

## A vision for the use of land in NW Enfield

The UK is a small, intensively inhabited island. Much of the land is in private hands. Perhaps uniquely, Enfield Council owns a great deal of land, one of its primary assets. The advent of global warming and the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019 place land use high on the agenda in both mitigating and adapting to rising temperatures.

Land in Enfield is largely used for homes, both council and privately owned, strategic industries, commerce, wheat and cattle farming, wood and parkland, flood alleviation, sport and leisure, education, an organic farm and a vineyard at Forty Hall.

However, currently, little use is made of the vast area of farmland in NW Enfield for sustainable methods of large-scale food production, or even for renewable energy as it is in other parts of the country. Indeed, much of the land in the NW of Enfield (largely Cockfosters and Chase wards) is not used at all, nor even tenanted. The traditional market gardening centres in Crews Hill have declined over recent years, replaced by often unlawful, opportunistic developments such as scaffolding companies and commercial outlets masquerading as horticultural.

Our concern is the absence of any Council strategic plan for the use of this farm and horticultural land that is unused.

The land in the NW of Enfield is designated Green Belt. Existing and proposed planning regulations have, and will have, a profound and long-lasting impact on land use.

The North East Enfield Area Action Plan (NEEAP) was agreed by Full Council in June 2016, having been agreed by a government inspector<sup>1</sup>. The Edmonton Leaside Area Action Plan was adopted by Full Council in January 2020.

There is no equivalent plan for the NW of Enfield and no mention is made of farming, agriculture or developing the potential for renewable energy in either the Climate Action Plan<sup>2</sup> or Enfield Council Plan<sup>3</sup> "A lifetime of opportunities". The latter was agreed by Full Council in June 2020<sup>4</sup> and the former launched publically in Sept 2020.

In the absence of a strategic plan, decisions such as those regarding Whitewebbs Park and the Chase Restoration Project<sup>5</sup> are being made under delegated powers by cabinet members without, or with limited, community or elected member consultation. This risks a sub optimal, patchwork quilt of land disposal with no over-riding strategic purpose or democratic steer.

Our vision is for a forward-looking strategic plan for the farm and horticultural land in the NW of Enfield which will provide a framework for realising our diverse communities' need for food, energy, health and well-being.

We are a non-aligned group of Enfield residents, keen to work alongside the council in promoting the strategic aims of the Climate Action Plan. Our thinking will be guided by the principles<sup>6</sup> established by the Committee for Climate Change, which advises the government and, more locally, by the findings of the GLA Environment Committee in "Farming in London's Green Belt"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/planning/area-action-plans/#4> <http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=36820>  
<http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s58187/Annex%201%20NEEAP%20Planning%20Inspectors%20Report%20and%20Main%20Modificatios.pdf>  
"Green Network and Food Growing" chap 8 <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/planning/area-action-plans/planning-information-enfield-aap-part2-p45-96-21-6-2016.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/environment/enfield-climate-action-plan-2020-environment.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s81894/Enfield\\_Council\\_Plan\\_2020-2022\\_V6.pdf](http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s81894/Enfield_Council_Plan_2020-2022_V6.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s81855/Council%20Plan%20Cover%20Report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://governance.enfield.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD3950&ID=3950&RPID=83393719>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-reducing-emissions-and-preparing-for-climate-change/#key-findings-and-recommendations>

<https://d423d1558e1d71897434.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Biomass-in-a-low-carbon-economy-CCC-2018.pdf>

<https://d423d1558e1d71897434.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Land-use-Reducing-emissions-and-preparing-for-climate-change-CCC-2018.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/farminginlondongreenbelt.pdf>