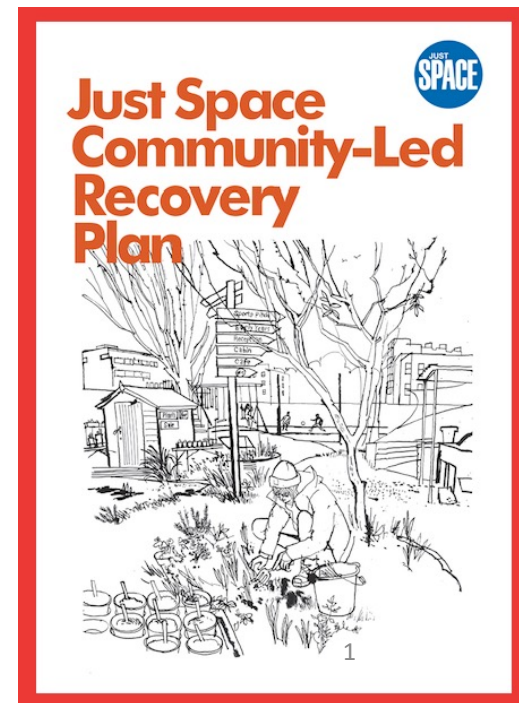# Just Space Community-led recovery plan for London

JustSpace.org.uk/recovery

2022

Caution: the Recovery Plan has a lot of text which adds context & explanation: these slides simply pick out policies and a few quotations.

Cover: Calthorpe Community Garden, King's Cross. Drawings by Lucy Rogers

Just Space

Formed in Just Space 2004-6 by community activist groups

…to support each other & little-heard voices in dealing with planning

…initially & especially the new London Plan
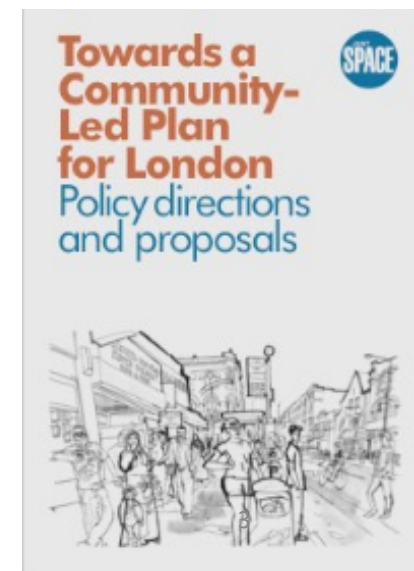
A minimally constituted network of groups

Almost entirely un-funded or minimally-funded community groups rather than NGOs with large staff

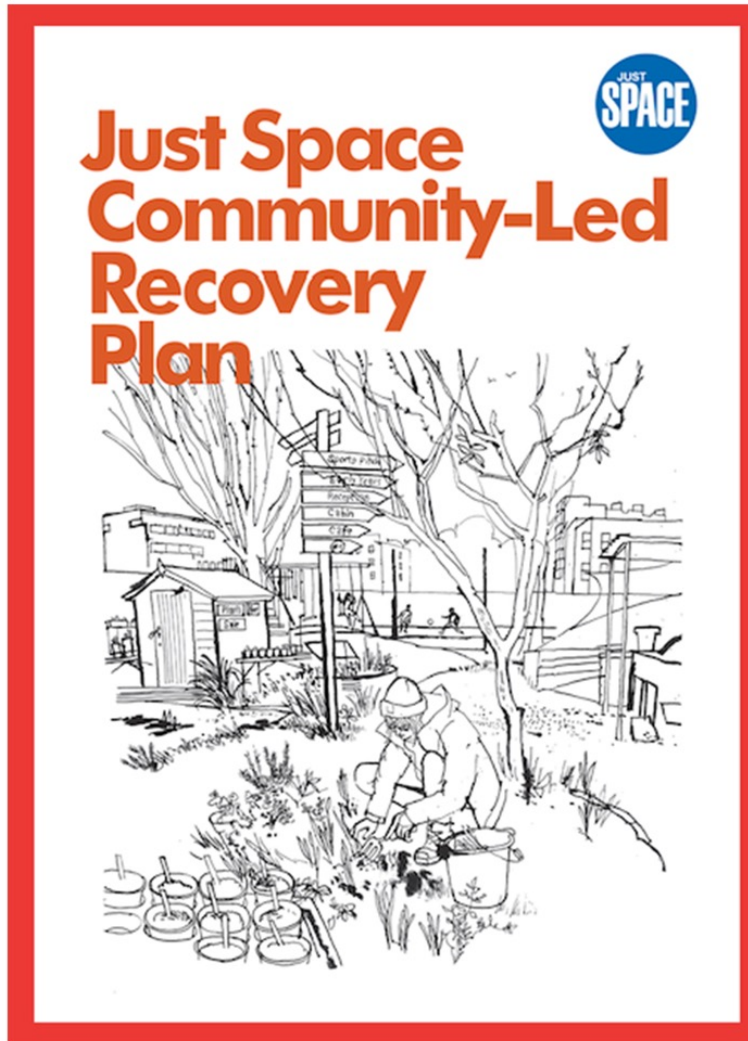Works at local, Borough and GLA scales and now a bit beyond

