



# Enfield Caribbean Association

Initial Response to Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-39

# About Enfield Caribbean Association



## Our Mission

Enfield Caribbean Association (ECA) was established in 1986. We work to eliminate racial discrimination and for an inclusive, fair and equal community, in which people of Caribbean origin can develop their full potential as visible, positive contributors and participants in the life of the Borough of Enfield.

## Our Values

At the heart of our core values are working for racial equality, valuing diversity and building good community relations. ECA works to ensure that Enfield's Caribbean Community is fully informed about services it needs, including advocacy, support, befriending, and social and cultural activities.

The Association has contributed to many local initiatives, including a campaign to mark the bicentenary of the 1807 Abolition of the North Atlantic Slave trade with the commemorative plaques now in place at Enfield Civic Centre, Edmonton Library and Community House on Fore Street in Edmonton, Enfield.

## Strategic Priorities

The ECA aims to be a hub in the community for African-Caribbean individuals and community groups offering support and guidance.

The four strategic areas that we will focus on:

- Education and Health
- Community, Cultural Esteem and Economic Empowerment
- Supporting the Community
- Social Justice

12/09/2021

## Strategic Priorities con'td

### Education and Health

The African-Caribbean community in Enfield is aware of the educational challenges the community has faced over the last six decades. African Caribbean students for many years were performing lower than the national average, however, more recently the attainment gap has been narrowing. Nevertheless, we continue to face challenges, such as the continuous over representation of African Caribbean pupils being excluded and the underperformance of black boys.

The hub aims to have a positive effect on pupil's educational attainment, self- esteem and identity, in addition to supporting parents and schools to significantly reduce the number of exclusions and the impact exclusions can have both socially and psychologically on our young people, as they transition into adulthood.

There are particular health conditions which affect us adversely in comparison to other community groups for example high blood pressure, diabetes, sickle cell, lupus and prostate cancer.

The ECA aims to raise community awareness by signposting and supporting individuals in need of advice by forming links with local health care providers. The Coronavirus is having a disproportionate effect on the black community.

## Strategic Priorities con'td

### **Community, Cultural Esteem and Economic Empowerment**

Building community and cultural esteem can lead to an increase in self-esteem. As such, the aim of our community and cultural esteem work stream is to build esteem in our community through social skills training and cultural awareness programmes and initiatives. More specifically, the aim is to increase the confidence and competence among our children, their parents, and the local community.

We are planning to develop inter-generational programmes that will provide our young people, parents and families with access to activities and events that promote self-esteem, resilience and the reduction of isolation, particularly in relation to strengthening our own cultural identity. We also aim to raise awareness and promote understanding of our community, cultures and traditions among service providers and the local community.

To begin the process we plan to hold a consultation exercise with representatives from the local community to obtain their thoughts, ideas and suggestions about the types of initiatives/programmes that can be practicably developed and implemented. Stemming from the consultation exercise, we aim to establish a community & cultural esteem working group, consisting of selected representatives from local community groups and interested individuals.

## Strategic Priorities cont'd

### Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment aims to ensure that members of the African-Caribbean community have the skills and resources to improve their economic status. Economic empowerment should put members of the community in a stronger position and gives them the ability to make decisions that promote their own health and wellbeing, as well as that of their families. In addition, individuals can decide on how to utilise their income and other resources and/or jointly make those decisions.

The ECA fully supports any policies or practical initiatives that supports African-Caribbean businesses and social enterprises. This entails ensuring individuals from the community have access to information, training and expertise that ensures they can continue to contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the UK. ECA will actively participate in the creation of the necessary infrastructure needed to support the economic and social advancement of the African-Caribbean community.

As digital technology impacts at all levels in society, in the work, social and cultural environments, it remains important to ensure that the African Caribbean community in Enfield, and throughout the UK acquire and share the new skillsets required to survive and thrive in the 21 st century.

## **Strategic Priorities cont'd**

### **Supporting the Community**

We aim to support the different needs in the community by providing a range of services. We run a luncheon club and offer a seated exercise. We have also set up a befriending service. We want to continue supporting students in schools by running Careers day and other activities which involve the young people.

