



Barnet Local Plan - Statement from Members of Barnet VCS Environmental Network (full list below)

The organisations (named below) collaborate and link as part of this Network have considered the “Regulation 19 Barnet Local Plan” and wish to ensure that the following key issues are addressed in the next stages of the Local Plan process.

The plan is predicated on an increase of over 50,000 people in the borough in the next 15 years. In a time of Climate Emergency, it is vital that not only should the impacts of this population increase be mitigated and addressed through built environment policy but that our open space and wildlife must be protected, increased, improved and nurtured.

The current plan is unsound in this respect. Current policy does not plan adequately for the impacts that this population and development increase will have on the open and natural environment. The evidence to support stronger policy is clear and but has not been fully and properly addressed. We propose the following changes should be made to begin to address these impacts.

- We oppose the “low value, low quality” provisions in Policy ECC04. We should be protecting and enhancing all open space in the borough not allowing development on it. The ‘evidence’ to justify this policy is out of date, extremely subjective in its judgements and should not be used.

O We propose removal of this element of the policy.

- A Regional Park for Barnet based on the Green Belt. (Policy GSS13) This idea has been around for many years but there is nothing specific on how and when it will be delivered. The messages given in the plan on this idea are garbled.

O We propose a much clearer statement MUST be included on how this is to be progressed including adding it to the key diagram, proposals map and identifying the resources to create it in the Draft Barnet Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

- London became the world’s first National Park City on 22 July 2019. This is not recognised by the plan. London National Park City is a movement to improve life in London working with residents, visitors, and partners to: Enjoy London’s great outdoors more; Make the city greener, healthier and wilder; Promote London’s identity as a National Park City

O Add new policy supporting the principles of London National Park City and amend relevant policies in line with these principles.

- Rewilding. No mention can be found about the importance of rewilding in Barnet. Enfield Council have taken a lead locally on such approaches.

o We propose a new policy should be added identifying key areas for rewilding in the borough, include such areas in the Draft Barnet Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

- Reuse of buildings. Substantial amounts of carbon are embodied in our existing built environment. Demolition of buildings releases this carbon and adds to emissions driving climate change. This should stop.

o Add new policy making it obligatory to stop the demolition of all existing buildings and press for reuse. New building can be added to existing.

- The value and importance of trees and hedges to our biodiversity and environment gets short shrift in the plan. Hedges get limited mention and Trees are subsumed within generalised policies.

o We propose a strengthened, separate policy to protect existing Trees and hedgerows and promotion of new hedges, trees and additional landscaping in new proposals coming forward.

- B-lines – No mention is made in the plan of these pollinator highways, promoted by Buglife as part of the Governments pollinator strategy. The north-south corridor through London cuts across parts of the borough including parts of Finchley and New Southgate where there is a growth area and a number of site-specific proposals. <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

o We propose that B-lines should be added to the Key diagram, proposals map, appropriate policies and site-specific proposals.

- Temporary use of sites for open space. There is a policy on 'meanwhile uses' for temporary housing but not for open space.

o We propose the addition of a new policy supporting temporary use of development sites for open space and community growing projects.

- Front garden use for car parking. The Local plan contains no policy to prevent turning front gardens into car parking on those roads where planning permission is required. See issues and evidence involved here. <https://frontgardens.nationalparkcity.org/>

o We propose a new policy opposing use of front gardens for car parking.

As a group of organisations working and campaigning on environmental issues across Barnet we will strongly support policies in the plan that seek to protect and improve open space provision, biodiversity and wildlife in the plan and would seek to be involved in all stages of the plan process where such policies at a general or site specific level are discussed.

This statement drafted by Roger Chapman, Chair of the Green Space Network, a member of the Barnet VCS Environmental Network.

The following organisations have signed:

Ruth Raman, member of Barnet FoE and Mothers' CAN
Shiri Atsmon, Mothers CAN Barnet, founding member
Esmond Rosen President Barnet Multi Faith Forum
2nd Edgware Scout Group
Wendy Alcock, Head Grower, Incredible Edible Barnet
Leo Smith (Chairman) for Barnwood N2 - Community Forest Garden.
Nanna Blomquist Green Beings
Daniella Levene, Founder & Manager, Colindale Community Garden
Barnet Community Harvesters
North West London Cleanup
Friends of the Welsh Harp
Janine Young, Programme Manager, Wild about our woods
Paloma Ibarra - Mutual Aid Barnet
Caroline Collier, CEO, Inclusion Barnet
Dr Suzanne King, Chair, Friends of Finchley Way Open Space
Tudorita Poenaru, Director @ RCCT CIC
Ingrid Posen, Chair, Friends of Childs Hill Park
Dollis Brookers Sterring Group, Jeffrey Newman, Founder
Anthony Sabini chair friends of stoneyfields park
Michael Posen, Trustee, Friends of Childs Hill Park

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