Has productive relationships with many staff and students of universities

Just Space community-led plan for London 2016

- Prepared through 2 years of workshops, conferences
- Aimed to influence new GLA in Just Space 2016
- Formed the basis of representations by JS and many member groups to the draft London Plan
- At its 2019 Examination in public about 80 community groups spoke
- Disappointing outcome on major issues
  - Social/council housing
  - Estate demolitions
  - Protecting jobs
  - Density policy
  - Reducing the need to travel
  - Environmental policy
  - Lifetime neighbourhoods / centres /
  - Approach to Equality analysis where we scored heavily

Towards a Community-Led Plan for London
Policy directions and proposals

'Just Space' - planning London after the pandemic

Front cover drawing: Calthorpe Community Garden

POLICY 5

Communities need to be given access to multi-purpose and affordable, ideally rent-free community spaces which provide people with a space to meet, to encourage cultural dialogue and make people want to get involved in community action.

"Inequalities have heightened due to the disappearance of libraries, youth clubs, community spaces, parks, playing fields. Reframing planning in a way that provides spaces that care for people—for people to come together, share their experiences, do positive things—will be crucial."
ROBERT CLAYTON, GROVE PARK YOUTH CLUB

"With Community review panels who picks them ... It's always people who are friends of the councillor or friends of a Mayor or the leader or whatever, and they haven't really worked with people. The difficult people or the people who've got something to say, they are never chosen."
LIBBY KEME EALING MATTERS

POLICY 7

Austerity has a significant impact on the small organisations that often do not meet the criteria for funding applications. A structural change in how funding is allocated needs to be reviewed, to ensure a level of priority for small organisations in obtaining funding.

4

Introduction / method

-

- The Recovery Plan was developed through a large number of small online meetings, each carefully managed to foster confidence among those new to the medium, built on briefings by student volunteers who drew from interviews and statements from the participants. A second stage of meetings refined and prioritised demands and policies and an editorial team finally linked the demands to earlier ones and to each other.

- A positive feature of the pandemic has nonetheless been the networks of care that it revealed and generated. Londoners have looked after each other when it matters, through solidarity, co-operation, mutual aid groups, food banks and in countless other ways. People also discovered the value of green spaces and briefly experienced less pollution from road and air traffic.

- These aspects should be fostered in a London that cares about people and nature. Planning and building can't continue as the servant of a small minority of financial interests at the expense of existing communities and the things they value.

- One thing is clear, it is now more important than ever to ensure all voices are included in the future planning of London. This is a vital part of recovery. The decisions made now must reverse the inequalities that the pandemic has brutally exposed.

Caring City

- **POLICY 1 Responses to the Climate Emergency can bring a care economy, a circular economy and the Green New Deal together. Social care jobs are low-carbon jobs and can contribute to the green economy. This can all be described as a care-led recovery.**

- **"We should avoid ghettoing care in the caring sector and instead define care as the prime mode of the economy. If work cannot be defined as caring work, then why is it defined as valuable? What is care work? The Lucas workers decided to produce something socially useful, which we see as being about care."**

- MICHAEL REINSBOROUGH, NEW LUCAS PLAN

2. **Widen the social care movement by building partnerships and alliances between anchor institutions (such as universities, Local Authorities, healthcare centres) and local community organisations using the approach of community wealth building. Neighbourhood plans could play a useful role, if they deal not just with the built environment but with the care economy.**

3. Implement place-based community wealth building by creating 'care hubs' on the high street, where a whole range of care services are organised in an integrated way within the locality. These should be seen as a part of social infrastructure, acting as a place for unpaid carers and residential care workers to go to for support.

4. **Introduce a system of social licensing for all care providers, to create a workforce model that challenges gender stereotyping and requires a real Living Wage for all care workers, driving down zero hours contracts and enforcing appropriate forms of continuous training (called Skills for Care) with significant resources allocated.**

"We're arguing you don't just need a funding solution, which is what the government's talking about, but we actually need a complete overhaul of the system, with local publicly accountable care provision, a national care service."

SUSAN HIMMELWEIT, WOMEN'S BUDGET GROUP

"I like the policy on care hubs and communities and connecting this with the high streets for all challenge, which funds local partnerships to facilitate recovery, would be a really good idea."

ANDREJ MECAVA, COMMUNITY PLAN 4 HOLLOWAY

Participation – our oldest demand

5. Communities need to be given access to multi-purpose and affordable… community spaces which provide people with a space to meet, to encourage cultural dialogue…

6. …community review panels and citizens' assemblies made up of community members, who are sufficiently compensated by the GLA for their time and labour. For selection… communities that have been historically disadvantaged by the planning system and/or tend to be invisible in official policy discussions.

7 …A structural change in how funding is allocated needs to be reviewed, to ensure a level of priority for small organisations in obtaining funding.

