



Haringey Labour Climate Action

(incorporating Hornsey and Wood Green and Tottenham Labour Parties)

April 2021

We publish this newsletter four times a year for circulation amongst Labour Party members and other concerned people. We would welcome comments, suggestions and contributions from readers. Please contact Chrisbarker46@gmail.com. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily the views of the Labour Party.

HLCA has a page on the Hornsey and Wood Green Labour Party website – see <https://www.hornseywoodgreenlabour.org.uk/haringey-labour-climate-action/> We publish regular blogs on this site. Please visit to see what's there.

What we stand for

Our general aim is to promote action and change through raising awareness that:

- Climate change and environmental degradation are primary and urgent global survival issues - they are already destroying livelihoods and the planet and need to be urgently and dramatically addressed to prevent further potentially disastrous consequences throughout the world.
- Climate change and environmental degradation are primary and urgent political issues - the main obstacles to tackling climate change are inadequate government and corporate measures, which in turn are due to short termism and putting profit before people and planet.
- Therefore tackling Climate change and environmental degradation provides an opportunity for social and political transformation to a green economy based on socialist principles of sustainable growth, equality, and collective social and global responsibility.

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Forthcoming events

Monday 12th April 7pm – 9pm London Mayoral Environmental Debate

Friends of the Earth have organised this jointly with some Greenpeace activists and Wildlife & Countryside Link. The debate, chaired by presenter & environmentalist Julia Bradbury, will allow Mayoral candidates to forward their policies on nature and climate to London's voters.

[More information and how to sign up, can be found on the website.](#)

If you want cleaner air, thriving parks, more abundant wildlife and new footpaths and cycle ways, this is your chance to ask the next Mayor for them. [Register here.](#)

Wednesday 14th April 7pm – 8.30pm Online Climate Hustings for the Enfield & Haringey constituency of the GLA elections.

We have confirmed these candidates will take part: Labour's Joanne McCartney, LibDem Dawn Barnes, and Green Party Jarelle Francis (these three have also all signed up to the climate pledge to make it a top priority after the election). We are hoping to confirm the Conservative candidate Lee David-Sanders imminently. The event will be chaired by Gerry Robinson, formerly headteacher of Woodside High School, now head of the Haringey Learning Partnership.

People can register here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/enfield-and-haringey-london-assembly-climate-hustings-tickets-146760605923>

More information from Quentin Given, Co-ordinator, Tottenham & Wood Green Friends of the Earth

07946 535656 @twgfoe <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/groups/tottenhamwoodgreen>

From the Ground Up – Take action now 22nd to 25th April

Registration is out now for our second global gathering, this four day online gathering. It will include 24 dedicated sessions focused on some of the key issues facing our movements today, to answer the question of

- How do we build power in our communities and workplaces for climate justice?
- How can we mobilise millions of people into taking action to stop fossil fuels extraction?
- How can we organise to win?

Sign up for your FREE ticket and to join movement debates, planning and skill shares. Each session will include interactive, participatory opportunities as well as dedicated workshops and presentations lead by activists. Spread the word, and register now!

[**Register Now**](#)

Green jobs: what are they and what could they mean for Haringey?

Tuesday, 20th April, 7pm - 8.15pm

We all know only too well how desperately we need to rebuild our economy to fight climate change, joblessness and rampant inequality. "What are green jobs, and what could they mean for Haringey?" is an online event that will feature a panel of Haringey business people, unions, and green jobs experts discussing how we can tackle the twin crises of joblessness and climate breakdown by creating a just transition to a decarbonised economy. We have confirmed speakers from The Ubele Initiative, Friends of the Earth, National Education Union and the North London Chamber of Commerce.

We'd love to have you join us to share your views in this critical conversation.

The event link is here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/green-jobs-what-are-they-and-what-could-they-mean-for-haringey/>

Biodiversity Action Plan On-line Zoom meeting Monday 17th May

Haringey is currently drafting its new Biodiversity Action Plan, for draft publication in July. Given the links between climate and ecological emergencies, we want to encourage the Council to make the BAP to be as strong as possible, and try to get more people behind it to support it at consultation, to win political support for funding it, and to take practical steps to help wildlife. So we are organising this online meeting after the mayoral and GLA elections.