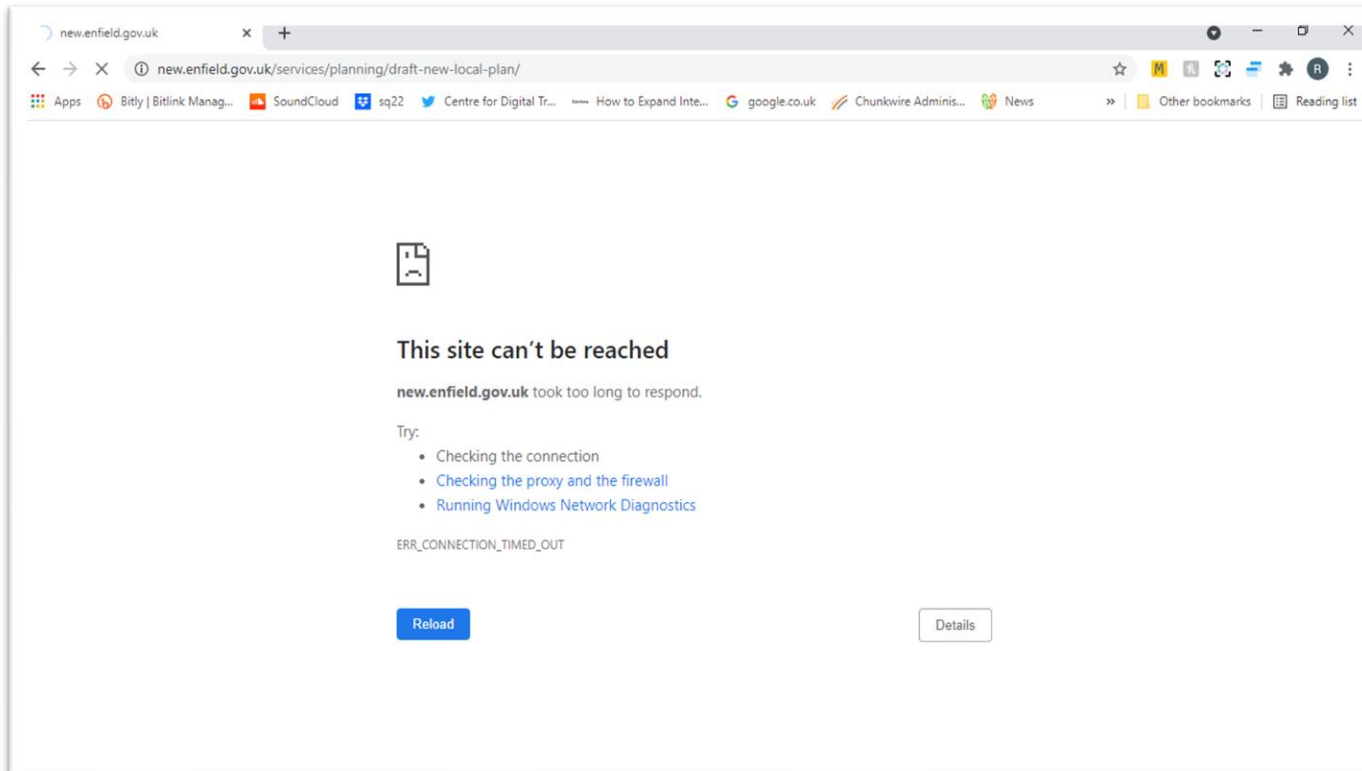
### **Social Justice**

We understand the need to work for social justice and will do this through being aware of and actively challenging the systems and policies which adversely impact on our community. Housing, Education, the legal system, and Health are examples of areas that affect us all. In order to continue to improve our conditions we need to have a voice in the community and become actively involved in local politics.



## Consultation Process: Dedicated engagement platform

Members of the public were encouraged to comment on the Local Plan via a dedicated engagement platform at <https://letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/localplan>. However, several ECA members were unable to access the bespoke consultation platform during different occasions during of the consultation period.



The few ECA members who were able to access the platform found the process for uploading comments to be arduous and convoluted. It's unfortunate that for such an important activity supporting the future direction of Enfield's communities, the local authority selected a platform that is not-fit-for-purpose.

## ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039

- The council has a vision of building 6,000 houses which should be affordable.
- The London population is expected to reach 9 million by the end of 2021 which will mean Enfield will have to build more houses as the population in the Borough will increase.
- Property prices is starting to increase rapidly, and investors are buying land and keeping them empty. Enfield must make sure they are monitoring such activities with a view of compulsory purchase after 6 months.
- Everything the Council does at present is too small-scale and cautious. Housing revenue account (HRA) reforms allows the Borough to think on a larger scale and start developing again.
- Buying Land : The Council should be thinking about buying land sites now e.g. Industrial ones, and change planning designation to use for House building or sell these sites to Housing Association for social housing and therefore keep control of development in the Borough.
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA): Enfield has huge potential due to changes in the HRA. The Council needs to be more radical and tie in planning and housing interventions.



## ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039

- ECA believes the council need to open up the west of the borough. Think about where our infrastructure is; there is scope for building on some low-grade green belt sites. Enfield Council needs to be more radical around density and high rise and look for opportunities such as in-fill housing estates which are often quite low density.
- Enfield Council is capable of providing good quality high rise of all types and they have the power to do it. We need more 3 and 4-bedrooms family size homes especially in social housing.
- The private developers must not be allowed to just build one and two bedrooms for sale and rent.
- The council must embrace the private rented sector as a good source of housing like it is in France and Germany.
- The Council can build and with the private sector houses to let.
- The council needs to establish a coherent Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Association forum to work with and partner with private sector builders and mainstream HA as part of its capacity building functions to improve the diversity of housing providers in Enfield.
- The Council is the enforcement body and must use regulatory functions to improve existing private rented sector and allow new BME HA to enter the market.