"Where if you're a migrant you get a seat on this panel and you're adequately paid for that time and it's not like a fellowship, but one of those things where you actually have a seat and you're like a chair or something like that."

FRANCESCA HUMI, KANLUNGAN

"With Community review panels who picks them … It's always people who are friends of the councillor or friends of a Mayor or the leader or whatever, and they haven't really worked with people.

The difficult people or the people who've got something to say, they are never chosen."

LIBBY KEMP, EALING MATTERS

8. The Mayor should require councils-as well as the GLA's own staff including the Deputy Mayor for Planning to embed co-production as their core value in planning practice and policy making.

9 Rather than consulting communities after the plan is created, the content of the plan must be discussed with local communities from the beginning, using inclusive methods, times and locations that cater to all community members.

10. The Mayor should provide support to London Boroughs to enable community leadership in local planning, providing funding and training on co-design, design codes and inclusive planning to both local authorities and communities and especially their marginalised members.

"I think we've got to get to a stage where planning is not something that's always done to communities for communities, but it's done with communities from the start, and there's processes for people to understand and be more involved — it's got to be simplified as well, the process and the whole planning speak and everything else. It's very technical."

ANDREA CAREY, DEPTFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION

"By increasing their [community groups'] knowledge of where their power actually lies, working collectively they are able to bargain more effectively with those developers and say, 'look we want this to change or we want that to change in your planning process' "

FAIZA ALI, ANTI-TRIBALISM MOVEMENT

...participation...digital

11 Create a long-term Mayoral programme for tackling digital exclusion: training, equipment, London-wide free internet coverage, the provision of accessible materials, the use of accessible software and communication platforms, access to community facilities. This should include informing people how to safely navigate the digital realm, so they have this access without having to reveal personal data. The Mayor should tackle the immediate challenges by distributing equipment and free data packages to those in need.

12 It is crucial to provide people with choices when it comes to online or in-person participation. It is important to include hybrid meetings or separate meetings in different modes.

13 Extend WiFi availability to all public transport modes.

"It seems like there is a danger that people will use post lockdown as an excuse for everything to go online, and not think about how that happens or how online/offline can really work effectively together."

HEATHER MENDICK, MORNING LANE PEOPLE'S SPACE MOPS, HACKNEY

"We exist in a digital world now. And if we're not providing these sorts of opportunities for the Communities that we're a part of, that we are part of and working with, then we are relegating them to almost a position of guaranteed digital and therefore social exclusion."

JAMES DELLOW, SOAPBOX, DRAGON HALL

"When we talk about digital exclusion, we often think about things like skills which are important— people not having the skills and not having devices and so on, but there are much wider
issues around it too. Being able to have access to data and broadband connections at home, and
the cost of that..."

CHRISTINE, HEAR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

Fairness

14 **Local Authorities should investigate and identify specific racial inequalities and patterns of deprivation that exist in their locality to understand the root causes of issues. Resourceful compensation and support must be made to historically disadvantaged communities and organisations that support these groups.**

15 **In the decision-making and policy-making process, the national government should make visible the existence of Black and minoritised communities, prior to investigating, reviewing and consulting them to collect equalities data.**

"We were absolutely reminded of just how poor the air quality is, which is going to always impact worse on low-income groups, those of us, and it always impacts worse on black people, not only green-space-deprived but actually oxygen-deprived."

PORTIA MSIMANG, RENTERS' RIGHTS LONDON

"We are made invisible by the census category 'Asian other' so we just don't exist on the census... Funding that might be community-specific or maybe ethnicity-specific won't get targeted towards the Filipino community.... It means that we have to first go through the process of actually justifying our humanity, which is an extremely demeaning thing to do because you have to first prove that you exist."

FRANCESCA HUMI, KANLUNGAN

"Although there is a category for Gypsy and Traveller people in the census, and this year is the first time for Roma people, a separate category, the real effect that prejudices and discrimination and oppression have on people is making them not want to tick that box, which is still so enduring. And just the whole system we're working in where you need that data to get funding for something, and politicians not really acknowledging that difficulty."

ILINCA DIACONESCU, LONDON GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

16 It is important that community organisations do not continue to go along with the systemic invisibility of certain groups, but instead push for their visibility in partnerships and alliances, which can translate into increased visibility in public life and policy making and practice.

17 Introduce a variety of activities dedicated to children and young people at the community level. Free play is essential to enable children to work through the situations they face and the impacts these might have on the children's mental health, with support, not interference, from adults. It will be important to encourage and facilitate children and young people to take the initiative in shaping these activities, to ensure effective and long term engagement.

"I think the Black Lives Matter made a lot of people more aware of the injustice inequality that has been happening, not to say that they weren't aware before, but it's made a lot more people aware of the problem, and to the fact that it's made those organisations really have to rethink, regroup, reimagine and reevaluate themselves... but the reality is what has changed?"

