



London Leap

Participatory policies for a fairer and greener London

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has uncovered London's many inequities. Now more than ever we need a green recovery for the city that puts justice at the heart of our transition to a more sustainable future. We must reimagine a city that enables a healthy mind, body and environment for individuals and communities. Another London is possible, where the majority don't just survive precariously, but where communities and the environment can thrive. London must be rebuilt to address our multiple crises and move towards climate, health, economic, cultural, political and social equity.

We now have the opportunity to move our economy away from extractivism and competition, and instead towards cooperation, redistribution and reparation. Meeting the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global average surface temperature rise to 1.5° will require changes to how we grow and distribute food, live, move, socialise and work. The UK has a particular responsibility¹ to reduce emissions. Committing to a zero-carbon London by 2030 is the leadership we need.

London's role in the global economy has dictated and influenced economic priorities and practices for centuries, and it continues to play a central part. With London residents driving change, we can tackle the roots of our injustices, driving ambitious local programmes that inspire bolder national and international action.

The London Leap, which is a project at Platform,² has set out to work with frontline groups across London to define how a climate transition can centre their needs and voices. Central to achieving this has been our commitment to co-producing policies, ideas and visions for a greener and fairer London that meets the needs of the people in this city while driving climate action

Executive Summary

With residents driving action, London can lead a justice centred transition that improves well-being for the majority. We propose co-produced commitments that would see the Mayor of London and the London Assembly secure:

- **Decent green jobs and social protection:** create 60,000 good green jobs and apprenticeships prioritising those in need, secure re-training for those in polluting industries, encourage low-carbon care work with decent conditions and pay, and secure social protection for those who can't work undoing years of austerity that has deepened hardship and reduced communities' resilience to climate, economic and health shocks
- **Accessible, secure, and green housing:** retrofitting all 100,000 homes starting with the fuel poor, supporting and listening to renters unions, encouraging community-led housing and community-led housing re-design schemes, campaign for democratic and community owned renewable energy generation across homes, and explore district heating and cooling opportunities
- **Connected, thriving, green neighbourhoods:** install wind and solar renewable energy infrastructure, expand electric transport, cancel new road-building plans and oppose airport expansion, reduce traffic and improve road safety, ensure a people-first approach to neighbourhoods such as investing in cycling, walking and disability infrastructure and more
- **An equity framework:** all policies must ensure that traditionally marginalised groups (whether on account of geography, ability, economic status, gender, age, sexuality, residency or other status) benefit first, and new policies repair underlying causes of inequity to promote universal well-being. Communities must be central in policy design and implementation, and be able to hold decision-makers to account for meeting measurable inequity reduction targets

1 Christian Aid and others; Fair Shares approach https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/FairShareUK_Infographic.pdf; Harpreet Kaur Paul, 'Climate change affects rich and poor unequally. Climate justice redresses the balance,' Greenpeace blog (9 Mar 2020).

2 For more about us: <https://platformlondon.org/>.

Throughout the document we prioritise democratic and community driven approaches as they are more likely to centre collective benefit, embed sustainability, improve well-being, and promote thriving neighbourhoods that build community wealth sustainably for the benefit of current and future generations.

Methodology and Acknowledgements

London Leap is committed to the co-production of vision and policy with frontline groups and communities. For nearly two years, Platform via the London Leap programme has worked with groups across London to lay out how carbon zero and net zero strategies can centre their needs and voices. These frontline groups work with their community to support their local residents. We invited them to become Leap participants.

We strive to surface the connection between climate action and social and economic justice. This is best done by working in meaningful collaboration with groups working to meet the needs of their communities everyday. Communities should have the agency to meaningfully shape their lives, neighbourhoods and city. Communities are where imaginative, ambitious ideas meet practical knowledge about preexisting needs and gaps, which together drive meaningful solutions.

To rise to the challenge of climate breakdown, we need to transform the values that underpin our current economy and society. London Leap believes this value shift comes before and in tandem with meaningful and visionary policies. This is why London Leap worked with our participants in the first phase of this project to formulate Just Transition values, captured here: [London Leap: Just Transition Values](#). Over the past two years, we've worked with London Leap participants to:

Phase one: build London Leap values

We began by undertaking semi structured interviews focused on how Leap participants' work relates to climate justice, and then these were analysed. We presented our analysis to participants and drew common values that underpinned our collective work, and identified the needs for a just transition to a low carbon city. The London Leap team absorbed this feedback and finalised values with editing support from Leap participants and consultants. The final values are:

- **Transition and transform London through a just recovery:** build economic democracy that centers communities and work towards the shared ownership of wealth and power for sustainable futures and collective well-being. Wealth inequality preys on our communities health on a daily basis. Unlike the response to the financial crisis of 2008, we will not accept a move towards enforcing austerity on public services. We need alternatives for the public benefit with public participation.
- **Redefining and centering workers and communities most impacted:** place workers and frontline communities at the center of how we redesign our future. Begin by asking what needs are, and how we can meet them. Redefine what it means to be a worker by breaking down the separation of 'work' and 'home'. This separation has enabled labour in our homes and our communities to be invisibilised.
- **Internationalism and solidarity:** London is hailed for being a place of great diversity in people and cultures, bringing folks from around the world together. London's industrialisation was resourced through wealth built off the backs of generations of migrant communities such as the Windrush generation and many others. In any meaningful transition, the experience of undocumented migrants' in London must be considered in this historic context. The hostile environment, with its inhumane impact on migrants, must be dismantled.

- **Enable self determination through collective power:** It's a myth that we all have choices in the current way our economy and society is run. A wealthy few are offered true freedom and thereby have real civic agency while the majority are left with little access to it. Through enabled spaces that create collective solutions such as unions to citizen assemblies, we can ensure everyone is able to build ownership and control over their own lives.

London for Living: We believe in a future where the wisdom of local communities is recognised, so that we see co-designed local and city-wide plans. People and communities should have what they need available to them on their doorstep. A thriving local economy includes high streets which are busy with local business that provide all our needs, from fresh produce to health services to community centers, all whilst strengthening intergenerational social relationships.

