

	Cabinet 14 October 2024
	Report from the Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services
	Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action (Councillor Jake Rubin)
Climate & Ecological Emergency Programme 2024-2026	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	Two Appendix 1: Climate Programme 2024-2026 Appendix 2: Brent Climate Data Dashboard
Background Papers:	None
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Cabinet previously agreed to renew the delivery programme (the 'Climate Programme') for the Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy ('Climate Strategy', 2021-2030) on a two-yearly cycle. This report provides a review of the council's current 2022-2024 Climate Programme (Section 5) and sets out a new Climate Programme for the period 2024-2026 (Section 6 and Appendix 1) which will run until the end of December 2026.
- 1.2. It is proposed that the new Climate Programme remains focused on the five key themes within the Climate Strategy (Consumption, Resources and Waste; Sustainable Travel; Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment; Nature & Green Space; and Supporting Communities) with an additional focus on the following overarching priorities:

Continuation of priorities from the 2022-2024 Climate Programme:
i) Climate action that supports households with the cost of living.
ii) Climate action that boosts the local green economy and helps local businesses with the cost of doing business.
iii) Continuation of the two community-led Green Neighbourhood Pilots in Kingsbury and Church End/Roundwood, and the initiation of the agreed development-led pilots at St Raphael's Estate and South Kilburn.
iv) Leading by example in the council's own corporate estate and operations.
v) An intelligence-led approach to boroughwide action where it is needed most.
Increased focus within the new Climate Programme:
vi) Improving Brent's resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change.
vii) Connecting people with nature.
viii) Building community capacity and assets for community-led climate action.

1.3. The report highlights some key deliverables within the new Climate Programme in Section 6 which require specific approvals. These relate to:

- Implementation of the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme, for which £3m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) approval is sought.
- Opportunities to bid for external grant funding this November for decarbonisation programmes for council housing and our corporate estate, preparation for which has identified the benefit of removing the current weightings within the Brent Carbon Offset Fund Allocation Policy, to enable greater flexibility to maximise both the overall funding the council can attract and the outcomes that can be delivered through the Carbon Offset Fund.

2. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes the progress made with the current Climate Programme (2022-2024) as summarised in Section 5 of this report and in the Climate Data Dashboard (Appendix 2).
- 2.2 Agrees the proposed overarching priorities and key deliverables to be included in the 2024-2026 Climate Programme, as set out in Section 6 of this report.
- 2.3 Agrees the new Climate Programme 2024-2026 set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Approves a capital budget allocation of £3m to implement the Church End and Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme, and approves £3m SCIL funding to offset these costs.

- 2.5 Agrees to an amendment to the current Brent Carbon Offset Fund Allocation Policy to remove the current weighting/proportions (60%/30%/10%) available for council housing, Brent maintained schools and 'Other' respectively, so that the Fund can be used to maximise both the overall funding the council can attract and the outcomes that can be delivered for residents and to meet our climate commitments; and, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action, to continue to have overall responsibility for the oversight and operationalisation of the Policy.
- 2.6 Notes that an updated Brent Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan, which sits under the Brent Climate Strategy, is proposed to be published later this autumn under delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action.

3. Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 Brent's commitment to tackling the climate and ecological emergency continues to be a top priority for this administration, as reflected in the 'Cleaner, Greener Future' theme within the Borough Plan (2023-2027). This includes commitments to create 'a climate friendly and sustainable borough' and to ensure that 'sustainability is central to the growth of our borough and local economy'.
- 3.2 Underpinning these Borough Plan commitments, Brent's Climate Strategy and associated Climate Programme constitute one of the most far-reaching programmes within the council. The Strategy's key goals are to do all reasonable in our gift to aim for carbon neutrality by 2030 and to make Brent one of the greenest, most biodiverse and climate resilient boroughs in London, with our residents better connected to nature.
- 3.3 This programme has the capacity to deliver this administration's political priorities, both in the short term, contributing to supporting residents with the cost of living crisis and supporting local businesses with the cost of doing business but also in the long-term, by transforming the borough's capacity and resilience to address the climate change emergency.
- 3.4 The programme builds on the achievements of our climate work to date, for which we have attracted over £12m in external funding since 2020, and through which we have adopted a range of innovative, community-led programmes such as green neighbourhood pilots, green and healthy schools streets, faith-based climate action, community grants for climate action and supported a growing network of schools who are adopting a whole school approach to climate action.
- 3.5 Achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 remains extremely challenging, requiring a massive upscaling in nationally funded infrastructure programmes as well as concerted action and behaviour change from all sectors and individuals across society. Regardless of whether this aspiration is considered achievable, the climate science tells us that every action taken now to either directly reduce carbon emissions or to improve Brent's resilience to climate change will help to lessen the worst impacts of climate change in future.

- 3.6 We also know that the adverse impacts of climate change, such as the severe flooding and heatwaves that we have already experienced in recent years, will affect working class communities and those with the greatest needs the most, while action to tackle the climate and ecological emergency has the potential to bring positive change for the whole local community on many of the issues that matter most to people, such as cleaner air, greener spaces, warmer homes, healthier travel and a thriving local economy. Our Climate Programme is therefore vital in improving lives and livelihoods, promoting health and wellbeing and environmental and social justice.
- 3.7 We will therefore continue to do all we can, within available resources and competing priorities, to continue to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. Our objective for the Climate Programme over the next two years is to provide even greater focus, pace, impact and visibility, so that we can deliver measurable change on the ground and across our diverse communities.
- 3.8 We will continue to collaborate ever more closely with our communities and with London Councils, the Greater London Authority, west London partners and to seize on any new opportunities introduced by national Government.