TONY CEALY, 81 ACTS OF EXUBERANT DEFIANCE

"I feel like we haven't seen a massive difference, despite there being a lot of initiatives for young people, and from the Mayor of London as well. So, I think there needs to be something more structural and something that kind of works to fight the system, rather than I guess workshops and stuff."

YASMIN MOALIN, ANTI-TRIBALISM MOVEMENT

"It's actually entrusting young people and believing in their potentiality and believing in them, to be able to make positive change for them and their peers. And it's about how do we facilitate a process through which that can take place."

JAMES DELLOW, SOAPBOX, DRAGON HALL

18 **Establish digital hubs for young people, so they can access both basic and high-level digital skills, with lessons and support, have a space to do their homework, develop social bonds and interact inter-generationally. Community groups should take the initiative in the shaping of these digital hubs, while being funded by the Mayor as a project of infrastructure provision.**

"We also need to be providing young people with access to specialist and high-level digital skills. The skills aspect of it is largely overlooked in conversations around digital exclusion and the digital divide. So I think it requires a huge amount of investment not just on behalf of young people, but on behalf of the social care / youth work / voluntary sectors, because if we're not feeling empowered and confident to be able to engage with it, how on earth are the people that we work with going to do that themselves."

JAMES DELLOW, SOAPBOX, DRAGON HALL

"Digital hub, I think that's a good idea. Providing a place or places where children can do their work. And I think it would be good if these places also encourage children to go and play in between, so they were spending not more than say an hour at a time, then having a break where they could go off and play."

MARION BRIGGS, ALLIANCE FOR CHILDHOOD

"In a youth leadership programme that we have running... people are trained to become community leaders and they do a social action campaign on an issue that is affecting young people."

YASMIN MOALIN, ANTI-TRIBALISM MOVEMENT

Housing

19 **Ensure well-maintained, social rented homes of suitable and adequate size for all. Homes should be of high quality and of adequate size—both in terms of usable floor area and number of good sized rooms—to meet each household's needs. Family-sized housing must be prioritised in all new public housing developments.**

20 **Simply housing people is not enough. Social housing must be culturally-aware so that people can remain with or further build their community. By culturally-aware, we mean that there should be desired community resources, intentional efforts to keep communities together during refurbishment (and regeneration) projects and that housing for multiple generations is made available to communities that value multi-generational living. Integrated, wrap-around services, which help to build such communities, must be accessible to all those in social housing.**

"About 40% of the Black Africans in London live in crowded housing and Somali housing in the UK has long been characterised by crowding in terms of poor physical conditions and hidden homelessness. Two or three generations of Black Africans, like Somalis, come and live together in a small space. Self-isolation was impossible."

ABDIRASHID FIDOW,ANTI-TRIBALISM MOVEMENT

"We have a housing project that we run with Somali residents that live on the White City housing estate in West London and also the South Acton housing estate. They feel powerless when it comes to their housing situation because, they think that when it comes to regeneration and everything else similar, they have no say, and they can't change anything in that process."

FAIZA ALI, ANTI-TRIBALISM MOVEMENT

21 **The affordability crisis in the private rented sector should be addressed. It is widely accepted that in order to be affordable, once housing costs are paid, tenants will still have sufficient money to meet all other material needs. The Government must act to bring rents down so that everyone has a home they can afford to rent where they can live and flourish.**

22 **Tenancy reform to support greater rights for private tenants in the shape of open-ended tenancies with few grounds for eviction, which can then lead to rent control, with limited capacity to increase rents, to bring a measure of rent stabilisation. At the same time develop housing alternatives, including Community Land Trusts and Co-operatives, giving residents more control of their housing at a neighbourhood level.**

"The key issue, if you're a private renter, is just the sheer unaffordability of living in the private rented sector in London compared to the salaries and wages we earn. I would say that affordability and private rents isn't anything particularly new, although, like most things, each has been exacerbated by Covid-19 because obviously people have taken a hit on incomes."

RHIANNON HUGHES, SOUTHWARK GROUP TENANTS ORGANISATION

"Eviction suspension and rent control are both short-term and long-term housing issues which are really important for people to feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods."

CLAUDIA FIRTH, RADICAL HOUSING NETWORK

23 **Improve existing housing via refurbishment and repair not demolition and redevelopment, to ensure community integrity and that neighbourhoods with high concentrations of working-class and ethnic minority communities are protected from displacement, gentrification and social cleansing.**

24 **Requisition all empty homes and offices — commercial properties above shops, unused office spaces in office buildings, Airbnbs and private homes —that have been empty for over X amount of time (to be established) for social housing or community-run cooperatives. Pending new legislation, make extensive use of Empty Dwellings Orders and existing legislation.**

"A general problem that we find in all regeneration schemes, is that communities, long standing communities going back decades, often, are broken up and people are sent all over the place. The priority of allowing communities to stay together on a long-term basis is very urgent. So, I think that should be a very large point against regeneration schemes and in favour of refurbishment rather than demolition."

