

Project code: 8365

Project name: The community and Council response to the Climate Emergency

Contact: Amy Burns, Hounslow Council

Category: Climate Response

Category type: LGC Awards Categories

Project title: The community and Council response to the Climate Emergency

- These awards primarily cover achievement and performance in the calendar year 2020 and the first two months of 2021, and entries should have a particular focus on that period. However, judges will take into account work that began before that period, as well as achievement and performance since that period.
- The awards will reflect the fact that Covid-19 and the response to it have posed an unprecedented challenge to local government. Judges' decisions should reflect attributes such as performance, resilience, compassion and adaptability in the face of the pandemic alongside achievement, innovation and vision. However, entries which are primarily not about the council's pandemic response should be treated equally to those that are.
- You only have to submit a single statement explaining why you should win (up to 1,000 words).
- Please also provide a 100-word summary of your entry. Please use this as an opportunity to make a pitch to our judges about what makes your work innovative and bold.
- Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.
- Please specify which private sector partners do you work with (if any).
- While you have the option of providing supporting material, we urge you to do this sparingly, and only if you feel further evidence is required to back-up your entry. The critical information should however be included in the main part of your entry.

If you require any help with your entries contact: **Rafael Younes** on **020 3953 2115**, email Rafael.Younes@emap.com or **Jae Taylor** on **020 3953 2117**, email Jae.Taylor@emap.com

Job Title: Senior Communications Officer

Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.

Total word count: 1,000

Submissions should focus on:

- Summarising your council's vision, its current objectives, the steps it is currently taking to achieving those objectives and your success in doing so, within the relevant timescale
- Specific evidence of the quality of the council's performance in relation to:
 - The performance of and outcomes achieved by the major services;
 - The council's response to continued reductions in public expenditure;
 - Community leadership;
 - Collaboration with other councils and partners, including where appropriate involvement in devolution agreements with the government;
- What makes your council distinctive;
- What you think makes your council excel and what you feel other councils could learn from what you have done.
- The council's contribution to sector-led improvement.

Award entries will be judged on:

- The scale and sustainability of the council's achievements and the quality of the evidence to substantiate them;
- The success of the council in combining significant public service improvement and reform with budget cuts and efficiency savings;
- The contribution of the political and managerial leadership, partnership working and community engagement;
- The council's success in addressing key challenges such as: economic growth, housing, the ageing society, health inequalities and children's services;
- The council's contribution to the wider local government sector;
- This award will be judged through both a site visit by judges and by a presentation to judges. Entrants are urged to use the visit to give judges access to the people – officers, members, staff, the public and representatives of local public sector partners, the business community and third sector organisations – who can prove the council's success in the above criteria.

Your answer here:

COVID had a significant impact on our borough. The strong leadership, expert partners and close community contact that created the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) proved critical in designing and framing the effective and wide-reaching response to the heavy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Hounslow. The leadership and community collaboration resulted in an innovative Green Recovery Strategy that dramatically accelerates the delivery of the CEAP by combining a long-term sustainable vision, close engagement with partners and delivery of actions that are fully supported by the community.

The visionary leadership, active community engagement and culture of 'green by design' have stimulated the drive towards a future that is stronger, greener, and fairer: a future that is a radically different way of living and working in the borough.

In implementing the strategies Hounslow have led the way and served as an exemplar for our local boroughs by:

Adopting a collaborative leadership style and shared vision Internally, we drew together the public realm leadership with the expertise across the directorates to create strategic vision to recover from the effects of the pandemic and achieve the shared vision of a net zero-carbon economy; building a great place to live and work.

Leading the cultural transformation of the Council. By embracing a cross-directorate collaboration with a shared vision, that speaks to the trust and belief across the Council teams. Hounslow is now an exemplar environmental organisation in the vanguard for change in our borough and across London.

Working with the community, partners and academics to design the Green Recovery Strategy. Leading from the front the Council responded to the dual challenge of the climate emergency and the economic impact of the pandemic by convening Innovation Labs (iLabs) – a collaboration of our residents, businesses, partners, think tanks, and academics with Councillors and officers.

The iLabs considered how to build the four key pillars of the strategy: low carbon neighbourhoods; the green economy; 21st century mobility; and green growth. Drawing on the expertise and experiences of those who attended the iLabs, further research was conducted, proposals were made and then refined through a collaborative process. The journey of how dozens of individuals came together to transform Hounslow into a green pioneer was widely communicated and documented in a series of accessible blogs.

