. To get involved check our website for different initiatives.

Sign up to the Mailing Preference Service and return junk mail to the sender where possible with a request to be removed from the mailing list.

Call 0845 703 4599 to register for the Mailing Preference Service

Choose products with less packaging.

Avoid disposable products such a plastic or paper cups/cutlery, paper towels etc

Consider using 'real' nappies rather than disposable ones.

Take items suitable for reuse to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Use internet exchange forums.

Donate to a charity shop.

Recycle and compost more.

Use the Reuse and Recycling Centre to reuse and recycle even more materials.

Recycle during your daily commute or other activities that you carry out away from home.

Sustainable Development and Regeneration

The council uses the new placemaking guide aims to achieve a safe, attractive, accessible and inclusive environment by setting out public realm policy and design guidelines and specifications for materials, street furniture and the layout of streets and spaces that fall within the control of the council.

Sustainable development is promoted by planning for mixed use development in growth areas where there is good public transport provision. We will ensure new development is accompanied by supporting facilities such as school places, open space and community facilities.

The council reduces the carbon footprint of new development by requiring high levels of energy efficiency and renewables beyond current building regulation standards, particularly in growth areas.

Achieve exemplar low carbon schemes, such as promoting combined heat and power district heat networks in Wembley and South Kilburn.

Reduce waste from demolition and construction by requiring all development to comply with the ICE demolition protocol and set targets for reuse and recycling.

Reduce the risk of flooding by steering development away from areas at risk and ensure new development includes measures to minimise rainwater runoff such as green roofs and permeable paving.

The council's Planning Service provides planning advice to residents and the private sector. Its aim is to reduce the carbon footprint of any development but has particularly stringent requirements for new developments in growth areas.

Provide guidance on sustainable design and construction in our householders' guide.

Publish our sustainability appraisal on new plans and policies so you can see how we have considered a project's environmental, social and economic impacts.

Consider the wider environment when making changes to your property.

Ensure your home is well insulated.

Install heating controls that allow you to control the temperature in different parts of your home.

Install low energy lighting.

Take steps to save water and collect rainwater where possible.

Use environmentally friendly materials.

Try not to pave over your front garden, but if you do remember that at least 1/2 of your front garden must be retained with soft landscaping and you should consider using a permeable surface and encouraging biodiversity.

Sustainable Transport and Streets

The council encourages low carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions, reducing the need to travel.

The council has recognised that for more people to walk and cycle around the borough, they need to feel confident doing so, for which it is necessary to design safer streets. To improve the walking and public realm, Brent has set about making areas look, feel and actually be safe. Work has been undertaken in areas such as Wembley, Kilburn Streets for People and Queensbury Parade. In the Kilburn Streets for People initiative, for example, in addition to wholesale improvements to the urban realm, wider benefits have included:

- 10 new car club bays;
- 166 trees planted;
- 26 cycle stands installed;
- 27 'white light' emitting lamp columns installed;
- 5% of parking spaces in the area removed.

Deliver car parking permits on a polluter pays principle.

The council will pay £200 to residents who surrender their parking permit and get rid of their car.

Provide electric car infrastructure by providing electric vehicle charging points such as the two PodPoint electric vehicle charging points installed in the council's public car parks at Wembley Central (Elm Rd/St.John's Rd and Harlesden (Wendover Rd).

Assist and support school travel plans.

Assist with business travel plans.

Make it easy to travel in a way that is sustainable, safe and efficient, whatever this entails.

Improve air quality and health outcomes by emissions based permit parking, where high-emission cars pay more. Encourage organisations to work with the council to create their own travel plan.

Provide new facilities such as cycle parking.

Consult residents and businesses on improving the Grand Union Canal environment around Alperton.

Walk children to school or share cars on the school-run.

Walk to the shops instead of driving.

Take advantage of the cycle training and try out cycling in the borough.

Use the Grand Union Canal Walk and the Capital Ring.

Take advantage of Brent's extensive public transport network to get around.

Try out car clubs and consider not using a car. Consider an electric car or one with lower emissions.

Report fly-tipping and illegal disposal of industrial / commercial waste to the council.

Please do not drop litter in the street – use bins provided or take rubbish home

The council provides an Animal Welfare Service that will educate, encourage and enforce responsible animal/dog ownership.

Plan to continue to deliver free cycle training for Brent's residents for three years.

Promote car clubs.

Publish travel advice on the council's website.

Improve the public realm to make walking a more attractive option.

In partnership with The Mayhew Animal Home provide free neutering for bull breeds and low cost neutering for all other breeds, to prevent over population of dogs.

.Provide free poop scoops to encourage dog owners to clean up after their dogs.

To undertake regular patrols of known hot spot dog fouling areas and educate dog owners and where necessary enforce fixed penalty notices.

To provide free "reward" packs to those owners "caught" clearing up after their dogs.

Work in partnership with the Neighbourhood Services (Parks) to provide educational events in Parks throughout Brent on responsible animal/dog ownership.

Be a responsible pet owner which means:
As a dog owner, to always clean up after your dog.

To become our eyes and ears – to report those dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs.
To ensure that you seek advice from the Animal Welfare Service BEFORE obtaining a dog to ensure you know your responsibilities.