4. Background

Brent's Climate Strategy

- 4.1 The council declared a climate and ecological emergency in July 2019 and following extensive engagement and consultation, adopted a [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy \(2021-2030\)](#) in April 2021.
- 4.2 The development of the Climate Strategy drew on the evidence base of the greenhouse gas emissions in Brent, the priorities set by the Brent Climate Assembly and the objectives of the London-wide climate programme that emerged following the climate declaration made jointly by the London Environment Directors (LEDNET) and London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee in December 2019.
- 4.3 The Climate Strategy's target is to do all reasonable in the council's gift to aim for carbon neutrality for the borough by 2030 and to work with government to achieve the national 2050 target. The objectives for each of the five Climate Strategy themes are:
- Consumption, Resources & Waste: By 2030, our communities will be living more sustainably: consuming less of the products and materials that accelerate climate change, whilst also wasting less of the world's natural resources
 - Sustainable Travel: By 2030, petrol and diesel road journeys will have at least halved in the borough, being driven as close as possible to zero, with an accompanying increase in journeys made by residents through cycling, walking or public transport.

- Homes, Buildings & Built Environment: By 2030, as many homes and buildings in the borough as possible will be more energy efficient, be powered by renewable sources and be resilient to future adverse weather events caused by climate change – and we will do all in our gift to achieve an average rating of Energy Performance Certificate B in directly owned council stock.
 - Nature and Green Space: By 2030, Brent will be one of the greenest, most biodiverse and climate-resilient boroughs in London with our residents better connected to nature.
 - Supporting Communities: Everyone who lives, works or studies in Brent will have improved access to clear and understandable information on the need to tackle the climate and ecological emergency, and as many people as possible will be actively engaged in taking action to help the borough become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.4 An independent Brent Carbon Scenarios 2030 Study, commissioned in August 2019, modelled a range of scenarios for potential carbon reduction in the Borough and the associated capital costs. The challenges identified were enormous. An 87% carbon reduction by 2030 (all possible measures that could be delivered locally) would come at a cost of £3.1 billion (at 2019 prices), with the remaining reductions required from a zero carbon national electricity grid.
- 4.5 As part of our climate programme, Brent developed a bespoke [Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan](#) in 2022, which also links to Brent’s statutory Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- 4.6 On 20 June 2022, Cabinet agreed the current [borough-wide climate delivery plan for 2022-2024](#) including the commitment to develop four new green neighbourhood pilots. Following extensive engagement, action plans for the first two community-led green neighbourhood (GN) pilots at Church End/Roundwood and Kingsbury were agreed by Cabinet on [16 January 2023](#). It was agreed that the two development-led pilots - South Kilburn and St Raphael’s Estate - would be phased to be delivered in 2024-2026 in line with their development timetables.
- 4.7 Progress with the Climate Strategy was last publicly reported to [Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee](#) in February 2024, including the first populated version of Brent’s Climate Data Dashboard (the ‘Climate Dashboard’).

Brent’s Climate Dashboard

- 4.8 The Climate Dashboard assesses Brent’s performance against 47 indicators and where available, provides benchmarking information against neighbouring boroughs who work together as part of the West London Climate Emergency Officers Group as well as comparison to Outer London Authorities and Inner London Authorities.
- 4.9 An updated edition of the Climate Dashboard is included in Appendix 2. The Climate Dashboard will be updated each year in summer once key data has been made available. This includes the latest territorial carbon emission figures for the

London Borough of Brent. The latest emission figures for calendar year 2022 were released at the end of June 2024, with a customary 18 month time lag. A breakdown of emissions by sector is included in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Brent’s territorial carbon emissions (DESNZ¹)

Sector	% of carbon emissions	Kilotonnes of CO₂
Domestic (Homes)	38.8%	353
Transport	26.2%	238
Commercial	18.2%	166
Industry	8.8%	80
Public Sector	8.0%	73
TOTAL	100.0%	910

4.10 Brent’s 2022 territorial carbon emissions (910 kilotonnes) compared with a West London average of 880 kilotonnes, a 2019 Brent figure of 1,000 kilotonnes and a 2005 Brent figure of 1,582 kilotonnes (the first year of data). In 2022, Brent’s carbon emissions had reduced by 9% since 2019 and 42% since 2005. Reductions in local authority area territorial carbon emissions largely tend to derive from the decarbonisation of the national electricity grid.

4.11 Since 2020, the Mayor of London has released statistics on consumption-based emissions broken down by London boroughs and these figures are also now included in the Climate Dashboard.

Local Area Energy Plans

4.12 Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) are recognised as the leading method for translating national Net Zero targets into local energy system action with plans that are collaborative, data-driven and cost-effective. The results are a fully costed, spatial masterplan that identifies the change needed to the local energy system and built environment to decarbonise, detailing ‘what, where and when and by whom’. LAEPs set out the total costs, changes in energy use and emissions over incremental time periods to meet net zero targets. LAEPs identify near-term actions and projects, providing stakeholders with a basis for taking forward activity and prioritising investments and action. By taking a more proactive, whole-systems, data-driven approach to energy planning, LAEPs aim to deliver cost savings and a more managed energy transition (e.g. managing electricity grid constraints; considering how energy is generated, stored, transported, and used; and the complex interactions of power, heat, and transport).