You can find the full values document and list of participants on our [website](#).³

Phase two: building the policy document.

Building on Phase one values, we brought our collaborative visions together, showcasing meaningful co-creation of policy frameworks and demands from these visions. We call for the Greater London Authority, through the London Mayor and London Assembly to commit to co-created policies, frameworks and programmes going forward, designed and delivered by London residents.

We asked community organisers and activists with decades of experience to propose visions responding to the question: *“What does a London that meets the needs of the people that you work with, look like?”* These visions and a subsequent roundtable inform the content of this policy document.

We are grateful to Andy Greene (Activist, Disabled People Against the Cuts, DPAC), Lauren Johnson-King (Chief Executive, Disability Advice Service Lambeth), Hannah Emery-Wright (Communities Manager, London Community Land Trust), Jesse Ashman, (Partnerships Manager and Recovery Worker, The Outside Project), Leslie Barson (Co-founder, Granville Community Kitchen), Deirdre Woods (co-editor of A People's Food Policy and on the GLA London Food Board), Ian Solomon-Kawall (Managing Director, May Project Gardens), Belmiro Costa, (Organiser), Mona Bani (Co-director, May Project Gardens), Zahra Bei, (Co-founder, No More Exclusions), and Ruth London (Founder, Fuel Poverty Action) for responding with moving visions in response to our question.

A thematic analysis of these visions was then undertaken, which guided and informed the Policy Recommendations put together by Harpreet Kaur Paul with input from Kennedy Walker and Sakina Sheikh (the London Leap team at Platform). These were then amended and updated following additional comments and reflections from roundtable attendees; Fatima Ibrahim (Green New Deal UK), Rebekah Diski (New Economics Foundation), Guppi Bola (Decolonising Economics), Mark Button (Citizens UK), Josh Gabert-Doyon (Common Wealth), Kieran Kirkwood (London Renters Union) and Ashish Ghadiali (Wretched of the Earth) and Deirdre Woods (Landworkers Alliance).

3 London Leap, Just Transition Values, <https://platformlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/London-Leap-values.pdf>.

London Mayoral and Assembly Policy Recommendations

Ultimate aim: To build towards a zero-carbon city by 2030 with equity we need:

1. Good green jobs and social protection

Decent green work and social safety can undo precarity deepened by decades of austerity, accelerating climate change impacts and a global pandemic. We are calling on the London Mayor to work collaboratively with London residents, civil society, employers and unions, to support the creation of decent green work for those that can work, and social protection for those who cannot. Local authorities can embed sustainability and social criteria in their procurement of public projects, enabling community wealth building that supports cooperatives and social enterprises that promote collective well-being. Decent work that builds towards sustainable futures must benefit low-income communities, who disproportionately face climate change impacts and pandemic related precarity. At the same time, social protection is essential to support those who cannot undertake paid work, and who contribute to our beautiful city in diverse and often unrecognised ways.

Why it's necessary

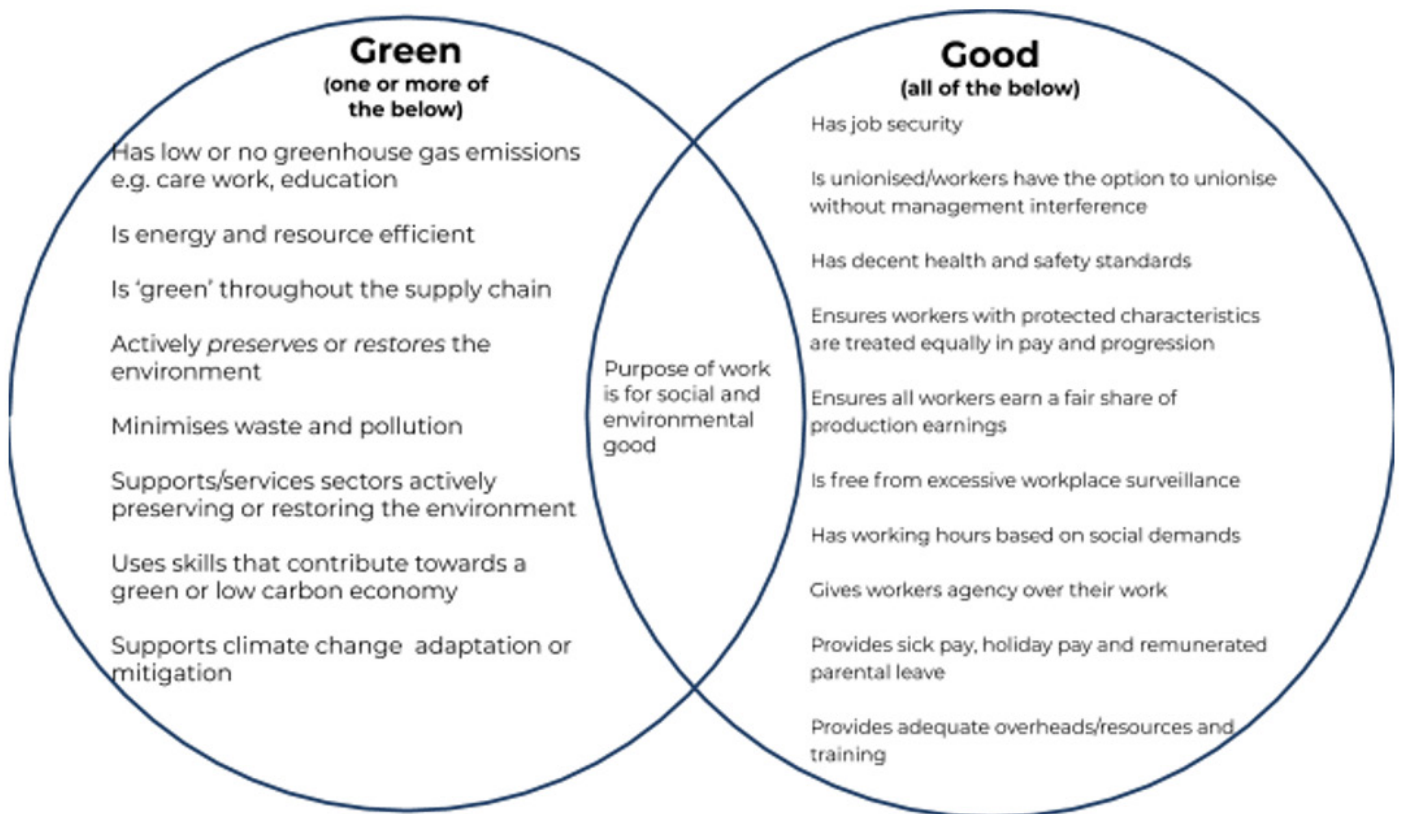
To decarbonise by 2030, London needs to prioritise and invest in socially valuable work that is sustainable. We support Citizens UK's call for the Mayor to create 60,000 good green jobs and apprenticeships (employing and training 'Just Transition Champions') over the next mayoral term, focussing on low income and diverse communities. The number of working families in poverty has

