



Cabinet
16 January 2023

**Report from the Corporate Director
of Resident Services**

Green Neighbourhoods Action Plans

Wards Affected:	Roundwood, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Kingsbury, Queensbury
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Three Appendix 1: Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan – Church End and Roundwood (CE&RW) Appendix 2: Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan – Kingsbury Appendix 3: Summary of Community Engagement Ideas/Comments
Background Papers:	None
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1 Introduction & Overview

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with an update on the development of the Green Neighbourhoods pilot project which formed a key

tenet of the council's Climate and Ecological Emergency 2022-24 Delivery Plan. The report provides Cabinet with an opportunity to review the area-specific action plans which have been put together following community engagement and working with relevant internal teams and services.

- 1.2 The council is taking a progressive and pioneering approach to tackling the climate and ecological emergency through the delivery of several Green Neighbourhood pilots (the first phase being Church End & Roundwood; and Kingsbury). The goal is to focus our resources in these pilot areas to test how they can become as environmentally sustainable as possible, to inform how the whole borough could be net zero and more biodiverse by 2030. The ethos of this programme is to be positive and transformative and to make changes which benefit residents' lives, involving residents and communities in the delivery of this programme and encouraging sustainable behaviours.
- 1.3 Officers have completed the first phase of engagement with communities in these areas and the comments and ideas which came through most strongly focused on: enhanced green infrastructure and biodiversity; sustainable travel infrastructure; and recycling and re-use projects, alongside the need to address parallel issues such as anti-social behaviour and fly tipping more holistically.
- 1.4 Distinct overall 'visions' have emerged for the approach in these two pilot areas. For example, in Church End and Roundwood, there is significant potential for developing an area-wide focus on 'Green Corridors' to promote the healthy streets agenda, enhancing and linking green and active infrastructure. In Kingsbury, there is a cluster of engaged schools that are passionate about tackling climate change with the potential to be the catalyst for change in their local communities. Area action plans to deliver on this work have been developed and will remain as live documents during delivery (February 2023 to December 2024).
- 1.5 As it stands, there are 34 actions in the Church End & Roundwood Action plan and 28 actions in the Kingsbury action plan. The aim is to embed environmental sustainability at the heart of day-to-day life in these locations. The plans will be phased to enable delivery of quick wins that form part of an overall vision to be fully delivered within two years.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the council would begin the next phase of community engagement in the two pilot areas from February 2023. The objectives of this phase of engagement would be to i) start co-producing those projects that would be co-delivered with the community and ii) to consult with the community on council-led infrastructure projects to ensure local stakeholders are supportive of scheme design and are encouraged to participate.

2 Recommendations

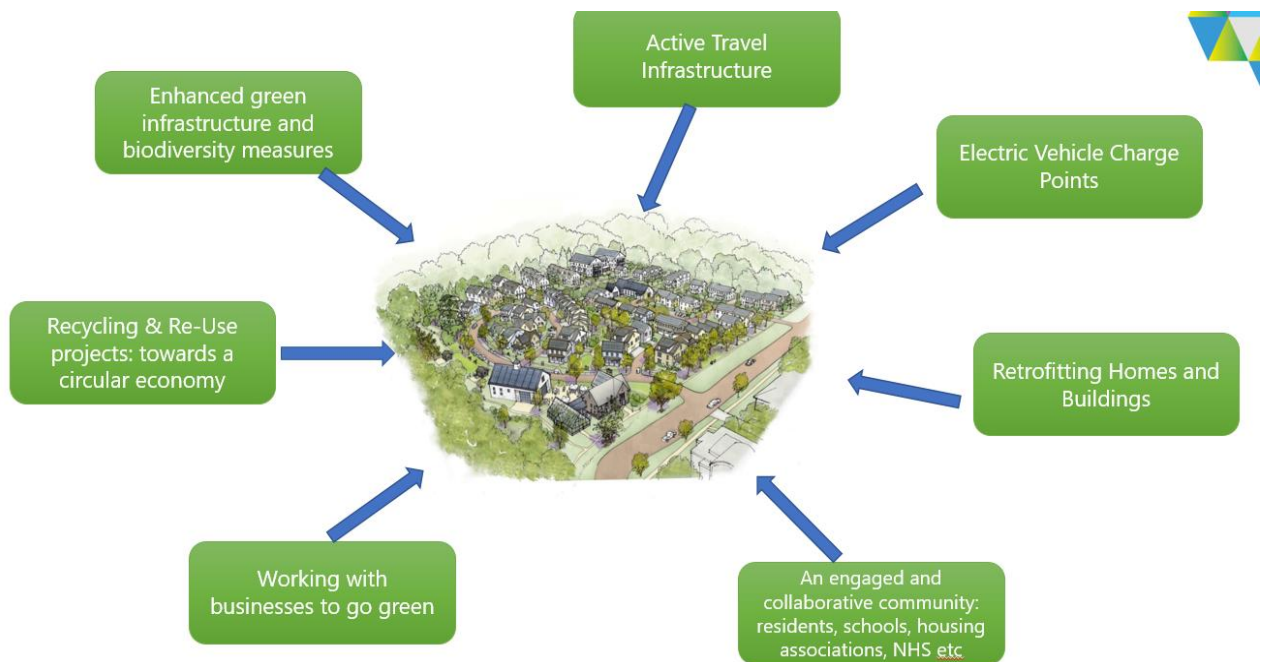
That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agrees the Green Neighbourhood Action Plans for Church End & Roundwood (Appendix A) and Kingsbury (Appendix B), summarised in section 5 of this report.
- 2.2 Notes the results of community engagement activity undertaken from July to October 2022, outlined in section 4 of this report and detailed in Appendix C.
- 2.3 Agrees the proposals for future engagement with communities in the Green Neighbourhood areas, summarised in section 6 of this report.