4.13 LAEPs scope addresses electricity, heat, and gas networks, future potential for hydrogen, the built environment (industrial, domestic, and commercial) fabric and systems, demand flexibility, energy generation and storage, and providing energy

¹ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

to decarbonised transport e.g. electricity to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

- 4.14 The Mayor of London is supporting the development of LAEPs across each sub-region in London and West London has been leading the way. To date, Brent completed stages 1-3 (phase 1) of the LAEP process as part of a group of West London boroughs in summer 2023, which was funded by the GLA.
- 4.15 Brent is now working with four West London boroughs (Barnet, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, and Ealing) to complete stages 4-7 (phase 2) of the LAEP, due to economies of scale associated with commissioning this work as a multi-borough group. This involves modelling future options, selecting a future pathway, as well as agreeing actions and priorities for the masterplan.
- 4.16 As part of this process, the West London boroughs will use the LAEP to investigate the aggregation and scaling up of local opportunities, projects and action that are most likely to attract investment to support the implementation of net zero action.
- 4.17 Socio-economic benefits of the net zero transition will also be explored, such as the creation of new, green jobs as a result of low carbon investments in local areas, as well as the implications for social and environmental justice within our communities.

Brent's Carbon Offset Fund Policy

- 4.18 Since 1 October 2016, under the London Plan, any development that fails to achieve on-site zero carbon must make cash in lieu contributions to a Carbon Offset Fund within the borough that they are operating, collected via Section 106. These contributions are used to fund local carbon reduction projects, thereby offsetting the development's carbon emissions shortfall.
- 4.19 Brent is a Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the London Plan requires LPAs to:
- set up a carbon offset fund that is ring-fenced to secure delivery of carbon savings within the relevant LPA
 - set a price for carbon, i.e. price per annual tonne of carbon, that developers pay to make up any shortfall in on-site carbon savings, securing contributions through Section 106 agreements
 - identify a suitable range of projects that can be funded through the carbon offsetting fund
 - put in place suitable monitoring procedures to enable reporting to the GLA
- 4.20 The GLA has specific guidance on the Carbon Offset Fund which is available online, but the fundamental purpose of the fund is that it should be used for tangible carbon reduction projects in homes and buildings, although education projects are also eligible. There are specific criteria related to the amount of carbon reduction achieved.
- 4.21 On 17 October 2022, as part of the report on 'Proposals for Future Brent Carbon Offset Fund Allocations and Together Towards Zero Small Grants Scheme Criteria', Cabinet agreed to the future allocation policy for Brent's Carbon Offset Fund, as outlined in section four of that report (60% to own housing stock; 30% to

schools; 10% held in reserve for general use), and to delegate authority to the then Corporate Director of Resident Services, in consultation with the then Lead Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, to have overall responsibility for the oversight and operationalisation of this policy, with an immediate opportunity to utilise this as part of a bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2, which was subsequently submitted and successful.

4.22 The allocation weightings broadly reflected the size of the carbon footprint of the housing, schools and corporate estate (prioritised within the ‘Other’ category) and the external grant opportunities and funding conditions that existed at that time.

5. Progress with the 2022-2024 Climate Programme

Overall progress with the 2022-2024 Climate Programme

5.1 The Climate Programme serves as an ‘umbrella’ document that draws together key strands from our various environmental sustainability strategies and programmes. There are 104 actions across the whole 2022-2024 Climate Programme, which comprises three plans: the borough-wide delivery plan and the respective Church End/Roundwood and Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood action plans. The current Climate Programme runs until the end of December 2024.

5.2 Progress is monitored internally through the Corporate Sustainability Board. Actions are monitored and provided a ‘RAG’ (Red/Amber/Green) rating, with two additional ratings - ‘Inactive’ or ‘Unlikely to Complete’. A description of these ratings is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Progress rating description

Progress Rating	Description
Complete (Green)	The action may either be completed and closed, or the core aspects may be up and running and ongoing.
In Progress (Amber)	Work on completing the core aspects of the action is underway, with the expectation that the action is on track to complete within the expected timescale.
Minimal Action (Red)	Work on the action has not yet commenced but the action is expected to complete within the expected timescale.
Inactive	The action is not possible to complete at this stage due to reasons beyond the council’s control.
Unlikely to complete	The action is no longer feasible due to challenges unforeseen at the time of adoption of the programme.

5.3 Progress made as of July 2024 across the whole 2022-2024 Climate Programme is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Overall delivery across the 2022-2024 Climate Programme

Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (Green)	57	55%
In Progress (Amber)	44	42%
Minimal Action (Red)	0	0%
Inactive	2	2%
Unlikely to complete	1	1%

Progress with the 2022-2024 Borough-wide delivery plan

- 5.4 Progress made specifically with the actions in the borough-wide delivery plan is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Delivery of actions within the borough-wide climate delivery plan

Borough-wide delivery plan		
Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (G)	31	72%
In Progress (A)	12	28%
Minimal Action (R)	0	0%
Inactive	0	0%
Unlikely to complete	0	0%

- 5.5 A summary of key achievements from the borough-wide delivery plan against the five Climate Strategy themes are highlighted in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Key achievements from the 2022-2024 borough-wide delivery plan to date