Policy recommendations:

1. Create 60,000 good green jobs and apprenticeships⁴. Green jobs could be as diverse as supporting community driven renewable energy generation, distribution and supply; retrofitting homes to address energy poverty, poor health and emissions; installing heat pumps; building district heating and cooling systems; supporting shared electric transport and delivery; redesigning infrastructure for walking, cycling and wheelchair use; building flood defences; replanting, re-wilding, re-forestation; promoting access to nutritious, localised, sustainable food through sustainable, organic, agroecology; better recycling initiatives and appropriate waste disposal; and technological innovation in decentralised, distributed and democratic solutions, for example
2. Allocate funds for re-training and supporting fossil fuel energy, fossil fuel intensive (road, airport and airline industry, for example), and precarious workers to gain decent green employment
3. Support decent pay and working conditions for already low-carbon work, including childcare, social care, education, older persons care and healthcare, for example
4. Promote a basic income, and comprehensive public services and social protection for those unable to work

increased by 50% over the last decade, and the pandemic has exacerbated precarity for many. Decent work which pays at least the living wage, and protects workers' rights can simultaneously ensure a just recovery and sustainable work. Those unable to work should also be supported through strong public services and social protection schemes, and basic income trials should be considered.

4 This is a demand from Citizen's UK that we support.



Source: [NEF](#)

Jobs which prioritise community wealth building by supporting cooperatives, mutuals, community businesses, credit unions and land trusts can start to repair the impact of neoliberalisation which, between 1995 and 2004, saw job losses of more than 30% in the energy sector alone. Entities that are run by workers for a community benefit are more likely to ensure decent working conditions and embed sustainability values, while also distributing wealth generated among members. Members are more likely to reinvest this in local projects.

Participants' reflections

Ian Solomon-Kawall calls for a reduction in youth unemployment. Ruth London describes green jobs as prioritising social value, low carbon jobs based on caring for people, animals and the environment, cleaning up pollution and refuse, and planting afresh. Green jobs with an equity lens can help those in the greatest need to work,

when they have the ability to do so. Jobs should meet the "good" criteria described in the graphic from the New Economics Foundation, including enabling collective action, and ensuring safety and dignity in the workplace. Roundtable attendees also highlighted the importance of a decent green jobs agenda being combined with strong social protection commitments that protect public services and promote innovations through experimenting with universal or basic income schemes.

Belmiro Costa articulates the possibility of a four day week creating time for families to cook nourishing and culturally meaningful food at home, which would improve well-being and reduce emissions. And Deirdre Woods visions a future where women's work and caring is valued.

2. Secure and green housing for all

From draughty older homes to high rises and social housing, our homes contribute differently to our climate crisis. Domestic housing accounts for about a fifth of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, mostly from heating and hot water. At the same time, in a city of extreme wealth, too many struggle to secure safe and secure shelter at all. Green homes for all can repair inequities in who has access to housing, and centre well-being. Our homes can reduce energy consumption through retrofits and redesigns that simultaneously keep our homes more snug in the winter (with less energy) and also improve ventilation in our warmer summers. This will improve health and, with the community leadership and appropriate public investment, increase the safety of our underfunded social housing too. At the same time, our homes can also become sites of democratic and distributed renewable energy generation. When collectively owned, renewable energy from our homes can significantly reduce emissions and power participatory urban governance in the energy system. This can support a low carbon transition, tackle fuel poverty or energy insecurity, address dissatisfaction with large energy providers, and build democratic wealth for the collective benefit.⁵ Fifth generation innovations in district heating for the winter and new experiments with district cooling for our warmer summers can also reduce the scale of our energy consumption and waste and give us a better chance of meeting global climate ambition.⁶

Why it's necessary

In order to ensure a just green transition, sustainable homes need to address inequities in who has access to decent homes and ensure that homes serve the diverse needs and abilities of all London residents. Soaring inequality, housing costs, poorly designed - and sometimes unsafe - housing and energy poverty cause displacement and health inequities, and exacerbate the climate

Policy recommendations:

1. Work towards ending fuel poverty by 2030, by upgrading 100,000 fuel poor homes over the next Mayoral term, to reduce emissions, improve wellbeing and create good green jobs⁷
2. Listen to and support renters unions proposals and expose rogue lettings agents who do not meet the legal minimum energy efficiency standards. In the longer term, increase energy efficiency ambition through supporting regulation of new developments to passive housing standards⁸
3. Place a strategic priority to support community-led housing and housing improvement schemes (co-designed and co-produced by communities) as well as democratic and community owned renewable energy generation across homes
4. Invest in district heating and cooling opportunities

crisis. We can build a more equitable London and improve living conditions, retrofit homes, reduce heating and cooling waste through district-wide solutions, and ensure access to affordable housing (by imposing rent controls, rent freezes, and mechanisms to curb housing speculation, as well as protecting and promoting social housing). London has seen a considerable loss in social housing. The Right to Buy scheme and estate regenerations have led to the loss of more than 8,000 social rented homes in a decade. Instead, community-led housing schemes can help neighbours co-design regenerations; and ensures ownership stays locked for community benefit.