PAT TURNBULL, LONDON TENANTS FEDERATION

"Neighbourhood-level changes applied undue pressures on working-class families, forcing them either to remain in the area in increasingly overcrowded conditions among their established kinship networks, or to move further outwards into unfamiliar territory on the peripheries of the city, where they were more isolated from their communities and extended families."

ADAM ALMEIDA, RUNNYMEDE TRUST

"What really surprised me was the amount of vacant property around. And some of these developments, one fifth of all these new developments are empty... The amount of empty property in London is absolutely phenomenal. It's huge."

MICK O'SULLIVAN, LONDON FEDERATION OF HOUSING COOPERATIVES

Lifetime Neighbourhoods

25 **The Mayor of London and Boroughs should foster the Lifetime Neighbourhood principle across the whole city, from high streets and town centres to the smaller scale, which is also important. This will mean designating local assets and infrastructure for protection, and investing in local people and services.**

26 **An important tool for Lifetime Neighbourhoods is a fact-based local audit. Walkabouts and mapping exercises build an understanding of a neighbourhood's community assets, local economy and social infrastructure, and consider gaps in the distribution of amenities. Residents taking part in the audit gain skills and an interest in planning their neighbourhood.**

"I saw 15-minute city as a neighbourhood — where people walk everywhere, there are facilities for everyone, a community centre the old live there, the new live there—but you can do everything there apart from if you had to go out to work ; a place where people get to know each other they stand talking to each other, cross paths, cross section of society — not as hard cold cities"

LIBBY KEMP, EALING MATTERS

"What I've seen locally in my area is people who are now not commuting all the time, and are working from home, realising the pleasures of their own local area and the pleasure of walking to the shops. People realise you don't have to drive to the shops, and the pleasures of their own parks."

MICHAEL BALL, WATERLOO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

27 **Support the development of co-operative infrastructures, from the use of local contracting and supporting local business, through to housing co-operatives and platform co-operatives developed at the neighbourhood scale to build community resilience.**

"In Hackney there is a high turnover of people, mainly because of private rental sector and people can't afford to stay as rents go up; so the idea that people could have a Lifetime Neighbourhood is quite compelling and it goes against the idea that people have to be displaced, they get moved out of areas— very different emphasis than the 15 minute city."

HEATHER MENDICK, MORNING LANE PEOPLE'S SPACE MOPS -HACKNEY

"We need to be committed firmly to the devolution of power to the lowest possible level — the commune — in the best tradition of co-operators"

PORTIA MSIMANG, RENTERS' RIGHTS LONDON

"From my own experience, a lot of the network or resources that already exist are invisible and the connection are much more diverse and complicated than the superficial level. So, I would think in order to have a Lifetime Neighbourhood we need to understand our locality, and the spaces and people and place are fundamental to have a better planning proposal."

MARINA CHANG, CALTHORPE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Nature and climate emergency

28 To achieve a positive gain in biodiversity:

- Habitats need to be properly protected
in their own right and must not be traded as part of a system of off-sets in planning applications.

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies should be allocated to biodiversity recognising it as an essential part of infrastructure.

- Promote ecological corridors (routes
for nature) so that species are able to move around.

- Encourage varied planting—flower meadows, hedgerows, fruit trees, nut trees and orchards—in the Council parks, green space and street management policies.

- Eliminate the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides.

"A lot of green spaces we have now are poorly maintained and in low quality. There is a need for proper ongoing management of streetscapes, parks and green spaces based on sensitive biodiverse practices and renewal investment in the skills and practices this involves, rather than harmful quick fixes such as dependence on pesticides and herbicides."

PAUL DE ZYLVA, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

"I was on the biodiversity action group for Kingston in 1998. We had another one in 2006 and again in 2015. But we've never enacted a Biodiversity Action Plan. All the recommendations on priority habitats should've been implemented but Kingston has never done that. So every time awe have a planning application, there's biodiversity loss."

ALISON FURE, ECOLOGIST / CAMPAIGNER KINGSTON

"I think the key is to connect everyone who is concerned about the green space issues together. People are desperate to engage in practical ways to solve the problems. I think there are many things that we can do from the bottom-up level."

SARAH VAUGHAN, TREES FOR BERMONDSEY

29 Implement a Biodiversity Review Panel in each Local Authority to facilitate knowledge- sharing and to support dedicated Ecology Officers. It should bring together active citizens and specialists to:

> **Oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy.**
>
> **Identify locations for ecological corridors Award grants to a citizen science**
>
> **programme of monitoring through audio and photographic equipment.**
>
> **Share knowledge about what resources are available and make connections.**

30 **For practical, immediate campaigning, encourage Natural Capital Accounting as an evidence base and important policy instrument, to assess impact and claim compensation for planning and biodiversity decision- making, to protect and increase the amount of green space in the Borough or local neighbourhood.**

"What is the governance structure which allows local communities to properly engage, because they are an under-utilised resource? Whether it is explicit localism or whether it is finding a mechanism for the groups to be the go-to place for auditing green spaces, bringing people to account, a formal structure with some control."