Strategy Theme	Achievement
Consumption, Resources & Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful roll out of new recycling service including small items collections. 80% average participation rate with new sack for paper/card • Launched the Library of Things at Willesden Library and held 5 Repair Cafes
Sustainable Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 871 Electric Vehicle Charging Points, 31 school street schemes and 144 bike hangars installed to date • Launched the Brent's Bike for Businesses e-cargo bike scheme • 47 electric vehicles introduced as part of the Council's new Street Cleansing & Waste; Grounds Maintenance and Parking & Civil Enforcement contracts in 2023
Homes, Building & Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted a new Sustainable Environment and Development Supplementary Planning Document • 71.6% reduction in council's estate carbon footprint in 2023/24 from the 2010/11 baseline • Secured £1.3m funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund for retrofit to 127 council homes, due to complete this autumn

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed the first Ground Source Heat Pump on a council building at Northwick Park pavilion • Procurement launched to Design, Build, Operate & Maintain the South Kilburn Heat Network which will serve up to 3,000 homes by 2030 • Over 600 households provided expert energy advice via Brent Well & Warm, estimated saving per h/h of £223 per annum and 477 tonnes CO2 per annum overall.
Nature and Green Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 green & healthy schools streets/rain gardens delivered at Leopold school, Kensal Corridor, Silver Jubilee Park • Installed the borough's first Living Wall on Willesden Green Library • Worked with partners to create a new mini forest in King Edwards Park • Completion of the Brent Highways Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance Guide
Supporting Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 Together Towards Zero grants have been awarded for local community climate action, totalling £139k • 9 organisations supported with grants from £1.5k - £20k for climate education, awareness raising and innovation projects from the Carbon Offset Fund (totalling £100k). • An award-winning inclusive climate communications and engagement programme, e.g. the Faces of Climate Change competition and the Faith Climate Action Plan, with 20 climate/faith ambassadors recruited • Established the School Climate Network and launched the Schools Climate Action Guide • Undertook a Net Zero Schools Retrofit and Engagement Project with five local schools • 1,600 students engaged in the Green Skills Centre at the College of North-West London in 2022/23 • Launched the Climate Challenge programme supporting 40 businesses; 15 energy efficiency grants awarded; inaugural Brent Business Summit held on 'Supporting your Sustainability Journey' (Nov 2023)

Progress with the two community-led Green Neighbourhoods Pilots

- 5.6 Following the selection of the first two neighbourhood-led Green Neighbourhood pilots (Church End/Roundwood and Kingsbury) in 2022, officers undertook a period of community engagement in both areas to put together bespoke action plans. This helped crystallise the distinct visions in the pilot areas.
- 5.7 In the Church End and Roundwood area there was significant potential for developing an area-wide focus on 'Green Corridors' to promote the healthy streets agenda, enhancing and linking green and active travel infrastructure.
- 5.8 In Kingsbury, the key factor was the importance of the Kingsbury and Kenton schools cluster who are enthusiastic about environmental sustainability and tackling the climate and ecological emergency. There are approximately sixteen

schools in and around the Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood boundary – which provides potential for reaching into the heart of local communities on this agenda and encouraging local action.

5.9 The current picture of progress with the Green Neighbourhood action plans as of July 2024 is outlined in Tables 6 and 7 below.

Table 6: Delivery of actions within the Church End & Roundwood GN Action Plan

Church End & Roundwood GN		
Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (G)	16	47%
In Progress (A)	17	50%
Minimal Action (R)	0	0%
Inactive	1	3%
Unlikely to complete	0	0%

Table 7: Delivery of actions within the Kingsbury GN Action Plan

Kingsbury GN		
Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (G)	10	37%
In Progress (A)	15	55%
Minimal Action (R)	0	0%
Inactive	1	4%
Unlikely to complete	1	4%

5.10 A summary of the successes and challenges with the two GN pilots is summarised in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Review of progress with the two community-led GN pilots

Successes	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of visible projects/infrastructure: school streets, bike hangars, EV charging points, rain gardens, Lime docking bays, community orchard at Longstone Avenue, BEE Colourful, Leybourne Open Space improvements • Green Corridors Feasibility Study in Church End & Roundwood completed by Sustrans following extensive local engagement • Increased engagement and action across the Kingsbury GN schools cluster, including enhanced curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding for retrofitting and transport infrastructure • Limited internal capacity initially impacted pace of delivery, but two new fixed term posts have accelerated projects significantly; procuring external expertise has delayed some projects • Attendance from communities varies meeting to meeting, impacting momentum towards a community-led model • Meeting expectations with funding shortfall for measures

<p>activities, CPD climate training for teachers, workshops for pupils, themed assemblies, webinars and schools-led community action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular engagement with resident/community groups and businesses in Church End & Roundwood • Resident involvement in delivering schemes – e.g. BEE Colourful, Leybourne Open Space and the community orchard • New signage to provide visibility in streets in both areas • Place-based projects have made bidding for external grant funding easier e.g. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Green and Resilient Development Fund, Schools Superzones funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining data at borough-wide level is challenging but even more so at neighbourhood level • Mixed/variable participation from all relevant departments due to capacity issues • Need for more business engagement in Kingsbury (town centre)
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6. The new Climate Programme 2024-2026

6.1 The new 2024-2026 Climate Programme set out in Appendix 1 is organised under the following sections:

- Borough-wide delivery plan (section 2)
- Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhood Action Plan (section 3)
- Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood Action Plan (section 4)
- The new St Raphael’s Estate Green Neighbourhood Action Plan (section 5)
- The new South Kilburn Green Neighbourhood Action Plan (section 6)
- Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan Action Matrix (section 7)

6.2 The Climate Programme 2024-2026 includes actions carried over from the 2022-2024 Climate Programme which are either partially implemented or implemented and ongoing. Each of sections 2 - 6 of the Climate Programme organise actions under the 5 Climate Strategy themes, with columns indicating how the actions meet the proposed priority focus areas for the new delivery plan (see para 6.3 onwards below).