Aims of meeting

- To explore what a really good BAP could look like in Haringey
- To support the new BAP process in Haringey and encourage its authors to make the draft as strong as possible
- To engage public interest in the BAP in advance of its publication and formal consultation

Speakers include Haringey's nature conservation officer Annabel Foskett and Cabinet member Cllr Kirsten Hearn; and Matthew Frith of London Wildlife Trust.

Organised by Haringey Climate Forum.

To join the meeting e-mail info@haringeyclimateforum.org – we will send you the meeting link - and let us know if you'd like to be added to the Forum's mailing list.

London Climate Action Week 2021

<https://www.londonclimateactionweek.org>

26th June-4th July

Harness the Power of London for Global Climate Action

Nicky Gavron writes:

As a commissioner for the London Sustainable Development Commission, I co-hosted and organised an event for the November 2020 virtual London Climate Action Week. It was about reducing the climate impact of construction and we attracted about 200 participants and having that platform and the publicity support round it certainly helped to amplify our message. I encourage you to take part and I am happy to answer any queries (gavronnicky@gmail.com). The last London Climate Action Week saw over 200 events with 35,000 attendees. Let's make LCAW 2021 even bigger and better.

How to get in touch and get involved

- 1) Join the mailing list/register: <https://www.londonclimateactionweek.org/>
- 2) Join the 2nd Stakeholder meeting in early April. Date after Easter will be confirmed asap
- 3) Plan your events and engagement!
- 4) Questions to info@londonclimateactionweek.org

LCAW needs you!

The organisers of London Climate Action Week (LCAW) are calling on **community groups and organisations** who understand the urgency of the climate crisis to help create conversations and events to make London Climate Action Week 2021 the best ever.

London Climate Action Week aims to bring together a collaborative “London Climate Cluster” to shape a net-zero, equitable and resilient future.

When and where

London Climate Action Week 2021 will be held virtually from 26th June – 4th July. Following the G7 Summit it is positioned at a vital point in the run up to COP 26 to set expectations, build momentum and increase climate ambition.

Wide reaching and diverse

LCAW welcomes all voices and wants to reach out beyond the traditional “climate bubble” to embrace the rich diversity of Londoners and bring people together in the spirit of climate justice, humanity and equality. If you want to take part, just get in touch

What can LCAW offer you?

- **Profile:** A globally-recognised platform that reliably “crowds in” a local, London and worldwide audience.

- **Collaboration:** access to a wide cross-sectoral group of like-minded climate actors to co-create, cross-publicise, share and work with.
- **Communication:** communications support from a dedicated LCAW comms team to amplify your messages, outputs and stories to a wide audience.
- **Innovation:** exposure and networking with innovative initiatives and new ideas.
- **Impact:** opportunity to build and participate in new – and unlikely – partnerships beyond LCAW.

Themes for LCAW 2021 (see website for details)

- Green, Fair and Resilient Recovery
- Road to COP 26
- Building a Sustainable, Net Zero London
- Whole of Society Climate Mobilisation

Start planning now--registration opens in April.

Message from David Lammy MP

After an immensely challenging year, the rollout of the vaccine is finally offering us a way out of the COVID-19 crisis. However, the battle doesn't stop there. As we brace ourselves for the economic fallout, we must push for a recovery that tackles the far deeper crisis that lies underneath: climate breakdown.

We know that bold action is possible. On his first day in office, Joe Biden signed executive orders to re-join the Paris Agreement and cancel the permit for the Keystone XL oil pipeline. Since then, he has announced an enormous, climate-focused infrastructure plan, throwing the weight of the government behind clean energy. Meanwhile, ministers in the UK are yet to show any sign that they will follow through on their climate promises. The long-awaited Environment Bill (first launched in 2018) has been delayed again, and the Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick recently waved through plans for a new coal mine in Cumbria, despite their goal to clean up the economy. Moreover, by cutting the international aid budget, this government is abandoning those countries that lie on the frontline of the climate crisis.

That's why Labour have recently announced a new plan to make electric vehicle ownership affordable to all, whilst creating jobs in the sector and accelerating the roll-out of charging points on streets across the country. This involves addressing the huge regional inequality that currently pits north against south for green investment. Climate action *must* be a collective endeavour that recognises the need for green infrastructure right across the nation.