3 Context

- 3.1 At its meeting in June 2022, Cabinet approved the council's refreshed Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Delivery Plan for 2022-24. The new plan was centred around three new areas of focus which would shape and accelerate the council's activity on tackling the climate and ecological emergency for the next two years. These were:
 - A placed-based approach, through a) piloting up to three sustainable neighbourhoods b) a focus on ensuring the St Raphael's Estate development is as green as possible and c) a review of Brent Local Plan Growth Areas to ensure that sustainability opportunities are maximised.
 - Community wealth building, through climate action that supports local economic growth and helps reduce the cost of business for local businesses and other organisations.
 - Supporting households with the rising cost of living, through specific climate action that aims to boost household income.
- 3.2 Cabinet also agreed the locations for the Green Neighbourhood pilots of which there were four proposed in total: Church End & Roundwood (1), Kingsbury (2); South Kilburn (3) and St Raphael's Estate (4). To manage officer capacity, the council is taking a phased approach and the first two pilot areas, and focus of this report, are Church End & Roundwood, and Kingsbury. A further report outlining the proposed approach for South Kilburn and St Raphael's Estate will be provided in 2023.
- 3.3 The Green Neighbourhood action plans set out in this report are the culmination of the first phase of engagement with communities in parallel with the development of viable plans following discussions with relevant council services. The plans embrace the concept of locality-based working and provide opportunity for phased improvements to the initial pilot areas (Church End & Roundwood; and Kingsbury), ensuring our ability to progress quick wins while making early preparations for more complex infrastructure projects. The aim is to have a rolling and incremental programme of sustainability interventions under the 'Green Neighbourhoods' brand, generating a sense of real momentum on tackling the climate and ecological emergency with an array of projects contributing to an overarching holistic sense of environmental transformation of each pilot area by the end of 2024. Such an approach mirrors the plans of other leading UK councils who are making real, substantive, and exciting progress on this agenda.

High level concept



4 Community Engagement and Internal Workshops

- 4.1 Officers have undertaken an extensive period of community engagement (1,888 face-to-face interactions stimulating circa 536 ideas with communities in both areas) to seek their views and ideas for what they would like to see form part of the Green Neighbourhood action plan for their local area. The comments and ideas from the community have been analysed and grouped according to key environmental themes and more detail is provided within Appendix C. Our interactions with the community thus far indicate support, interest, and enthusiasm for this agenda – with the majority understanding its significance as a priority to be addressed urgently.
- 4.2 The comments and ideas which came through most strongly from the community were around physical and visible sustainability improvements to the public realm. In particular: enhanced green infrastructure and biodiversity; sustainable travel infrastructure; and recycling and re-use projects. There were also concerns raised around anti-social behaviour, particularly in Church End & Roundwood, which appeared to impact on people’s willingness to use green spaces or active travel routes. It is suggested that the council should endeavour to factor in seeking to tackle these issues holistically as part of this project. The co-benefits of taking action to tackle the climate and ecological emergency were also apparent, with communities expressing that green spaces, community gardening, active travel schemes and having active community participation on this topic is beneficial to mental health, public health, and community cohesion. These co-benefits are significant and contribute to a host of other council priorities in ensuring that Brent remains a great place to live.