Overarching priorities for the new Climate Programme 2024-2026

6.3 It is proposed that the new Climate Programme (2024-2026) includes a continuing focus on the key priorities underpinning the current Climate Programme (2022-2024), as set out from 6.4 to 6.10 below.

Climate action that supports households with the cost of living

6.4 An ongoing focus on climate action that supports households with the cost of living remains necessary given that so many households and communities across the borough remain affected. Climate action that can help residents with the cost of

living include Brent Well and Warm, circular economy initiatives such as the Library of Things and our Repairs Cafés, food growing and encouragement of active travel in place of expensive car travel.

Climate action that boosts the local green economy and helps local businesses with the cost of doing business

- 6.5 An ongoing focus on the green economy and supporting local businesses will help with the cost of doing business and to promote local companies that already are, or who are interested in being, part of the green economy.

Continuation of the two community-led Green Neighbourhood Pilots in Kingsbury and Church End/Roundwood, and the initiation of the agreed development-led pilots at St Raphael's Estate and South Kilburn

- 6.6 We have made good progress in the two existing GN pilots in Church End/Roundwood and Kingsbury but we are yet to realise the full extent of our ambitions in these areas and to learn the full lessons for how these pilots might be extended to other parts of the borough in future. We also want to be able to fulfil the expectations that have been raised with the local communities in these areas.
- 6.7 Cabinet previously agreed to phase the two development-led pilots at South Kilburn and St Raphael's Estate to start during 2024-2026. The opportunity remains to ensure that we maximise our investment in these areas in ways that support our climate targets.
- 6.8 Green neighbourhood models are increasingly being adopted by other London boroughs and Brent attends regular meetings facilitated by London Councils to share best practice and learning.

Leading by example in the council's own corporate estate and operations

- 6.9 We have made good progress in leading by example in our own estate and operations, through our decarbonisation programmes, Green Travel Plan and embedding climate emergency considerations in our sustainable procurement policy, HR processes and corporate reporting. We are also reinvigorating our staff eco-champions scheme, in partnership with the unions, and introducing an annual staff awards category for 'outstanding contribution to reducing the council's environmental impact'. It is vital that we continue to show the way for other organisations and institutions to follow our lead.

An intelligence-led approach to boroughwide action where it is needed most

- 6.10 A borough-wide plan remains vital so that we can take an intelligence-led approach to identify where interventions are needed the most. Examples of this are prioritisation of the worst performing housing for energy efficiency grants, the targeting of air quality hotspots and deprived areas in respect of active travel and green space improvements, and the targeting of education in areas with the most contaminated recycling.

- 6.11 In addition to these continuing priorities, it is proposed that we introduce a greater focus on the following additional key priorities set out in 6.12 to 6.22 below.

Improving Brent's resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change

- 6.12 In the past three years since adopting the Climate Strategy, Brent has experienced several major instances of flooding relating to severe downpours which has resulted in an emergency response, and this had a detrimental impact on residents/households across sixteen local roads. In summer 2022, we also experienced the hottest heatwave the UK has ever experienced, with the BBC singling out Brent in an article as being one of Britain's hottest neighbourhoods. Globally, last month was the warmest June on record and the 13th straight month of record-breaking temperatures.
- 6.13 It is therefore proposed that we increase our focus on climate adaptation and resilience as part of our programme. The Climate Programme 2024-2026 therefore includes a commitment to update our Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan and the Actions Matrix in section 7 of Appendix 1 sets out the actions under active consideration. The updating of this Plan will link to the updating of our Flood Risk Management Strategy and our Tree Strategy also scheduled for this autumn.

Connecting people with nature

- 6.14 There is a major opportunity to reinforce the Climate Strategy aim to be one of the greenest, most biodiverse boroughs in London, with residents better connected to nature, arising from the new biodiversity duty in the Environment Act (2021) and the strengthening of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006). The biodiversity duty set out in Section 40 of the NERC Act, has now been further strengthened through the Environment Act (2021), which states that:

"A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective".

This 'general biodiversity objective' requires both the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.

- 6.15 As part of the new duty, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a way to introduce nature-based solutions to developing land so that nature forms an integral element to developing land, making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.
- 6.16 Developments will need to deliver a minimum 10% BNG compared to the baseline from 12th February 2024, unless exempt. It applies to small sites from 2nd April 2024.
- 6.17 BNG, when designed and delivered well, can secure benefits for nature, people and places and for the economy. It aims to create new habitats as well as enhance existing habitats, ensuring the ecological connectivity they provide for

wildlife is retained and improved. Importantly, BNG will include funding not only for biodiversity improvement but also site maintenance for 30 years.

- 6.18 The Greater London Authority has been appointed as the ‘responsible authority’ to produce the statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Greater London, which will inform priority sites for BNG improvements across the capital. Brent, along with other London boroughs, is putting forward local sites to from part of the London LNRS.
- 6.19 This new opportunity to lever funding into the borough for BNG will provide extra impetus to our programmes to connect people with nature, for their physical and mental health and wellbeing and to help raise awareness of the important role that nature will play in climate adaptation and resilience in Brent.