This is just part of our green transformation, which intends to make our economy fairer, more equal, more secure and more sustainable. Climate justice is social justice. This is the DNA of Labour: Green and Red together.

Catherine West MP's Update from Parliament

The environment must be front and centre in our post COVID recovery and I'm pleased to be working with Haringey Labour Climate Action on plans for a July event on energy and climate issues in the run up to COP26. Ed Miliband, who's leading Labour's work in this area, has [begun setting out a vision for a radical climate policy](#) that recognises the scale of the challenge we face and it's vital we build on this and communicate effectively in the run up to COP26.



Johnson's Government certainly isn't up to the job - the March Budget was yet again a missed opportunity to show global leadership and put in place bold policies that could see us reach our climate targets. As it is, they're slipping further out of reach. I made the transition to a green economy one of the subjects of my Budget Speech – it's a challenge we cannot afford to ignore or neglect any longer. [Watch my speech here.](#)

Here are some of the things I've been doing in Parliament since your last newsletter:

Green Homes Grant

My [written Parliamentary Question on the Green Homes Grant](#) drew [widespread attention](#) to the serious problems in what was supposed to be one of the Government's flagship schemes. Huge delays in agreeing grants and giving out payments has left 95% of the £1.5 billion pot unspent yet incredibly in response to my question the Minister confirmed that this wouldn't be rolled over into the next financial year. Instead, since I asked my question the scheme has now been scrapped. It's bad for businesses, for home owners and makes a mockery of the Government's supposed commitment to the green transition we so desperately need. The rollout of the scheme has clearly been botched, but abandoning it, like the Green Deal Loan Scheme before, sends the wrong message and Government needs to get a grip and not waste yet more time with inaction.

Labour's Air Quality Summit

I was pleased to chair a session of Labour's Air Quality Summit last month calling on the UK Government for a Clean Air Act. In my session on *Air Quality in Urban Communities* with speakers Kerry McCarthy MP, Cllr Tom Hayes from Oxford City Council, Cllr Mete Coban from Hackney Council and Andrea Lee from Client Earth we discussed the challenges in cities and the work already taking place. Oxford City Council was England's first local authority to set a city-wide pollution target and under their new Air Quality Action Plan they've pledged to reduce nitrogen dioxide emissions to 30 µg/m³ by 2025.

Protecting our urban trees

I've had a number of constituents get in touch this month in alarm at Thames Water's works at Tile Kiln Lane reservoir and conservation area and the impact on woodland and trees. I'm pleased that, following my intervention, [works have stopped on site](#) but it again raises questions about the protections in place for our precious urban greenery. I've been asking Parliamentary Questions (below) and [my website](#) has a

wider update on some of the work I've been doing in Parliament and locally to protect our mature trees.

Some of my recent Written Parliamentary Questions

- To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of the Government's climate policies on BAME communities. [Response here](#).
- To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of trees being felled in urban areas. [Response here](#).
- To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what data is collected on the number of trees felled each year as a result of claims of subsidence damage to nearby buildings. [Response here](#).

Tree felling on Parkland Walk

Haringey and Islington councils are trimming vegetation and felling trees, particularly in the neighbourhood of bridges, on the Parkland Walk. Many people are alarmed at



the extent of this clearance and it appears Islington's work is far less drastic than Haringey's. Norman Beddington, on behalf of HLCA, wrote to Haringey's tree officer asking for a pause in the work and a re-evaluation. He cited the following reasons:

- the clearance seems to be widespread and quite destructive to biodiversity as many trees some distance from bridges have been cut down and ground vegetation cleared
 - Islington are only clearing to within a 2ms distance of bridges in their section of the Parkland Walk so other strategies seem to be possible
- we have access to a survey by an arborist showing that to date 171 trees have been felled of which only 22 are within 5 ms of bridges. Some of the 171 trees were diseased and dead - we have accepted this - plus some were felled by Islington.
 - all this work is being carried out during the nesting season
 - we would request that during any pause an environmental engineer be asked to carry out an assessment of the impact of trees on Parkland Walk bridges.