- 4.3 The Climate Emergency Team has also liaised with all the relevant internal services and held workshops to further flesh out potential project ideas for the Green Neighbourhood areas and explore viability. This work has considered cost estimates, funding sources and potential funding and capacity gaps. The delivery plan workstreams overseen by the council's internal, Corporate Sustainability Board members has also been refreshed to embed this work within relevant service areas to be driven forward as a priority.

5 Emerging Action Plans

- 5.1 The development work listed above has informed the creation of two specific actions plans for the pilot areas. The action plans listed in Appendix A and Appendix B will remain live documents which can be added to and tweaked as the project progresses. If opportunities arise for additional resource and funding to upscale some of the projects further, the council will endeavour to capitalise on these.
- 5.2 The development work to this point has helped crystallise the distinct emerging visions in the pilot areas. For example, in the Church End and Roundwood area there is significant potential for developing an area-wide focus on 'Green Corridors' to promote the healthy streets agenda, enhancing and linking green and active infrastructure. The aim of this action would be to develop a series of cycle / pedestrian friendly green corridors and each corridor would be considered in terms of what can be done to achieve routes that are safe, direct, and attractive.
- 5.3 Given the potential transformative scope of this work, the project will be implemented in two phases. Firstly, through commissioning a specialist feasibility study which will seek to consider four potential corridors for further study: two in the north/south of the area, and two in the east/west alignments through the area and consider the potential for more ambitious interventions in the healthy streets agenda which will accelerate the council's public aspirations and support for active travel measures. Once the scope and cost of interventions have been established, work will begin to categorise actions for implementation according to quick wins in the shorter term and medium/longer-term aspirational work which would be dependent on business cases being put together and funding sources being found. There is likely to be a significant role for councillors and ward members in proactively and publicly supporting the proposals arising from this work and leading by example in putting the council's active travel public aspirations into practice.
- 5.4 There is also the potential to use this agenda as a springboard to be addressing several long-standing issues in this area of the borough, particularly around high-emission, polluting transport, and travel patterns. For example, we will use the Green Neighbourhoods agenda to re-engage with relevant partners (Transport for London, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham in particular) to reduce the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) which pass through Harlesden and in and around the south of the Church End and Roundwood Green Neighbourhoods area.

5.5 In Kingsbury, a differentiating factor between the pilot areas is the importance of the Kingsbury and Kenton schools cluster who are passionate about environmental sustainability and tackling climate change. There are approximately 16 schools in and around the Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood boundary – which provides a substantial potential for reaching into the heart of local communities on this agenda and encouraging local action.

5.6 Officers have held two workshops with many of these schools to identify the main issues in the area relating to environmental sustainability and the schools’ priorities for working together. These were: sustainable travel, energy efficiency on school sites, recycling, and biodiversity measures.

5.7 Highlights from the expected outcomes from the action plans for both areas are listed in the table below. Each action has been categorised as follows:

- Short term, funded (quick wins, to deliver in 2023)
- Medium term, funded (to deliver in 2024)
- Short-term, aspirational (subject to identification of funding)
- Medium/long-term, aspirational (subject to identification of funding)

Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhood	Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood
<p>Short term, funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area-wide feasibility study on the creation of new Green Corridors, linking active travel routes and green spaces in the area • Exploration of the reduction in flow of Heavy Goods Vehicles in the area • 11 x new Electric Vehicle Charge Points and accompanying comms campaign • 3 x permanent School Street Schemes delivered • 2 x new bike hangars (funding for a further 6 being sought) • New virtual docking bays for Lime Bikes • New biodiversity infrastructure in green spaces (such as Roundwood Park, St Mary’s Church, Willesden Cemetery) • New verge greening schemes and rain gardens at selected locations • New internal food waste caddies for eligible flats • New behaviour changes campaigns around re-use, repair, and recycling • 3 x Re-use and Repair Pop-Up Events at community locations • Expanded cargo bike trial scheme for businesses • New offer to businesses: energy saving grants, carbon foot printing tools, climate charter • Development of sustainable, green, School Travel Plans for all schools in the area • New Brent Environmental Network Community Action Group • New standard of energy efficiency improvements with housing associations in the area 	<p>Short term, funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a dedicated Schools Climate Network with the Kingsbury (& Kenton) Schools Cluster • 6 x permanent School Streets delivered • Development of sustainable, green, School Travel Plans for all schools in the area • Feasibility study on creating a green corridor between Fryent Park and Roe Green Park • 4 x new Electric Vehicle Charge Points and accompanying comms campaign • New biodiversity infrastructure in green spaces (such as Roe Green Park) • New verge greening schemes and rain gardens at selected locations • Expanded cargo bike trial scheme for businesses • New offer to businesses: energy saving grants, carbon foot printing tools, climate charter • New internal food waste caddies for eligible flats • New behaviour change campaigns around re-use, repair and recycling • 3 x Re-use and Repair Pop-Up Events at community locations • New Brent Environmental Network Community Action Group • New standard of energy efficiency improvements with housing associations in the area

