

## **Executive summary**

On 27th March 2019 Southwark's Council Assembly resolved to call on cabinet to declare a Climate Emergency and do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.

Cabinet agreed, and Southwark's commitment to adopt this ambitious target has been mirrored by a string of London boroughs and the GLA, instituting a movement for change that was first ignited by young people, including most famously Greta Thunberg.

The Environment Scrutiny Commission has taken an overview role in examining the emerging Climate Emergency strategy, which is due to come to the July 2020 Cabinet, scrutinising the focus, principles driving the strategy, themes, engagement process, and data.

The commission made a first report to cabinet in October 2019. This second report reflects on cabinet feedback to this first report and also takes a deeper dive into a number of issues, including:

- Local transport emissions ( complimented by a longer Air Quality review)
- Planning, regeneration, and carbon offsetting
- Community Energy

The following points summarise the reports main conclusions and calls for a:

- A strategy that sets out to address the ecological emergency as well as the climate emergency, and which aims to restore nature, not only limit the amount of carbon emitted.
- A strategy guided by our Fair Future promises and the environmental principle of a Just Transition.
- A data driven strategy that maps emissions and consumption data and overlays deprivation data to ensure we deliver a comprehensive, effective and fair strategy.
- A partnership orientated strategy working with all sections of the community, including our citizens, voluntary and statutory organisations, and both large and smaller business partners.
- An engaging strategy, which ensures future generations and marginalised communities are prioritised.
- A transformative strategy, which sets out to change our transport system so that by 2030 the overwhelming majority of journeys are taken by foot, bicycle and public transport and where a car, and other vehicular traffic, is the exception rather than the rule.

- A strategy that quantifies the carbon emissions and resources used in our boroughs regeneration schemes and aims to rapidly move towards a low waste, low carbon, low ecological impact built environment, though building on our pioneering Great Estates programme, and utilising the circular economy principles.
- A community focused strategy that brings Community Energy forward, by identifying all solar opportunities in the borough, starting with our local schools.

The coronavirus pandemic has shown us that governments can quickly implement socially unpopular policies in the interest of the public good and it shows that we can respond to a crisis when we need to. Society now needs to respond to the climate crisis with the same urgency and at the same comprehensive scale.

A blog published on EOS entitled 'Eight Lessons from COVID-19 to Guide Our Climate Response' quoted climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe: "The pandemic has shown that we are all part of an interconnected system. To care about biodiversity, to care about the integrity of our ecosystems, to care about our planetary boundaries and the limits on the resources we can use, and, last but not least, to care about climate change, the great threat multiplier, we only have to be one thing. And that one thing is a human living on planet Earth."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Katharine Hayhoe](#), an atmospheric scientist at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.