Average rents have risen approximately 11% in London since 2012. Average pay has risen just 1%. The increased proportion of costs being allocated by working families to meet basic needs, such

5 See mPOWER (Municipal Power project), <https://municipalpower.org/>.

6 See for example, mPOWER, 'New ways for the energy transition - the Viennese approach,' 22 June 2020, <https://municipalpower.org/articles/new-ways-for-the-energy-transition-the-viennese-approach/>.

7 This is a demand from Citizen's UK that we support.

8 Lenny Antonell, 'How Brussels went passive,' 26 Oct 2016.

as housing, energy and food is a leading cause of precarity and homelessness. The influential minority of a super rich quickly buy-up newly built homes solely for investment purposes, sometimes through off-shore jurisdictions. Thousands of council tenants in London are displaced, and homelessness has increased. Around 4 million UK households are in fuel poverty, unable to afford warm and dry homes. Roughly 15,000 people died in the winter of 2018 unable to warm their homes.

Homes also consume significant amounts of energy. In 2012, direct buildings emissions (mainly from the use of gas for heating) accounted for 37% of UK greenhouse gas emissions. Buildings also were responsible for 67% of electricity consumption and related (i.e. indirect) emissions. Democratised renewable energy generation and distribution, heat pumps, district heating and cooling as well as improved energy efficiency can reduce emissions and improve health and well-being.

The potential benefits of energy efficiency measures include improved physical health such as reduced symptoms of respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, rheumatism, arthritis and allergies, as well as fewer injuries. Social housing must be retrofitted, and private homes and housing associations incentivised to do the same. Building London into a thriving city with decarbonised and democratic renewable energy enabled, district heating and cooling, as well as energy efficient homes can help generate more energy than is required, sending the remainder to local healthcare centres, hospitals, childcare centres, schools, universities and colleges, and innovation cooperatives. Cooperatives, as well as community led, owned and implemented approaches enable wealth created by communities to be held by them, rather than flowing outwards. Plural ownership is fundamental to building a more generative economy from the bottom up.

Participants' reflections

Ruth London calls for energy efficiency schemes where non-toxic, non-flammable materials are used to build - through a diverse workforce accountable to residents - good, green homes

that are efficient, accessible and where rents are controlled. The buildings have good insulation so need less heating. When heating is required, it can be powered by “the sun, the ground, water sources, the air, and waste heat from industry, often but not always supplied via communal heat networks. Energy is cyclical, smartly recycled to and from our homes, the transport system - now almost all public - bicycles, and gyms.”

Deirdre Woods calls for ecological, low cost housing that is community led and built, with communal social and utility spaces, in homes and community buildings. Leslie Barson also cites housing as a key human need. Andy Greene envisions 3D printed solar powered homes to address the housing crisis. He also visions homes that are built to enable everyone - especially including those that live with disabilities - to live autonomous lives. Hannah Emery-Wright calls for affordable homes to be based on how much people in a local area earn, and she also calls for sustainability across generations so that people are not priced-out of communities in the name of profit. Jesse Ashman calls for rent caps and creative solutions.

3. Connected, thriving, green neighbourhoods

We need “walk or ride-able” neighbourhoods free from road danger, with cleaner air, community run and owned hubs or centres close by; resulting in a feeling of pride in co-creating communities, with thriving opportunities to socialise and access green spaces. We need neighbourhoods where people can walk, move in a wheelchair or cycle quickly and safely to work, nurseries, schools, community centres, markets, and parks, along quiet streets with plenty of places to meet and rest. Pedestrians and cyclists could enjoy protected footpaths lined with trees, shops, art and music studios, galleries, theatres, and restaurants. Speed limits on the streets could be low enough that everyone feels safe crossing, especially valuable for older persons, those who live with disabilities, those pushing a pram and young children who often don't feel this is the case.

With steady foot traffic, local retailers and eateries would thrive. In relation to transport, well-maintained public transit could offer convenient and comfortable commutes, connecting every neighbourhood so that people do not have to drive. The few vehicles on the streets could all be electric, quiet and pollution-free with much deeper commitments to enabling cycling and car sharing - given the raw earth minerals required for electric car batteries, and the related human rights and sustainability issues in source countries. As a result of cleaner air, asthma, allergies, other respiratory diseases and even lung cancer would be far less common. It would be more pleasant inside homes, community and commercial buildings, with increased natural lighting, good ventilation, and material and design choices that limit the need for temperature control. Combined with democratised and localised rooftop solar panels and highly efficient heating and cooling systems, compact, connected and healthier neighbourhoods would help us leverage the tools we currently have to attain really meaningful net-zero carbon emissions and improve lives.

Why it's necessary

Infrastructure that increases emissions, roads and airports must be halted to meet the UK's fair share of responsibility under the Paris Agreement. The New Economics Foundation has shown London City Airport's half a million square metres could be used to create at least 16,000 more jobs and add an additional £400 million to the UK's economy if it were freed up for other uses. In addition, poor air quality causes almost 64,000 early deaths in the UK every year. Pedestrians accounted for 43% of fatalities and 30% of serious injuries on built up roads in England in 2019 with almost 5,300 pedestrians killed or seriously injured on England's roads. Only 47% of children and young people are active for the recommended 60 minutes a day. And only 67% of adults meet the NHS's physical activity guidelines of at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. Black residents are four times more likely than white residents to have no access to outdoor space at home (e.g. a balcony or a garden). This lack of outdoor space has been difficult during COVID-19 but as temperatures warm will also increase risks of heat

Policy recommendations:

1. Install wind and solar renewable energy infrastructure on publicly owned buildings
2. Expand electric public busses and innovative electric car sharing schemes prioritising those with the greatest needs to ensure access is equitable and based on need
3. Exclude the most polluting cars, vans and lorries, cancel new road-building plans and oppose airport expansion
4. Provide a London vision - based on meaningful community participation co-design and co-implementation - for reducing traffic and improving the safety, accessibility and sustainability of streets for people, and hold council leaders to account for their role in making this happen
5. Within a year, embed the 20 minute neighbourhood principle (everything being a 10 minute walk or wheelchair ride there and back) into the London Plan, the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Adapt the Strategic Neighbourhood Analysis to ensure a people-first approach to neighbourhoods across London and repair inequities to ensure all neighbourhoods thrive
6. Encourage and support community led social enterprises that reclaim High Streets and transform them into thriving community wealth building hubs of cooperatives, mutuals, community businesses, credit unions and land trusts that serve the community benefit, build social value, local wealth, and ensure sustainability
7. Work with boroughs to remove 50 hectares of 'greyspace' from our streets and replace it with trees, plants, sustainable drainage schemes, parklets, seating and play equipment
8. Stop the privatisation of land and impose a moratorium on the council selling land until planning processes - formulated transparently

and accountably - encourage and support community stewardship by social enterprises that build community wealth

9. Support arts, music and cultural sites (including community markets and spaces) to stay open and accessible

related hazard exposure. Individuals living in high-rise residences will experience heat stress more severely in contrast to those with green spaces. Air pollution is concentrated in the 20% of poorest neighbourhoods in England and in areas with a greater proportion of Black people.

Black people are less likely to cause road pollution,⁹ yet are more exposed to air pollution and are also 30% more likely to be injured on the road than white groups. Community road design can be re-centred to be safer. Over two-thirds of transport emissions in 2018 were from road transport, of which over half comes from cars. Cars account for almost 40% of total transport emissions. Over two-thirds of transport emissions in 2018 were from road transport, of which over half comes from cars. Cars account for almost 40% of total transport emissions. While transport via car will continue to be necessary, particularly for specialist appointments etc., electric car sharing and accessible, regular and timely bus routes alongside prioritising those with specific needs is essential to ensure we can decarbonise meaningfully.

Participants' reflections

For Jesse Ashman, safe spaces to participate in public life is essential, alongside support services for physical and mental health. In Belmiro Costa's piece we hear intonations of a recognition that inequality keeps the majority of people from accessing localised food from accessible farmers markets. Andy Greene refers to assistive technology being leveraged so that people who live with disabilities can live independently. Technological innovations - when they are directed to meeting needs and increasing equity - can be essential.

A yearning for increased access to outdoor space echoes through numerous contributions. Belmiro Costa talks about an expanded national park reaching neighbouring roads. Deirdre Woods foreshadows a future of land justice where the land is held for the common good, and visions a 20 minute neighbourhood where everything that one needs is within a short walk, wheelchair ride or electric shuttle ride. She also describes a strong community ethos where neighbours cook, eat, work and play together upholding the holistic ecology of community care, equity and resilience built on social solidarity principles with affordable, culturally appropriate, agroecological food at its centre.

Both Leslie Barson and Belmiro Costa describe neighbourhoods as villages bringing forward notions of more interdependence and interconnection. Jesse Ashman talks of the importance of preserving community spaces, and creating new spaces to come together, from homes, entertainment venues, parks, libraries, and other public spaces of the city. Jesse Ashman also highlights the importance of community spaces that are specific to the specific needs of marginalised communities, in his case the LGBTQI community. As noted in our roundtable, for people of colour communities, culturally significant markets are also spaces in which culturally appropriate food and other resources can be bought and people can come together. Hannah Emery-Wright describes the positive role that Community Land Trusts can play in enabling a positive vision of transformed neighbourhoods of safe playtimes and togetherness.

Ian Solomon-Kawall speaks of a grassroots community ecosystem where access to green spaces is central. Organic agroecological urban and nearby farms can also feature as a key solution to sustainable access to nutritious food. Ruth London talks about promoting work that brings play, experience and elders' knowledge across diverse communities to the fore.

⁹ Black households are much less likely to have access to a car than white households.

4. Commit to an equity framework

London is a city of extremes. 50% of London's wealth is owned by the top 10%. The bottom 50% own only 5% of London's wealth. The wealthy live 7-9 years longer, are disproportionately responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, and have the resources to fund their resilience to climate impacts. An equity framework can address injustices in who has access to green space, disparities in health and wealth between different groups, the quality of public spaces, and access to quality housing, education, and food. An intergenerational equity approach is particularly crucial in a climate change context, given the accelerating hazards that young children and future generations will face. In active co-creation with London residents, the Mayor should commit to monitoring measurable reductions in inequalities and inequities through ensuring that policies do not cause or perpetuate disadvantage, and instead address causes and promote dignity, rights, respect, fairness and autonomy.

Why it's necessary

London's financial centre acts as a hub for the global extraction of coal, oil and gas, which net-zero carbon emission pledges try to green wash. Two banks alone have funnelled around \$43 billion to coal and tar sands companies, and oil and gas expanders. Austerity measures brought in to pay for a financial crisis, have led to 130,000 preventable deaths across the country, unemployment has stayed high and household wealth has dropped (with disproportionate impacts in Black and brown households). The financial sector has seen soaring profits. The "banks and corporations first" principle applied to the financial crisis has also applied to the COVID-19 response. The "eat out to help out" scheme not only cost £849million but fuelled a second wave. Corporations profited from free school meal provision, and companies with connections to the government (but limited experience in creating health related applications, and manufacturing or sourcing personal protective equipment) gained lucrative contracts.

Policy recommendations:

1. Commit to an equity framework where policies must ensure that traditionally marginalised groups (whether on account of geography, ability, economic status, gender, age, sexuality, residency or other status) benefit first, lead in identifying needs and gaps as well as policy design and implementation, and are able to hold decision-makers to account for meeting measurable inequity reduction targets
2. Commit to progressive business rates and advocate for broader equitable taxation measures to avoid exacerbating inequalities and inequities
3. Encourage local authorities to promote International Labour Organisation compliant social and sustainability standards in the procurement of energy, food, electronics and other products at high risk of carbon emissions, environmental degradation and workers' rights violations throughout the global supply chains

We have also already considered the racialised exposure to air pollution and traffic incidents, and unequal access to green housing and community spaces. Energy poverty is also rife in London. Policies must instead centre well-being, care and cooperation for intergenerational sustainability.