Building community capacity and assets for community-led climate action

- 6.20 There is opportunity to build on our innovative climate engagement work to both achieve greater reach into our communities and to create sustained, community-led action through the new organisational focus on Community Power and Resilience (CPR) and its three underlying principles.
- 6.21 The Climate Strategy was founded on the first CPR principle of *community decision-making*, through the commissioning of the Brent Climate Assembly, while the CPR principle of *collaboration* is also central to all our climate engagement work.
- 6.22 It is proposed that the CPR principle that offers the greatest potential to increase the reach of our climate engagement work is that of *building community capacity and assets*. Officers are keen to explore new approaches to increase community capacity and skillsets and to increase the viability of local places and spaces to help climate action thrive across the local community, as part of a consolidated review of strategic commissioning, community wealth building, the voluntary and community sector and council property assets.

Key deliverables within the new Climate Programme 2024-2026

- 6.23 The key deliverables in the new Climate Programme are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Key deliverables in the 2024-2026 Climate Programme

Strategy Theme	Key deliverables
Consumption, Resources & Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the new behaviour change campaign to target contaminated recycling across the borough • Continued expansion of the communal flats food waste programme
Sustainable Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhood Green Corridors Scheme • Increasing the number of green and healthy school streets

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of innovative cycling incentive schemes such as peddle my wheels and bike repurposing schemes
Homes, Buildings & Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a follow on to the West London Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) Phase 1, undertake a Phase 2 Brent LAEP as part of a consortium tender with 50% match funding provided by the GLA and the remainder funded by the Brent Carbon Offset Fund • Completion of a net zero route map for our corporate estate by December 2024 including preparation of a bid for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding in October 2024 • Preparation of a Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3 bid for council properties in November 2024 as part of a London Councils-led consortium bid • Delivery of the South Kilburn Heat Network with the Energy Centre operational by March 2026
Nature and Green Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing the necessary processes and partnerships to secure BNG investment in the borough to help Brent to become more biodiverse and to connect local people with nature, including community gardening projects • Deliver pilot highways verge greening projects under Brent's new Highways Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance Guide • Publish a Tree Strategy for the Borough
Supporting Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to implement the full vision for transformative schools-led community climate action in Kingsbury GN • Providing whole school climate support to 20 primary schools through the externally funded Our School Our World programme • Updating Brent's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan with a prioritised set of deliverable actions • Developing a Brent Green Directory to promote green businesses, services and goods to local people and to promote shopping local • Building community capacity and assets to deliver a greatly expanded programme of local community-based climate action

Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme

6.24 Following its selection as a Green Neighbourhood pilot in 2022, Sustrans was commissioned to explore the feasibility of walking, cycling and green infrastructure improvements in Church End and Roundwood that would have a transformative effect on the area and help make the Green Neighbourhood an exemplar in Brent. The resulting [feasibility study](#), part funded by the Mayor of London's Green and Healthy Streets programme, included concept designs and a linked package of works that reflected the priority locations and interventions identified throughout the project, through extensive public engagement, which if implemented will support sustainable growth and create a healthier and more active future for

Church End and Roundwood and transform the area into a greener neighbourhood.

- 6.25 This report now seeks Cabinet approval for up to a £3m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) allocation for the Church End and Roundwood Green Neighbourhood Green Corridors Scheme (the Scheme). The Scheme lies within the Church End Growth Area and is strategically located near to the key growth zones of Neasden Station Growth Area and Harlesden Town Centre and officers consider that the Scheme, as a linked package of works, will support growth in these areas and is therefore eligible for SCIL.
- 6.26 The Scheme is expected to deliver significant benefits, including reduced carbon emissions, improved air quality and increased levels of walking and cycling. The Scheme will also foster stronger community engagement through a collaborative co-design approach, ensuring that local needs and aspirations are reflected in the final outcomes. Among the range of measures to be delivered as part of the Scheme are:
- Measures to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists (including provision of safe and secure pedestrian and cycle links and facilities).
 - Measures to improve the quality/resilience of the street scene (including the provision of new places to stop and rest, and additional shade and shelter).
 - Measures to reduce the dominance of private motor vehicles (Inc. potential for new/amendments of existing 20mph zones and town centre urban realm schemes, and traffic restrictions).
- 6.27 The proposed implementation of modal filters aims to address the increasing traffic congestion and safety concerns caused by non-local motor vehicles. These filters will reduce motor traffic volume and speed, creating safer, greener, and more sustainable streets conducive to cycling and walking. The need for such interventions has been identified as a priority in response to community feedback and growing regeneration pressures in the area.
- 6.28 The modal filters will be strategically placed to prevent through-routes along heavily used north-south corridors, including Fawcett Road, Longstone Avenue, and Cobbold Road. Temporary filters will be installed first, allowing residents to provide feedback before permanent structures are implemented. Public realm improvements, such as the addition of planting, seating, and cycle hangers, will also be delivered in tandem to activate the space and create a more inviting environment for local residents.
- 6.29 These measures are expected to significantly reduce traffic in key residential areas, such as Roundwood Estate, Fortunegate Road, and surrounding streets, leading to a safer, more peaceful neighbourhood with improved air quality. This will enhance the quality of life for residents by promoting active travel and reducing noise pollution from motor traffic.
- 6.30 In addition to the modal filters, a range of other street improvements will be delivered across the area. For instance, a 3m-wide bidirectional cycle track will be

installed along Church Road, connecting Church Path to Mayo Road via upgraded signal crossings. This will require the removal of a southbound traffic lane on Church Road and introduce a continuous footway treatment at Curzon Crescent, with space allocated for sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) and cycle parking.