Of course, he added, we realise that vegetation needs to be cut back and some trees need to be felled from time to time but query whether it needs to be done in this high-impact way. The contractors are likely to be continuing their work until May but, if this goes ahead as planned, protests are like to continue and Haringey will continue to be seen as careless about the environment at a time when they are trying to safeguard and enhance biodiversity.

There is a petition against the present policy at <http://chnq.it/DnhNGSGZ9s>

No Cop Out at COP26

The international meetings on climate have a long but not distinguished history. The Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 established the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). That agreement, together with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) providing the scientific consensus on climate change, have explained what needs to be done. Subsequent meetings, the Conference of the Parties (COP), have set ambitious aims - the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015). But action to implement these aims is woefully lacking. Global carbon emissions have actually gone up.

The UK Government co-hosts COP26 to be held in Glasgow in early November. The ambition is to commit nations to emissions reductions that will limit global temperature rise to no more than 2C and ideally less than 1.5C, a stiff challenge given we are at 1.2C already.

To achieve these reductions, the mechanism proposed is for each country to submit an updated but non-binding Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), a piece of paper that outlines what reductions a country might make. These Contributions range from new policies that will be implemented effectively to wishful thinking. Alas the NDCs so far submitted – even if they are all actually implemented – would only make a tiny impact on worldwide carbon emissions. Nothing like the large cuts that are needed.

So for COP26 to be counted a success, more nations will have to submit much more ambitious NDCs that they commit to implementing. The next step in the COP process is to agree on how actual emission reductions are measured and reported so we can be assured that reductions are actually made rather than result from accounting tricks, double counting or claiming burning biomass is carbon neutral.

The UK has a big role to play in ensuring an effective international agreement is reached at COP26. But in turn this means a spotlight on the UK's own plans. Here we are well aware of the Government's record, lofty ambitions followed up by few and flawed actions. A record that will not convince other nations to take action.

A key issue is emissions trading. The EU has an emissions trading scheme, the EU ETS, where large emitters, eg steel makers, pay for their emissions. But makers of steel, say in China, do not pay an equivalent, meaning their steel is cheaper. The EU wants a border adjustment charge to compensate. But how will the US react? John Kerry has already objected. And what will the UK do? We are setting up our own scheme now we are out of the EU. What will it be?

So we must push for NO COP-OUT at COP26! Especially for the UK Government – but also for all the other Governments taking part.

Alan Morton

Disposing of our waste

In 2019 12½ million tonnes of waste was incinerated in the UK. Present capacity is 14½ million tonnes. Additional plants under construction will raise this to 18½ million tonnes¹. So there is already over-capacity. At the same time government policy is to 'reduce, reuse and recycle'². This disconnect is reflected in the plans to enlarge the capacity of the Edmonton incinerator. In fact if we pursued the policy which the government is recommending we would see a drastic reduction in the amount of waste which needs to be dealt with by incineration or landfill.

Firstly we need to raise the recycling rate. 'London has the highest incineration rate (54 per cent) in the UK for management of local authority waste, yet the lowest recycling rate (30 per cent)³. One of the problems is the policy of many London boroughs to collect all recycled material from one container rather than separating out paper, metals and plastics, a method known as comingling. The result is that many loads are rejected as non-recycleable because they are contaminated.

But raising the recycling rate on the doorstep is not all that can be done. It is estimated that 60 per cent of residual waste could be recycled by 'post-separation' including 70 per cent of plastics and 80 per cent of metals⁴.

The end result of all this leaves about 30 per cent of all waste which would need to be disposed of by incineration or landfill but this would need only a fraction of the capacity of the present incinerators let alone the new capacity being built.

A major problem arising from this over-capacity is the need by the incinerator operators to increase the collection of waste to feed them. It is perhaps no coincidence that the areas with the greatest incinerator capacity are also the areas with the lowest recycling rate¹.

This is not to say that incineration should never take place. It is better than landfill and for the time being there will be this 30 per cent. But the essential points are; one, stop over-capacity, two, build flexible incinerators which can readily be switched off and on according to need and three, finance them in such a way that there is no incentive to increase their use.

Chris Barker

¹ Quoted in <https://ukwin.org.uk/facts/>

² See, for example, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765914/resources-waste-strategy-dec-2018.pdf

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/stop-allowing-new-toxic-waste-incinerators>

⁴ <https://papers.tinbergen.nl/16103.pdf>