<p>Sustainable food & purchasing</p> <p>The council explores the issue of food growing in Brent as part of the allotment strategy development process. Public consultation on the draft strategy is expected to take place in the spring of 2012.</p> <p>The council implemented the Wellbeing and Healthy Living strategy.</p> <p>The council supports the Brent Fairtrade Network by providing premises for meetings. It has set up a Scrutiny Committee Task Group to assist the Brent Fairtrade Network in its work.</p> <p>The council has produced a food sustainability checklist and only buys Fairtrade tea, coffee, milk, sugar, fruit for council meetings and events.</p> <p>Commit to provide and improve allotments or other food growing projects, including a survey on the use of allotments.</p> <p>The council only purchases peat free products.</p>	<p>The council offers evening cooking lessons classes via BACES in order to enable residents to learn basic skills in this area.</p> <p>The council provides allotments to residents and local groups.</p> <p>Promote the farmers' market events.</p> <p>Promote Fairtrade events throughout the borough.</p> <p>Provide information on healthy living via the council's website.</p> <p>Provide information sessions on growing your own food in an urban setting through the Brent Sustainability Forum.</p>	<p>Eat freshly prepared fruit and vegetables that are local and seasonal and where possible organic. Reduce food waste.</p> <p>Buy Fairtrade goods such as tea, coffee, sugar, wine, bananas and cotton.</p> <p>Try to avoid highly processed, heavily packaged ready meals.</p> <p>Consider growing your own food.</p> <p>Think about shopping at a farmers' market now and again.</p> <p>Consider sustainability when buying food (food miles, how was it reared etc).</p> <p>Buy peat-free products. Peat acts as a carbon sink and is a non renewable resource.</p>
<p>Sustainable Water</p> <p>The Council considers flood risks for any infrastructure, building or transportation work.</p>	<p>Reduce flood risk by when planning new buildings.</p>	<p>If covered, consider turning your front garden into a garden with plants.</p>

Consider water conservation and water management in all areas of the council's services.

When planning new buildings, incorporate SUDS (sustainable urban drainage systems) whenever possible.

Use tap water in meetings instead of bottles. Using water more efficiently in buildings and in the products we buy, tackling local flooding and watercourse pollution.

Reduce flood risk by keeping urban areas green and by using plants in parks that are drought resistant.

Reduce flood risks which will have direct and indirect economic benefits.

The council replaced bottled water dispensers with mains water in public areas of council offices.

Use tap water instead of bottles.

Fit water saving fittings for taps, showers and toilets.

Consider taking showers instead of baths.

Collect rainwater by installing a water butt.

Grow drought resistant plants in your garden.

Consider fitting a water meter to gain control over water usage.

Sustainable land use and wildlife

The council preserves and enhances Brent's existing parks and open spaces and aims to increase these as opportunities become available.

Support and fund the work of the Welsh Harp environmental education centre.

Make sure the planning system protects and enhances open spaces and biodiversity and does all it can to protect and promote trees and woodland and promoting wildlife.

The council conserves and enhances biodiversity.

Protect our SSSI sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) at Welsh Harp, and our local nature reserves such as Fryent Park.

Create wildlife corridors where possible (e.g. Fryent Park to Roe Green Park and along railway lines).

Brent Council is a member of the Pesticide Action Network and has reduced its own pesticide use to a bare minimum.

Greater biodiversity and open spaces contribute to improved environmental quality and wellbeing.

The council's parks add to improved air quality for residents both locally and globally.

Parks provide walking routes for local journeys.

Brent in Bloom is an annual competition that gives local people the opportunity to show off their gardening skills and aims to make the borough more attractive.

Erect bird, bat and bumblebee boxes to increase biodiversity.

Keep grass long and sow wild flower seeds to increase biodiversity.

Grow plants that attract wildlife into your garden or on your balcony to increase biodiversity.

Return land use from hard-standing such as slabs and concrete to natural vegetation, lawns or bark chips to encourage a balanced eco-system.

Consider creating ponds and wet areas in gardens and the creation of wild flower chains for pollination and insect habitat. See <http://www.riverofflowers.org> .

Reduce the use of pesticides, preferably stop using them altogether.

Take part in Brent in Bloom

Brent Council Links

The following council strategies and action plans have been used to compile the Green Charter

- Air Quality Action Plan 2005-2010
- Brent - Our Future 2010-2014 corporate strategy , One Borough, One Community, One Council
- Brent Biodiversity Action Plan 2007 and Biodiversity Action Reporting System
- Brent's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2008 - 2018
- Brent Regeneration Strategy 2010-2030 draft
- Carbon Management Strategy 2010-1014
- Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009
- Corporate Environmental Policy Statement 2009
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2006
- Council Travel Plan 2009
- Cultural Strategy 2010 - 2015
- Household Waste Policy Strategy 2010 – 2014
- Joint Commissioning Strategy - Short Breaks and Preventative Services for Disabled Children and Young People 2009 - 2011
- IT Strategy 2010-13
- Inspiring Brent - Brent Council's Action Plan for the London 2012 Games (2010)
- Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2010-2026
- Library Strategy 2008-2012
- Parks Strategy 2010-2015
- Shaping the Future of Housing in Brent, Housing Strategy 2009 - 2014
- Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity in Brent 2010-2015
- Transport Local Implementation Plan 2011-2014