

Enfield Blue and Green Strategy

Frequently asked questions

What is blue and green infrastructure?

Blue and green infrastructure relates to the 'green' (e.g. parks, open spaces, street trees and routes) and 'blue' (e.g. reservoirs, lakes and waterways) elements of Enfield's landscape.

These assets also symbolise the character and identity of the borough (as expressed in the blue and green stripes on Enfield's official crest).



What is the Enfield Blue and Green Strategy?

This strategy sets out our ten year ambition to become the greenest borough in London.

The strategy will help make Enfield a greener, healthier and more distinctive borough that is better connected to the great outdoors and more active.

The strategy forms a key part of our response to the climate change emergency and covid-19 crisis to improve the quality of life and well-being of the borough. It also helps achieve the borough's aim of being zero carbon by 2040.

This strategy also replaces the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and updates the objectives of the Biodiversity Action Plan. It also contributes to London's status as

the world's first "national park city" (as set out in the Mayor of London's Environment Strategy).

Alongside this strategy, we have published an up-to-date assessment of the quality, quantity and accessibility of the borough's parks, open spaces, woodlands, watercourses and wildlife sites.

Why do we need to produce a strategy?

Located on the northern gateway into central London, Enfield is well placed to capitalise on its proximity to open countryside and key attractions, such as the Lee Valley Regional Park, Forty Hall, Trent Park and Enfield Chase.

Blue and green space makes up over half of the borough's land area and represents one of London's most valuable assets. This includes:

- over 1,000 acres of open space, including country parks;
- over 300 hectares of woodland and scrubland;
- 20,000 plus street trees;
- around 10,000 hectares of open water, including 5 reservoirs and 6 freshwater lakes;
- 41 sites of nature conservation importance; and
- over 100 km of watercourses - the greatest length of any London borough.

The distribution of the blue and green network is however uneven and there are significant disparities between the east and west of the borough in terms of access to nature and open space. Some assets (e.g. reservoirs) remain inaccessible to the public.

Other pressing issues facing Enfield include a rapidly growing population, rising temperatures and emissions, continued wildlife loss, increasing levels of obesity and inactivity and diminishing natural resources. Urgent action is also needed to address the impacts of future pandemics and technological change.

In response to these challenges, we need to develop a new long term approach to the conservation, management and expansion of the borough's blue and green network.

The Blue and Green Strategy has been prepared to:

- define our response to climate change mitigation and adaptation, in line with the targets set out in the Climate Action Plan, including a 25% net increase of blue and green cover;
- guide the delivery of blue and green infrastructure within new development alongside the policies in the adopted Local Plan (e.g. Core Strategy), especially within areas of deficiency;
- prioritise investment decisions through our capital programme alongside other relevant corporate strategies, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Parks and Open Spaces - Outdoor Events Policy, Playing Pitch Strategy, Heritage Strategy, Culture Connects (Cultural Strategy) and Climate Action Plan;

- create positive outcomes to the health emergency response, such as reduced stress and physical exercise;
- encourage innovative solutions to longstanding constraints, including poor east-west links, exposure to air pollution, uneven distribution of open space and vulnerability to flood risk;
- facilitate partnership-working through volunteering and education programmes to encourage local ownership of projects and on-going management (e.g. events and festivals); and
- address/mitigate the impacts of new development (e.g. recreational pressure on international nature conservation sites).

In doing so, the strategy will achieve some of the highest environmental net gains in London and, in turn, help Enfield become the greenest of all London boroughs.

How have feedback informed the proposals set out in this strategy?

In November 2020, we launched a six-week public consultation on our proposals to gather the views of key stakeholders and the wider public

We received over 120,000 social media hits, 8000 website views and 245 individual responses from a wide range of stakeholders, with widespread support from government agencies, local authorities, community groups and infrastructure providers, making this one of Enfield's largest public consultations in recent times.

The strategy has been amended to take account of the feedback from the consultation, including suggested textual amendments and new project ideas on how the borough's blue and green network could be better protected and enhanced.