There is also a high risk that the products we consume have high carbon embedded in their creation and distribution, and many products (from healthcare equipment, to food, electronics and even renewable energy infrastructure) may also have been made in places with poor workers' rights monitoring and safeguarding, as well as poor environmental controls leading to community exposure to potentially toxic hazards and risks of workers' human rights abuses. Public authorities can embed social and environmental sustainability criteria in their procurement to help address this. Procurement which embeds compliance with International Labour Organisation and other standards (like the The Blue Angel environmental

label) - and promotes worker driven monitoring of the standards - can start to improve conditions for the workers and communities in our supply chains, and ensure that culturally appropriate food and goods can be transported to the UK ethically.

Participants' reflections

Climate change exacerbates underlying marginalisations, and Zahra Bei articulates powerful parallels between climate injustice and disproportionate school exclusions among Black (in particular Black-Caribbean) and brown children as well as children with special educational needs, those who live with disabilities, children in care, children in receipt of free school meals, and particularly boys. She highlights that too many people are navigating precarity and neglect, concerned with immediate safety and survival. Mona Bani refers to the debilitating impact of unequal access to food, shelter, health, education and basic human rights. In contrast, Deirdre Woods calls for needs to be met, for example through a basic income that covers living expenses, utilities, rent and food. Leslie Barson also echoes for the fundamental needs of human life to be centred, including healthy, sustainably grown, nutritious food.

Mona Bani talks about luck, or the lottery of birth, not determining our ability to override health and climate crises. Instead, there should be an expectation that politics services the public good.

In order to propose meaningful solutions to climate and school exclusion crises, Zahra Bei proposes a centering of care, nurture, and safety over upholding racist, sexist, ableist, and classist values that not only produce “poor life outcomes, including higher risk of premature death” but which precludes excluded children from having the space to imagine sustainable futures for themselves and future generations.

This approach to education which prioritises giving young people the skills, agency and resources to build the futures we need and deserve, echoes with visions that call for increased participation in policy making beyond formal education. Deirdre Woods, for example, talks of everyone having

access to the information to make informed decisions in connection with neighbours, a theme central also to Leslie Barson and Lauren Johnson-King's contributions.

Belmiro Costa reflects on a form of schooling that builds community and intergenerational connections and addresses loneliness, which is associated with an increased risk of certain mental health difficulties. In addition to addressing loneliness, there is also a recognition that building relationships across generations can provide guidance.

Andy Greene proposes progressive taxes can enable this so that people have the resources that they need. Delivery by and for disabled people is another key element. Lauren Johnson-King also calls for disabled people to be designing and implementing climate change strategies too and she quotes the slogan “nothing about us, without us.” Hannah Emery-Wright also insists on co-design as a key principle for action.

Ruth London calls for a vision where the city's vast wealth has been redistributed to all, policing, and prisons, and detention centres have been repurposed or knocked down. Work that is essential is powered, while work that is for profit alone ends in order to meet the “1.5° C to stay alive” climate ambition. Releasing the curiosity and creativity of children, and bringing into play the experience and knowledge preserved by grandparents, women, and London's many immigrant communities.

Visions from London Leap Participants

Belmiro Costa

Organiser

I'm enjoying life a bit more now.

Since the national park got expanded to neighbouring roads, I walk through it to get to school. I think the green is a nice contrast to the grey of the estate.

School is getting a bit better too. The "It Takes a Village" programme paired us up with the nearby care home and we visit each other from time to time. I didn't really know what I wanted to do when I was older but I met Gary there who's teaching me about electrics. I think I want to be an electrician now.

I think Gary used to get lonely. I did too. All my family is back in Portugal so having Gary around is nice. We even invite him over for supper. Since my mum only works four days a week now we have time to cook food from back home together at least once a week. We can even afford food from the farmers market which we couldn't do before.

London feels more like home now.

Zahra Bei

Co-founder, No More Exclusions

One of the major examples of the violence of racism consists of rearing of generations of black people who have not learnt how to imagine the future - who are not now in possession of the education and the imagination that allows them to envision the future This is violence that leads to other forms of violence - violence against children; violence against partners, violence against friends... in our families and communities, we often unconsciously continue the work of larger forces of racism assuming this violence is individual and sui-generis.

Angela Davis, Freedom is a Constant Struggle, 2016, 89

The climate crisis is not typically linked to school exclusions yet there are many parallels. Both disproportionately affect Black and Brown communities. Both are continuing to rise/worsen. Both reproduce extremely poor life outcomes, including higher-risk of premature death. Both are maintained and accelerated by neoliberal market-principles and policies, including austerity and academisation. Both are frequently subject to minimisation or denial in policy terms, in spite of all the decades of research evidence. Both stem from political choices made by officials far removed from the communities most affected they are supposed to serve. Both require us to think and act in entirely new ways if we are to secure a future for the world and all our children's futures, who will eventually inherit that world.

Political choices (and ideologies) affect policies and policies affect lives.

School exclusions are rooted in laws, policies, practices and behaviours that are inherently short-termist, exploitative, punitive, racist, classist, sexist, disablist and anti-humanity.

School exclusions marginalize and ostracise the most vulnerable of the already vulnerable: disproportionately children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, children in care, children on Free School meals, Black-Caribbean children and particularly boys.

School exclusions alter children and young people's imagined futures along with their sense of self-worth. They carry enormous stigma.

If society abdicates its care and safeguarding responsibilities of some its children by exiling them, why do we then expect those same children to care for themselves, others and the world they live in? All children need and deserve care and nurture. All are entitled to a free inclusive quality education.

As it stands, too many children and young people do not see themselves or their interests, dreams and aspirations included or valued. Their educational journeys can be truncated at any time.

The communities we represent, and that we are ourselves part of, deserve to belong. For London children, that starts with schools and education.

This is why No More Exclusions (NME) is calling for a moratorium on school exclusions in the wake of the pandemic.

Too many of our London communities are perpetually concerned with their immediate safety and survival. We have to build in security, care and safety instead of precarity, neglect and vulnerability. London children and young people above all need hope and to believe their imagined futures stand a chance.