## **ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039: Employment**

- Enfield has a significant minority ethnic population (National Census). There is higher rate of unemployment among minority ethnic men compared to white men (House of Commons Library). Also, there is a large gender gap in construction (Women in Construction).
- ECA believe Enfield council has a responsibility to ensure that the workforce that will implement the Local Plan, in construction and all the related work, that will result from the Local Plan, whether private or public, reflects the demographics of Enfield.
- To achieve this, ECA believes there must be targets for the staff profile of those that will implement the Local Plan, in construction and all the related work, with meaningful sanctions for those that do not comply. Furthermore, training should be offered if there are skill gaps in order to achieve employment parity.
- If there is not the expertise within the council to deliver this diversity in employment, then the council should look to employ a third party for the expertise.

- Unfortunately, ECA was unable to find any significant reference to the expansion of the Edmonton Incinerator in the Local Plan 2019-39. Despite the significant impact this will have on the air quality of the environment for residents throughout the borough. The integrated impact assessment conducted on the likely impacts of the Local Plan should have addressed the environmental impact of the Incinerator as avoiding the risks to the health of communities should be paramount.
- ECA would like a pause in the plans to build a new, larger Edmonton incinerator, and for North London Waste Authority to properly consult the people of Enfield borough about it. Most people in Edmonton seem to have no idea what is going on. This is no surprise since the public 'consultation' on the incinerator ended in 2015, nearly six years ago. The 'consultation' was ridiculous. The newsletter was only delivered to those living within a one-mile radius of the incinerator. Only 72 residents responded to phase one and 123 people to phase two – out of two million residents in North London.
- Evidence shows that small particulate matter – air pollution – can travel many miles. A recent study by air quality consultants for the Greater London Authority calculated that 15 deaths a year in London were at least partly caused by emissions of nitrogen oxides and particulate matter from five London incinerators (or “energy from waste plants” as they are dubbed by their proponents).
- Although such crucial information can be found on the Mayor of London's website, go to Edmonton Green and ask people if they know about the incinerator plans and try to find someone who knows about it; you will struggle to find anyone.

## **ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039: Expansion of Edmonton Incinerator**

- Black communities are certainly becoming more aware and are starting to campaign around this issue. A nine-year-old girl called Ella Kissi Debrah died in 2013. She lived near the South Circular Road in Lewisham, South London, and a coroner ruled last year that air pollution “made a material contribution to her death”.
- This ruling sent shockwaves through the black community, including those in Enfield. Edmonton is already polluted from the North Circular Road, so a larger incinerator on top of this screams that black lives don't matter to the politicians who endorse this toxic, air-polluting choker.
- Covid-19 has disproportionately affected black and brown communities and experts are now linking air pollution to Covid-19 deaths. The Office for National Statistics has published a report on the link between long-term exposure to dirty air, severe symptoms of Covid-19, and a greater risk of death. This gives even more reason for black communities to oppose the plans.
- Incinerators are three times more likely to be built in deprived areas, which themselves are more likely to have a racially diverse population. Edmonton's ethnic make-up is around 60% black, brown, or other racial or ethnic group.

## **ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039:**

### **Our Conclusion**

ECA is concerned by the lack of ambition of Enfield Council's Local Plan. The Council is now in a position where it can make real changes in the built environment. They have got the powers in the HRA reforms and can borrow at relatively cheap rates. It is now all about the administration being confident as an Authority and step up to the housing challenge. They must do something more than just manage the traditional poor quality public housing stock. By being radical and stepping up to the challenge, they will in turn put pressure on Central Government increase funding for housing in Enfield and elsewhere in London.

The Mayor is keen to encourage boroughs to develop affordable homes in their own right but strongly encourages them to consider working in consortia, with other registered providers, to maximise efficiency in programme delivery.

ECA is also concerned that the African Caribbean communities are effectively able to gain the economic benefits expected from the Local Plans. We are concerned by the lack of viable mechanisms to openly monitor developments. E.g. The council needs to establish a coherent Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Association forum to work with and partner with private sector builders and mainstream HA as part of its capacity building functions to improve the diversity of housing providers in Enfield.

## **ECA Initial considerations on Enfield Council's Local Plan 2019-2039:**

### **Our Conclusion – cont'd**

ECA is concerned that African Caribbean young people are unable to access employment, training and career opportunities as a result of the implementation of the current local plan. Enfield Council must make a clear commitment to provide Black and Minority Ethnic communities access to the potential opportunities that will arise from local plan. Furthermore, that African Caribbean owned- businesses are given the opportunity to tender for appropriate Enfield Council contracts.

Finally, we are concerned by Enfield Council's attempt to demarcate the expansion of the Incinerator in Edmonton, with the council's local plan. We found it disingenuous that we could find relatively few reference to the Incinerator in the local plans, when it could have a detrimental impact on the health and welfare of all residents in Enfield. ECA would urge the council to pause in the plans to build a new, larger Edmonton incinerator, and for North London Waste Authority to properly consult the people of Enfield borough about it. It should not be too much for the North London Waste Authority to find a technological solutions to deal with London waste and it is not acceptable to export it to third world countries.



**Much Thanks**

**Oveta McInnis Chair & the Board of Enfield Caribbean Association**

**We look forward to hearing your response!**