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer cooperation energy efficiency improvements with private sector landlords in the area <p>Medium term, funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofits of some of the least energy efficient council properties in the area <p>Short term, aspirational:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New trees and flowerbeds • New community gardening schemes • New initiative to provide materials (like seeds) to residents to green their homes • New 'Environmental Street Champion' scheme <p>Medium/long-term, aspirational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Green Corridor programme • Reduction plan for Heavy Goods Vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer cooperation energy efficiency improvements with private sector landlords in the area <p>Medium term, funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New green infrastructure improvements at Leybourne Open Space • Deliver the council's first exemplar net zero new build as part of the New Council Homes Programme • Retrofits of some of the least energy efficient council properties in the area <p>Short term, aspirational:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New trees, flowerbeds and tree planting in selected locations • New community gardening schemes • New initiative to provide materials (like seeds) to residents to green their homes • New 'Environmental Street Champion' scheme <p>Medium/long-term, aspirational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Fryent Park to Roe Green Park Green Corridor
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6 Proposals for the next phase of community engagement and timescales for delivery

6.1 It is proposed that the next phase of community engagement would begin via public co-design workshops in February 2023 in each pilot area, to focus on the proposed action plans, and work with communities on where they may be able to take a lead or an active role in delivery of these projects and to stimulate interest and support for the proposed new initiatives. Following these, a hyper-local Environmental Network will be established for each area supported by a central advisory group of the most active, passionate stakeholders who wish to support this programme and mechanisms for regular two-way communication. The council would also build on the work we have begun so far through sub-groups such as the climate ambassadors programme, climate faith groups network and youth engagement work. These proposals will be developed and refined in the coming days and weeks with input and oversight from the Communities and Regeneration Directorate.

6.2 Delivery will then become the prime focus and the project timescales will run until the end of the 2024 calendar year. To measure the effectiveness of the Green Neighbourhoods project, officers are in the process of developing an internal data dashboard to take a snapshot of key datasets as things currently stand, and then continue to review these datasets as the project progresses and at the end of the programme.

7 Alternative Options Considered

7.1 There were no substantive alternative options considered at this time.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The financial implications for each action are set out within Appendix A and Appendix B.
- 8.2 For the Church End & Roundwood Action Plan, of the 34 actions currently proposed, 18 actions have secured funding (via existing budgets or external grant funding) for delivery in either 2023 or 2024 calendar years. A further 11 actions are presently listed as aspirational but are largely low value and are expected to be confirmed and delivered via existing budgets or grant funding for delivery in 2023. A further 5 actions require undertaking further scoping/review work initially to better understand the interventions and costs required in the medium-to-long-term - the review costs of this work are minimal, but implementation may have significant revenue and capital financial implications which will be assessed as more detail is obtained.
- 8.3 For the Kingsbury Action Plan, of the 28 actions currently proposed, 18 actions have secured funding (via existing budgets or external grant funding) for delivery in either 2023 or 2024 calendar years. A further 8 actions are presently listed as aspirational but are largely low value and are expected to be confirmed and delivered via existing budgets or grant funding for delivery in 2023. A further 2 actions require undertaking further scoping/review work initially to better understand the interventions and costs required in the medium-to-long-term – the review costs of this work are minimal, but implementation may have significant revenue and capital implications which will be assessed as more detail is obtained.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (the Act) is the statutory basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. The Act places a legal duty on central government to set legally binding targets to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.

10 Equality Implications

- 10.1 The council, as a public authority exercising public functions, is subject to a public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (EqA). The PSED requires public authorities to have 'due regard' to:
- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA
 - The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involved having due regard to the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic

- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- Encourage persons who share the relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant and protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

10.2 A full Equalities Impact Assessment was provided upon the adoption of Brent's Climate Emergency and Ecological Strategy in 2021 and has been published on the council's website. This EIA forms the basis of the development of the action plans as part of this project.

11 Property Implications

11.1 There are no notable property implications at this stage.

12 Environmental Sustainability Implications

12.1 Environmental sustainability considerations are integral to the purpose, content and recommendations in this report.

13 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

13.1 The next phase of the engagement process for the neighbourhood-led pilots is set out in paragraph 6.1. Ward Members will be invited to the co-design workshops and will be encouraged to lead local communities in delivering the action plans.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director, Resident Services