Deirdre Woods

Food Justice Policy Coordinator, Landworkers Alliance

South Kilburn is the paragon of local futures. An area of life and interdependence where everybody, everything matters. The people are empowered to participate in deep democracy to make decisions about their lives, community and neighbourhood. A participatory governance built on the values of accountability, transparency, accessible information, authentic communication of deep listening and real dialogue. All voices are heard.

The land is now used for its highest and best use in service of the common good of the people. The neighbourhood is planned with a focus on meeting needs and people's desires. Safe, accessible services and buildings, biodiverse green and public spaces. South Kilburn is now a 20 minute neighbourhood where everything that one needs is within a short walk or electric shuttle ride. Ecological, low cost housing is community led and built, with communal social and utility spaces, in homes and community buildings where people can cook, eat, work and play together. Women's work and caring is valued. Everyone receives a basic income to cover living expenses, utilities, rent and food. The thriving local economy is built on social solidarity economic principles with affordable, culturally appropriate, agroecological food at its centre. A place for all with living intersecting ecologies, creating a holistic ecology of community care, equity and resilience.

Mona Bani

Co-director, May Project Gardens

London is considered worldwide as one of the most developed, wealthy and sought after places to live. As such, we assume a certain degree of 'civilisation' and standard of living. In practice however, the erosion of social security and the basic belief that certain things - food, shelter, health, education - are universal, human rights, is debilitating. At grassroots level, we feel this reality daily, as we fill the gaps left by statutory services. During lockdown when apparently all disadvantaged young people were entitled to laptops, the refugee minors we support, came to us - a non-statutory body of five part time staff - for laptops. When asked if we could organise it with their social workers, who hold the duty, and finances to provide them with what they need, they'd ask us not to. They had no faith in the system to deliver.

Everyday, these vital services are carried by ordinary people - alone or in groups, some incorporated, some not - often with no recognition or remuneration for their work. Although this dedication is commendable, it's unacceptable that we need it. At MPG, we're constantly questioning whether to pick up these jobs, abandoned by the state, to do right by society, or whether we 'strike' to hold our establishment to account. A London that meets the needs of people would build its intentional structures and services on this humanity and dedication, and exist to uphold its citizens. It would have these values and intentions at its core, rather than as a 'bonus', offered on the sidelines by those with the least power and resources to implement them. Having access to essentials such as a laptop for school work, would not be a matter of luck, it would be an expectation, which the state prides itself on meeting, so in turn people can participate meaningfully in the city they live in.

Andy Greene

Activist, Disabled People Against Cuts

I Imagine myself waking up in my 3D printed, solar powered home. Part of a solution to the crisis in accessible homes in London.

A home designed around my personal needs, with support from experts where it's required. A home that adapts around my life and my needs as I develop as a person, potentially raising a family and growing old in.

I begin the day by using a mix of equipment, assistive technology & the physical support I need to prepare as anyone would: washing dressing & eating, connecting with those near and far, in the real world and online. Physical Support to do these tasks now and throughout the day or night is paid for in general taxes but free at the point of use, it's person centred, and its delivered by organisations run by and for disabled people.

Organisations like centres for independent living & user led disabled peoples organisations; whose role is Empowering and employing disabled people. Where disabled people learn the skills to both how to thrive as individuals and how to contribute to & benefit from society in equal measure. Organisations which are involved in making decisions in how our communities are run and how resources are used.

Leslie Barson

Co-founder, Granville Community Kitchen

Run by principles: Equity - from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs.

Interdependence, with dependency discouraged. Mistakes welcome and seen as creative moves forward. Constant creativity, not one answer, but different answers to the same problems. Constant critical debate and thinking, asking and weighing up 'whose interests are served?' 'who benefits?' 'who loses out?'

Participation time given for decisions, the bigger the decision the more time. The whole community is seen as just as important as the individual. Present underlying structures replaced with small human scale structures like 'villages'. These are run by people who live there of ALL ages, maybe over 2 years old, chosen by a lottery system. The policies are all agreed by everyone and derived from the principles in active, open and constant debate about how they are run.

They are the centre of life so this debate is natural, not bureaucratic or forced. 'Gathering spaces' are on each corner open to all, stewarded by the village for the future. This replaces the nuclear family with all sections of the village using these spaces for support, work, creativity, finance, celebrations, politics, learning, mental and physical health and food growing (as well as other spaces). Healthy nutritious food is sustainably grown. Like housing, food is a fundamental need for human life. The village resources are focused here with the village managing food and housing. These are the main focus of each village's governance as well as communications with other villages and transport. Homes are small private spaces as all extra space for guests or parties etc are cited at gathering spaces. In the village, power has to be monitored constantly, examining why X has power in Y situation. Sometimes power imbalances are valid but all the present 'isms' that mean people have unseen different amounts of power have to be made explicit and positively addressed.

Jesse Ashman,

Partnerships Manager and Recovery Worker, The Outside Project

I asked our current guests what they would change about London as it is today their demands were fairly simple - access to space, support services and community. Our vision of a London that met our needs afforded us the right to a safe place to live, the right to exist in public life and access to support services for emotional, physical and mental health.

Almost everyone who accesses our services has experienced being pushed out of a space they should have access to, or seeing it closed down - be this their home, an entertainment venue, a park, library or entire space of the city. LGBTIQ+ people are constantly expected to explain and justify our struggles to organisations and people who have little to no understanding or experience of LGBTIQ+ life.

In 2019 we opened our community centre, providing a safe, sober space for LGBTIQ+ people and especially LGBTIQ+ people at risk of homelessness. Groups met and formed here, including a library, a museum, art collective, cancer support group and migrant and refugee rights activist groups (Book28, Queerseum, Museum of Homelessness, Live Through This, LGSM and African Rainbow Family). For many of the people who used the community centre this was the first space they had experienced of its kind - where services were created by and for the LGBTIQ+ community with the safety of everyone in mind. A London that met the needs of our community would have these kinds of spaces open locally to all LGBTIQ+ people.