PETER TREADGOLD, EALING MATTERS / EALING FORGOTTEN SPACES

31 **Campaign to reduce inequalities in access to green space as raised by Public Health England in their report Improving Access to Green Space by:**

• Ensuring all London Boroughs rigorously enforce the London Plan open space access/ deficiency criteria.
• Use the ONS data assembled by Friendsof the Earth on gardens and public green space to target those London Boroughs that rank as the most deprived Local Authority areas in the UK for access to green space.

"A key demand is that green space should have the range of quality, well-managed facilities serving all sections of the community, e.g. play and youth facilities, cafes and toilets, onsite staffing and staff depots, sports facilities, community-managed buildings and centres."

DAVE MORRIS, LONDON FRIENDS OF GREEN SPACES NETWORK

32 Community Groups should sign the Charter for Parks and call for the Mayor of London, the GLA and the London Green Spaces Commission to also sign the Charter for Parks.

The Charter for Parks sets out to:

Celebrate the central role well-run parks play in our neighbourhoods for all sections of our communities. Recognise the right of every citizen to have access within walking distance to a good quality public green space. Endorse a legal duty for all public green space to be managed to a good standard. Embed effective protection from inappropriate development or use, or loss of any part of our parks.

Ensure adequate long-term resources for ongoing maintenance, management, and improvements. Encourage and enable community involvement and empowerment of local people and park users.

Alongside the Charter for Parks, there should be a simple and accessible 'Charter for Wildlife', produced by communities, which links both to everyday lives and to Council and other policies.

"The big issue with public green space and Covid is that there's been a huge increase in the amount of people using green space... but no money's been allocated to deal with the additional usage and wear and tear. With increasingly underfunded and understaffed local park services ... there must be a call for adequate funding, a good simple mechanism for raising all this is to get everyone to sign the Charter for Parks."

DAVE MORRIS, LONDON FRIENDS OF GREEN SPACES NETWORK

"The Local Authority delivery organisation is always subject to repeated cuts, or at least financial pressure on the budget and they don't have any spare capacity for liaising to a greater degree with local community groups. The only way, I think, to identify suitable mechanisms for increasing or empowering communities is simply to persist ... starting local and then London wide, creating networks which become part of a national system of organisations that represent friends' groups and local green spaces."

ROBIN BROWN, HAYES COMMUNITY FORUM

...climate ... decarbonisation

33 In too many cases, district heating is badly designed, maintained and administered. Rather than a cycle of temporary repairs until the next breakdown, district heating should be transitioning to a decarbonised heating system, using the model of community-run energy schemes. This should be integrated with the insulation of homes and a mass programme of whole house retrofitting that addresses fuel poverty and has tenants on board first.

34 A strategy is needed that looks at fuel poverty and energy in a comprehensive and long-term way. There should be a London-wide public energy company.

"There are a number of energy co-ops in London. Some of the Councils use the energy obligation levy to allow community organisations to bid for energy saving schemes. The communal heating systems are inefficient, the Councils only replace the equipment and people have to wait, because you have to send off to Germany or Eastern Europe somewhere and wait six weeks to fix the system again, which is totally inadequate. One of the organisations I am working with is Harry Weston Tenants Cooperative in Islington and they want to put in heat pumps so that they can actually cut out and alleviate the old fashioned boiler system."

MICK O'SULLIVAN, LONDON FEDERATION HOUSING CO-OPS

"We advocate for public ownership of the entire energy system, generation and supply as well, and including requisitioning fossil fuel assets. The cheapest energy is the energy we don't use. There needs to be a mass retrofit programme run out on public ownership through local authorities on a street by street basis and obviously prioritising those in greatest need."

SAM MASON, PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES (PCS) TRADE UNION

…climate … decarbonization… circular economy

- 35 **Prioritise retention and refurbishment of existing buildings over demolition. As part of a planning application, a pre-demolition audit should be required, which must include engagement with local communities, to identify the existing social value of the site and explore repurposing buildings as community spaces.**

"This approach to regeneration fails to recognise the socio-economic arrangement of existing neighbourhoods, and is socially, economically and environmentally unsustainable... From our experience in Peckham town centre, much more significant self-regeneration could be achieved through reuse, refurbishment and repair... Great merit to bring the care economy and circular economy together, the paid and unpaid economy, all are bits of the jigsaw of the local economy and how to think about it at local level from the perspective of local people."

EILEEN CONN, PECKHAM VISION

…climate … decarbonization… travel

- 36 **The Mayor of London should produce a shared decarbonisation vision for transport:**

- **• Work collaboratively with residents, schools, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to present an inspiring vision of what zero-carbon streets and neighbourhoods could look like, highlighting the benefits to different groups of people.**

- **Encourage Friends of Streets groups, to give the community a role in street management and make the 'healthy streets' approach real and tangible, with targets for healthy streets in each Borough. This could be a responsibility for neighbourhood forums.**

- **Give greater attention to buses: recognise their importance for visits to shops, libraries, health centres and hospitals. Make the case for government funding to enable a zero-emission bus fleet before 2030.**

- **Adopt road pricing much earlier than the deadline in the London Plan, but only if it is equitable and proportionate.**

- **Provide docking stations for bikes at high street locations and expanded across Outer London.**

- **Recognise the right of every citizen to have access within walking distance to a good quality public green space.**

"You're not going to get people out of their cars if there isn't a public transport alternative. The further out you go, the more dependent you are on the bus. Even if the rail is the largest part of the journey, you still need a bus to get to the station from many places."