The iLabs have created a Green Recovery Strategy based on firm empirical foundations that has the support of the community. Each element of the strategy is designed to be trialed, tested, and refined using the 'engage, discover, design and deliver' approach that embeds collaboration and innovation at its core and is visible to our community.

Creating the transformational Community Reference Groups. Critically important to the development of our shared values and the design, governance and delivery of our projects are the Hounslow Community Reference Groups (CRG). The CRG comprises residents and Elected Members and is a core part of monitoring and implementing our CEAP and Green Recovery Strategy. The CRG works closely with the officer-led Board to co-create and prioritise actions, increase transparency and promote the public understanding around the opportunities for and the hurdles to action – a true example of collaborative working.

The CRG work closely with the Council to stimulate the wider civic support necessary to deliver the ambitious change and give the community representatives a direct voice to the Council leadership. We are now creating a Youth CRG to give a voice to the younger members of our community.

The collaborative approach is embedded within the shared strategy and will continue as projects are delivered and accelerate the delivery of the CEAP and Green Recovery Strategy, thereby benefiting our local communities. Every project is designed to be green, inclusive, deliverable, and focused on improving the overall wellbeing and the quality of life of our residents.

Committing investment such as a £250k Innovation Fund to realise the early actions from the iLabs. Securing funds to decarbonise the Council's own estate and schools by replacing gas-fired boilers with sustainable heat generation (£18.9m) and developing the Council's green fleet (£5m). We are recruiting a Green Recovery Programme team of 12 and a new Green Recovery Board that will strengthen the delivery and further enhance the two-way communication with the community.

In January 2021, planning approval was received for the construction of five zero-carbon Council houses to stand as an exemplar development and blueprint to support the delivery of the CEAP.

Alongside the committed investment are a range of flagship programmes:

Create an inclusive Green Skills Academy in Hounslow in response to the economic impact of the pandemic.

Transform an estate of 300 homes to become net zero-carbon.

Transform a community into a 15-minute neighbourhood with active mobility, revitalised services connected by safe and pleasant routes with low carbon access to the wider area.

Grow the low carbon economy by working collaboratively across West London to support the design and development of the West London Innovation District and create Green Enterprise Zone in Hounslow alongside encouraging green innovation business and start-ups.

Develop a Low Carbon Energy Masterplan

Achieve an air quality better than regulatory standards. The CRG recognised that Hounslow was already meeting the required and regulatory standards, but better air quality remained a high-priority concern. In response the Council committed to the design of an enhanced programme to monitor, communicate and improve air quality. The design is being finalised with the CRG and will deliver

detailed community-level monitoring and communication with individuals, schools and health centres.

What has been the impact?

The impact of the Green Recovery Strategy and collaborative working has been extraordinary. We believe that truly collaborative leadership, a different mindset, and community co-production is at the heart of our rapid success and creativity of the strategy.

Embracing and embedding innovation and collaboration is now business as usual and sits at the heart of the green recovery:

Cllr Samia Chaudhary, Cabinet Member for Leisure Services, who chairs the Green Recovery Board, said: "It's sometimes difficult to imagine the scale of change we need to see to address the challenges before us. That's why this strategy puts change into a concrete form that will inspire us to turn it into reality.

"The ambitious plans for the green recovery couldn't have been put together without contributions from residents, local businesses, academics, and partner organisations. We will continue to work collaboratively to deliver it.

The strength of the collaborative leadership model has permeated into the managerial, supervisory, and front-line. Most importantly, we have cultivated collaboration, forged extensive relationships and embraced a new culture that gives us the confidence to navigate the challenges ahead and forge new ground in the delivery of our Climate Emergency Action Plan and our Green Recovery Strategy.

100 word summary*

100 word summary:

Through a series of workshops, we collaborated with local communities and produced our Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP). This will take forward our shared vision and roadmap to be net-zero carbon by 2030. To accelerate the environmental action, we worked with communities to co-design our response to the pandemic by adopting our Green Recovery Strategy, using innovation labs. These explored the environmental challenges, that once addressed, will push forward the delivery of our CEAP by taking forward our ambitious flagship priorities. These include; creating low carbon neighbourhoods, delivering 21st century mobility, stimulating green growth and greening our economy.

What private sector partners do you work with (if any):

If you are a private sector organisation Please provide contact details of the local authority that you are in partnership with. You will need to obtain prior consent from the local authority contact to pass on their details for GDPR compliance.