Our specific requests to the GLA and Local Authorities can be found in our 2020 mayoral election campaign; www.lgbtqioutside.org/downloads/manifesto.pdf

Ian Solomon-Kawall

Managing Director, May Project Gardens

The Coronavirus crisis is the largest public health crisis in London's living memory. This crisis has exposed long-standing inequalities in our society; disproportionately affecting BAME communities. This is also however, an opportunity. We can use our recovery from COVID-19 to reimagine our city as a place with a better long-term future for Londoners (and people globally). One which is fairer, greener and more resilient than it was before - we need to Build Back Greener.

I enclose my vision to build back greener with the practical experience of 15 years creating an Grassroots Community Eco System with [May Project Gardens MPG](#) a Community Hub. We need to support grassroots individuals to create alternative Housing / Buildings using that use natural Materials such Straw Bale Classroom. We need to re-distribute properties that are unaccompanied for over 6 months for community leaders and to create hubs as mentioned above. From my experience at Hip-Hop Garden, a youth program, I know we need to increase the branches of the program to reduce youth unemployment, capture entrepreneurship and develop innovation. From my work at Come We Grow, an outreach and fundraising event, I know we need to [educate people about the issues creatively](#), such as food poverty. As a [KMT Freedom Teacher](#), an Eco Artist for Social Change, I know we need to use participatory methods to address the most damaging social issues, to inform policy and to create solutions to things like littering as well as encouraging people to [Plant More Trees](#). Let's create partnerships to invest non bureaucratic funding and support the above.

Lauren Johnson-King Chief Executive, Disability Advice Service Lambeth,

When Covid-19 and climate change are mentioned in the same breath, it is to illustrate how the challenges of the pandemic indicates the scale of the emergency we face in the coming decades.

How easy it would be to rush to a return to normal, so desperate we are to remove ourselves from restriction and fear.

What we cannot do is risk sleepwalking into a new crisis.

Disabled people have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19. It is essential that a London that takes action to mitigate the effects of climate change also protects the rights and ends the marginalisation of Disabled people. Changes to our way of life cannot come at our expense.

London Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) need to be at the heart of change, adequately resourced and supported to build our capacity and leadership to ensure the inclusion of Disabled people in the design and implementation of climate change strategies.

DDPOs work in a person-centred and holistic way; we understand intersectional identities. We need to work together to ensure we have a voice, and influence decision makers through policies and campaigns.

We can provide the knowledge, resources and services that are needed to effectively respond to the changes London will inevitably face in the next 20 years. We can provide accessibility and inclusion, and support Disabled people in the fight for this across all public spaces, and in all public services.

Never has the spirit of "nothing about us, without us" been as important as this.

Ruth London Founder, Fuel Poverty Action

"What does a London, that meets the needs of the people that you work with, look like?"

The old buildings are still there. They were not built to keep out cold, or heat. From Edwardian and Victorian terraces to 20th century tower blocks, most London buildings were built with so little attention to energy efficiency that many people advocated tearing them all down and starting fresh. But developers faced fierce battles from people who loved their homes, their communities and their history and suspected their opponents' motives and the standards. The carbon cost of "fresh-start" would in any case have been immense. Instead of regeneration London was renovated with a community-run programme using non-toxic, non-flammable materials, a new generation of skilled builders of many nationalities, stringent

monitoring and accountability to residents, and decanting people into good, local, temporary accommodation while their homes were insulated and made fit. The blight of empty homes and buildings has been brought to an end; all space is used. And while we were at it, as many homes as possible were made fit for people of all ages and disabilities. Rents are controlled.

Once freed from profit-making interests, the long debate about sustainable heating has led to a plethora of solutions, using heat from the sun, the ground, water sources, the air, and waste heat from industry, often but not always supplied via communal heat networks. Energy is cyclical, smartly recycled to and from our homes, the transport system - now almost all public - bicycles, and gyms.

But less energy is needed, because, since the '20s pandemics, people have redefined what activities are "essential" and work that was done just for profit has come to an end. The huge waste, pollution and destruction of the military has ended, along with junk food, built-in obsolescence, and duplication of effort for the sake of the "market". With the city's vast wealth redistributed to all, policing, and prisons, and detention centres have been re-purposed or knocked down. What is valued and rewarded instead is the work of caring for people, animals and the environment, cleaning up the pollution and refuse of ages and planting afresh, releasing the curiosity and creativity of children, and bringing into play the experience and knowledge preserved by grandparents, women, and London's many immigrant communities.

Hannah Emery-Wright

Communities Manager, London Community Land Trust

Genuinely and permanently affordable homes

London CLT want to see a London where what is genuinely 'affordable' is based on how much people in the local area earn. Homes should be affordable to local people in perpetuity, ensuring that Londoners can afford to live in the city for generations to come, rather than selling their home to make a profit.

Community-led

If Londoners are to live in their communities for generations to come, they need to have a say in shaping them, meaning decisions about projects are actually made by the people who live in that neighbourhood, building up local leaders to take lasting ownership.

Transforming Neighbourhoods

Transforming a neighbourhood is something that happens over time. One CLT resident says that "*Living at St. Clement's turned out even better than we expected. The children are always in and out of each other's houses, having dinner, playing, they're like brothers. The other day our cat was stuck on the roof...and the whole community came together to help.*"

There is a tangible yet illusive feeling you get in such moments, of what being part of a close-knit community means. For London CLT creating homes is not just units and metrics, but a sense of security and long-term stability with people around you that are part of your collectively built daily landscape.

London Leap participants not mentioned above:

Alexa Waud, *Fuel Poverty Action*

Ameen Kamlana, *NHS/GP*

Liz Ward, *Advocacy Academy*

Calum Green, *London Community Land Trust*

Bethan Lant, *London Community Land Trust*

Josina Calliste, *Land in Our Names*

Fliss Premru, *TSSA & RMT unions member*

Gaby Jeliazkov, *United Voices of The World*

Roshini Thamotheram, *Women's Environmental Network*

Amina Gichinga, *London Renters Union*

Dan Barron, *PEACH [They have now left this organisation]*

Harry Gay, *The Outside Project [They have now left this organisation]*

John Stewart, *HACAN East*

Sonia Adesara, *Docs not Cops*

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