ANDREW BOSI, FUTURE TRANSPORT LONDON / CAPITAL TRANSPORT CAMPAIGN

"Need a plan to achieve a zero-emissions transport network by 2030, including a zero-emission bus fleet. Workings need to be shown 45 **for achieving 2030 net zero and for achieving 80% active travel target. Decarbonisation needs smarter charging, so that it is equitable (e.g. you don't pay road user charges if your annual income is under £30,000). Equity is a key issue."**

OLLIE MORE, SUSTRANS

Local Economy

37 **Councils should conduct a complete audit of their high streets by assessing the contribution of retail, office, commercial and industrial activities, shops selling fresh food, super- markets, street markets and covered markets, independent shops and specialist ethnic shops and services. The audit should examine the high street as a public space for congregation and cultural exchange and provider of social infrastructure.**

The audit will be a baseline for the formal protective designation of high streets, in order to prevent the displacement of existing businesses, traders and valued uses. Boroughs should use the audit as evidence to seek Directions suspending the operation of Permitted Development.

"For some years, we have sent students to do audits and surveys of what is on the high street. We have qualitative and quantitative evidence to support the idea of the high street as being local, a place of work for a wide range of communities, and the diversity of ethnic businesses. We started to pull it together and the material is there to use."

ELENA BESUSSI, UCL

"The markets and traders all rely on their unique supply chain, which is never mentioned. There is zero discussion on this when discussing the revival of the high street. Zero discussion

on the loss over 25 years of workplaces, and zero understanding, actually, of the free pass given to property developers who remove the afford- able workspace."

TOM YOUNG, TOM YOUNG ARCHITECTS / QUEEN'S CRESCENT SHOPS AND MARKET

38 **Restructure Business Rates. Post-Covid, the cost of workspaces needs to be reduced in order to make renting, and not closing down, appealing to businesses. Alongside downward rent reviews there must also be a restructuring of the business rates model, so that small businesses can compete with the online businesses that don't pay high street levels of business rates.**

39 **Enable the start-up of community food hubs, usually located in high streets, to work in partnership with schools and colleges. They will encourage food-based businesses by offering training and skills in food growing, marketing and distribution as well as environmental management, managing food waste and addressing food poverty. They will provide a variety of skills to encourage localised, self-reliant developments.**

40 **Set up Community Improvement Districts to manage community spaces, local services, street markets and shops on the high street in the interest of local communities and small businesses. The audit of high streets recommended in policy 37 above would feed into the areas chosen for Community Improvement Districts.**

"We need to think about what's actually happening because, whilst the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) sound like good ideas, the way they are actually implemented in many areas is deplorable because new businesses that come in, and who tend to be over-represented on these BIDs,

often have no real interest in the older existing economy or the wellbeing of the wider diversity of people that live in a locality. This may hasten a gentrification agenda."

MAMA D, COMMUNITY CENTRED KNOWLEDGE

"Spend money on forums for every high street, rather than on projects. Navigate the boundary between social and workplace. The high street provides a way into the world of work and the world of contributing generally. Pay much more attention to the setting and rely on the health of the neighbourhood's social dynamics to deliver possibilities for people."

TOM YOUNG, TOM YOUNG ARCHITECTS / QUEEN'S CRESCENT SHOPS AND MARKET

Low cost workspace

41 **Covid-19 has been devastating for small businesses but now the closures on the high street and a surplus of commercial and office space provide opportunities for repurposing space as low cost workspace with 'social leases'. Workspaces that produce social value for their surrounding local communities should be recognised as social infrastructure.**

As a method of increasing community space, the community and voluntary sectors should be eligible to be workspace providers.

42 **Existing low cost workspace should be protected. Boroughs should protect the supply of older spaces which so often house important concentrations of jobs in long- established public and private services: bus garages, council depots, railway arches, railway workshops.**

"Do we use the term 'affordable workspace' (which suggests products to be delivered by developers who make money from them) or low cost workspace? Start–up co-working space is easy to argue about, but there is a bigger question about how we value different economic activities in London and how some produce social value."

MYFANWY TAYLOR, UCL AND WEST GREEN ROAD / SEVEN SISTERS DEVELOPMENT TRUST

"Local Authority programmes to provide education, networking opportunities, introductions to finance and acceleration services for small firms are also more productively given when their recipients are in clusters and ecosystems located in workspace hubs."