- 6.31 Along Church Path, community-led enhancements will transform the route into a green corridor. This will involve de-paving and greening efforts, resurfacing damaged pathways, and establishing pocket parks at side roads. New crossings and SUDS will be installed to improve pedestrian safety and water management, enhancing the overall functionality of this important route.
- 6.32 Longstone Avenue will also benefit from a comprehensive improvement scheme, linking Willesden New Cemetery, Roundwood Park, Longstone Avenue Open Space, and Newfield Primary School. A 3m-wide bidirectional cycle track, parallel zebra crossings, and greening efforts, including tree planting, will be delivered to create a safer, more accessible route for pedestrians and cyclists. The removal of on-street parking will allow for these enhancements, making Longstone Avenue a key green corridor for the local community.
- 6.33 Other important improvements will take place along Fawcett Road and Oldfield Road, focusing on enhancing connectivity and the public realm. These upgrades include a shared-use cycle path, carriageway reallocation for greening, tree planting, and parking removal to prioritize active travel. A parallel zebra crossing will be installed to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists traveling between Church Path and Oldfield Road.
- 6.34 Public open spaces, such as Franklyn Road Open Space (on Roundwood Road, which will also benefit from carriageway narrowing and public realm improvements including SUDs and greening) and Longstone Avenue Open Space, will be revitalised to create vibrant, sociable, and biodiverse areas for the local community. These projects will include additional greening, social seating areas, and highway verge planting, fostering a more welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike.
- 6.35 The improvements will culminate in the transformation of Roundwood Park Annex into a more inclusive, biodiverse space through various greening initiatives, including shrub and tree planting, mown paths, and enhanced entrances. These efforts will contribute to the overall environmental and social sustainability of the area.
- 6.36 The indicative Scheme timeline is included in table 10 below.

Table 10: Scheme Timelines

Milestone	Start	Finish
Detailed design, consultation and procurement	November 2024	June 2025
Delivery of first measures	July 2025	March 2026
Ongoing Scheme delivery	April 2026	March 2027

- 6.37 It is recommended that the Brent Carbon Offset Fund continues to be allocated to Brent’s council housing, Brent maintained schools and other priorities (such as the council’s own corporate estate and operations and strategic decarbonisation enabling studies such as LAEPs), to ensure that residents and young people continue to benefit and to help the Council lead the way for other organisations in the borough on how to decarbonise their estate.
- 6.38 The continuing practice of using the Carbon Offset Fund as match for external grant funding bids will help extend the benefit of the Fund as widely as possible. This is particularly important because match funding is increasingly being required in external fund bids and the council is constrained in the amount of capital finance it can raise.
- 6.39 It is recommended however that the allocation *weightings* currently applied to housing, schools and ‘other’ are removed altogether, so that the Carbon Offset Fund can be used in a more agile way to attract additional external funding and maximise decarbonisation opportunities.
- 6.40 For example, we have an opportunity to bid for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund Round 4 (the application portal opens in mid-October and closes on 25 November) for heat decarbonisation works for corporate buildings. Unlike PSDS Round 1 in 2021, when we received a 100% grant allocation for a £3.2m programme, PSDS Round 4 will require 50% match funding from applicants. As an illustration, if the council were to submit a similar bid in scale as we did for PSDS 1, we would need to identify £1.6m capital as match. Currently there is only £0.32m available within the Carbon Offset Fund for ‘Other’ priorities, so a total bid would be limited to a maximum of £0.64m.

Table 11: Brent Carbon Offset Fund collected since policy agreed in 2022

Category	Percentage allocated	Total allocation	Expenditure to date	Amount Remaining
Housing	60%	£2,774,716	£900,000	£1,874,716
Schools	30%	£1,387,358	£595,910	£791,449
Other	10%	£462,453	£139,503	£322,950
Total	100%	£4,624,527	£1,635,412	£2,989,115

- 6.41 Another consideration is that there are only a small number of council housing properties that are currently eligible for external funding from the Warm Homes Fund Wave 3 (previously the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund), as our stock is relatively high performing with an average energy efficiency rating of EPC C, whereas the Warm Homes Fund threshold is EPC D or worse.
- 6.42 Removing the current allocation weightings will enable the council to maximise ongoing opportunities and benefits from the full £2.99m currently sitting in the Carbon Offset Fund in a more agile and flexible way.

Climate Programme 2024-2026 risks

- 6.43 There is existing budget to support a further estimated 400 households under the Brent Well and Warm energy advice programme. This funding may run out during winter 2025/26 and continuation funding will be explored as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.
- 6.44 There is funding available for the Business Climate Challenge & Climate Essentials programmes in 2024/25. We will seek to bid to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to extend the Climate Challenge programme in 2025/26.
- 6.45 There is sufficient funding for an estimated 15 Together Towards Zero grants in 2024/25. Opportunities for further funding will be explored as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.
- 6.46 Retrofitting homes is perhaps the biggest challenge to achieving our climate targets, but regrettably, retrofitting at scale is not currently feasible. There is an estimated minimum £60m shortfall to increase Brent's council stock to an average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) B rating (the London wide target), while finance models and labour markets are not yet available to deliver retrofit at scale. Additionally, only around 2% of council properties meet current grant funding requirements (EPC D or lower) as we have a relatively high performing stock (average EPC C). We will of course however continue to bid for all available external funds for retrofit and to use the Brent Carbon Offset Fund where match funding is required. We will also support the work of London Councils which is exploring innovative approaches to scaling up retrofit across the capital.
- 6.47 Brent has made a positive start with its award-winning, inclusive and faith-based community climate engagement programmes, which proactively support our seldom heard and diverse communities. However, creating sustained, community-led action and achieving significant reach across the community is hugely challenging given our limited human and financial resources and the high levels of social deprivation and inequalities in the borough. Rethinking how we can build capacity and assets for community climate action as part of the Community Power & Resilience workstream of the organisational change programme will be key.

7. Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 7.1 The Climate Strategy and Climate Programme have involved extensive engagement, consultation, collaboration and co-production with stakeholders, councillors and communities across Brent.
- 7.2 Ward members in the green neighbourhood areas are invited to any climate-related events taking place within the green neighbourhoods and are regularly updated on project developments or additions to the programme.
- 7.3 We have held several Member Learning and Development sessions and provided factsheets for ward councillors on the climate and ecological emergency.
- 7.4 Engagement with stakeholders within the wider Brent Community takes place under the umbrella of the Brent Environmental Network.

7.5 The new Climate Programme 2024-2026, once agreed by Cabinet, will be considered a live document for use as the basis for ongoing engagement with the community over the course of the next two years.

7.6 Extensive consultation will be undertaken with local residents and businesses during the design and development of the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme in 2025.

8. Financial Considerations

8.1 The 2022-2024 climate delivery plan and the green neighbourhood pilots at Church End/Roundwood and Kingsbury have secured funding (via existing budgets or external grant funding). This does not affect the actions that are to be rolled over into the new 2024-2026 Climate Programme.

8.2 The new actions as part of the 2024-2026 Climate Programme including the green neighbourhoods at St Raphael and South Kilburn are to be funded from within existing resources.

8.3 Paragraphs 6.43 to 6.45 of the report highlight three actions that have funding risks in 2025/26. Further work is required to secure funding before these actions can be extended into 2025/26.

8.4 The total estimated cost for the improvement works for the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme is £3m. This report seeks approval for a capital budget allocation of £3m for the Scheme and approval for SCIL funding of £3m to offset these costs. Officers will value engineer the Scheme to ensure that the final design and implementation costs are kept within the approved budget.

8.5 Greening measures within the Scheme will be specified as low maintenance and we will seek to attract Biodiversity Net Gain to fund these measures and their ongoing maintenance.

8.6 Specific schemes will be confirmed on an annual basis with work focused on scheme investigation, design, consultation and implementation. The provisional programme is outlined in Table 12 below (each project element includes a 10% contingency):

Table 12: Church End & Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme costings

Scheme element	Estimated Cost (£'000s)
Modal Filters	330
Church Path	814
Longstone Avenue	275
Fawcett Road to Oldfield Road	550
Roundwood Road	110
Franklyn Road Open Space	253
Longstone Avenue Open Space	132

Roundwood Park Annex	275
<i>Sub-total (inclusive of professional fees and 10% project contingency)</i>	<i>2,739</i>
Project Management (3 years)	270
Total	3,009

9. Legal Considerations

- 9.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (the Act) is the statutory basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to the climate and ecological emergency. 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. The Council's commitment to carbon neutrality and the actions towards this as set out in the report are consistent with the Governments Net Zero Strategy and are indicative of the important role local authorities play in achieving carbon neutrality.
- 9.2 Local authorities have a range of powers to support the approaches outlined in the report. In addition to the wide general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which allows local authorities to do anything that individuals generally may do, there are specific powers to include those relating to Biodiversity Net Gain which now has a statutory footing in the planning system, having been created by the Environment Act 2021 and inserted on 12 February 2024 into the Schedule 7A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 9.3 Local authorities must spend the Community Infrastructure Levy (levy) on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area, Accordingly the Council will decide what infrastructure is needed.
- 9.4 The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development.
- 9.5 The levy can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities as set out in [section 216\(2\) of the Planning Act 2008](#), and [regulation 59 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010](#), as amended. This definition allows the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, healthcare facilities, academies and free schools, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities. This flexibility gives local areas the opportunity to choose what infrastructure they need to deliver their relevant plan.
- 9.6 Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables the council to enter into a legal agreement with developers to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal. The Council can enter into section 106 agreements with developers to secure carbon offsetting contributions on the basis that they are to be spent on the implementation of projects to reduce carbon emissions in its area to offset the proposed shortfall in meeting London Plan targets. The proposals set out for the expenditure of those carbon offsetting contributions secured through the section 106 process are in compliance with the terms of the Council's section 106 agreements.

10. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

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). A full Equalities Impact Assessment was provided upon the adoption of the Climate and Ecological Strategy in 2021 and has been published on the council's website. This EIA forms the basis of the development of the Climate Programme.

11. Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

11.1 Climate change and environmental considerations are integral to the purpose, content and recommendations in this report.

12. Human Resources/Property Considerations

12.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

12.2 The council is working towards a decarbonisation strategy for Brent's estate as noted within the Climate Programme.

13. Communication Considerations

13.1 Communications and engagement are integral to the Council's Climate Programme. We utilise the council's corporate communication channels with most of our communications and engagement being via the Brent Environmental Network and its various bespoke segments.

13.2 The council's climate communications and engagement plan will be updated to reflect and support the new Climate Programme 2024-2026 once agreed by Cabinet.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services