MICHAEL PARMAR, DHARAT WORKSPACE PROVIDER, LONDON AND BRISTOL

. workspace

43 Low cost workspace hubs should cater to a mix of businesses across a wide range of sectors from micro to small businesses, start- ups, tech spin-offs, artists and creatives and reserve a proportion of space for charities, community groups and social enterprises with a direct role in addressing inequality. These will provide training and jobs for young people, apprenticeships, business mentoring, employment opportunities for local residents especially Black and minoritised and low income communities.

44 Local Authorities' role:

Local authorities should recognise the social as well as economic value of low cost workspaces, and include social value within the criteria for their audit and monitoring. Local authorities should produce low cost workspace strategies as part of a larger economic development agenda, that connect with rent control and create secure and long-term tenancy where they have ownership or influence.
Local authorities should provide support for the preparation of business plans for local workspace hubs.
There should be the production of a toolkit with model lease terms, and training for Local Authority officers and councillors.
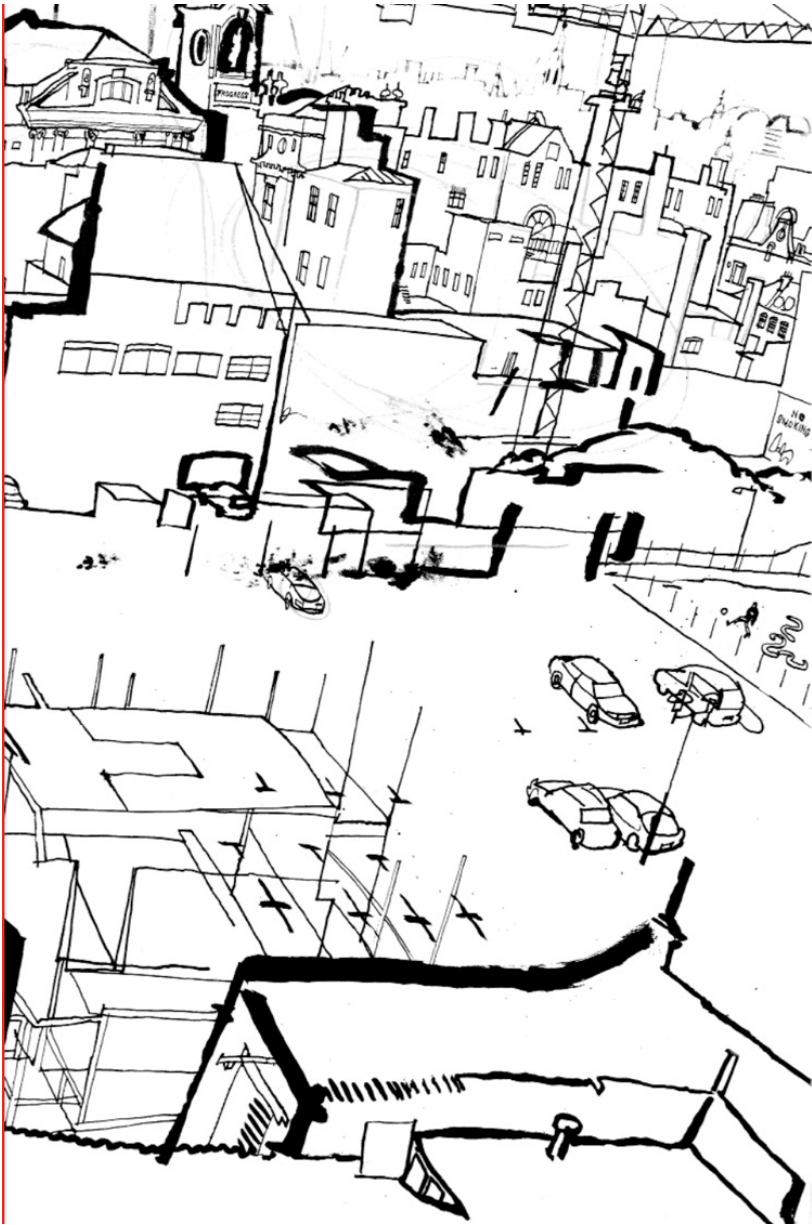
"We want inclusive spaces, for those without capital to get started. I like the voucher scheme that goes with social leases and initial capital is also good and not to lock in with a 6 month or longer lease. There are lots of tools to let in those who cannot survive in the market. If you have s106 requirement, developer can come back afterwards and say not economically viable and have the s106 over-turned."

MICHAEL PARMAR, DHARAT WORKSPACE PROVIDER, LONDON AND BRISTOL.

"Local authorities should own the role of social landlord and not put things under planning, which is about spatial needs not economic needs, but under economic development. Look at markets like Queen's Market, Seven Sisters, Church Street, which sell products at sub-economic rates with rent at sub-market rates, and sustain local communities which are very diverse. Need social landlords that recognise the need to support these."

SEEMA MANCHANDA, BLACK TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE GROUP (BTEG)

Next...

- Spread the word among other communities and groups
- Develop and research these proposals
- Influence policy by lobbying?
- Engage with borough elections?
- Further presentations, discussions

- Download the plan / reqest paper copies / respond all at JustSpace.org.uk/recovery