

## Written Questions

### Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Climate Action (Cllr Costigan)

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Gary Malcolm	Given the current government consultation about possibly seven different types of bins that might be required for collecting and recyclables from residents' homes, can the portfolio holder outline the implications of these proposals for Ealing Council and its residents?	Earl McKensie
<p>The Environment Act became law in 2021 but two years later we are still waiting for the government to take the steps needed to implement the Act and to start to make a real difference to reducing waste and the massive impact it has on the climate and ultimately on the air we breathe. In May the government announced there would be a further delay until after the local elections, which have now passed but with no further announcement from government. Although it is certainly right to prepare for potential changes, it looks like government will continue to delay taking the kind of brave action that is needed to reduce our waste-based emissions and that they will continue to sit back and do nothing while our planet sizzles and families suffer from resulting flood and drought risk, food scarcity and serious health impacts.</p> <p>However, to ensure we are prepared if the government ever does decide to take action, We are working closely with ReLondon on the potential implications for Ealing. ReLondon is a partnership between the Mayor of London and London's boroughs which exists to improve waste and resource management in the capital and accelerate our transition to a low carbon circular city.</p> <p>The Consistency in household and business recycling collections consultation has not yet concluded, and so we don't know exactly what the outcomes will be. We expect that local authorities, along with separately collecting a core set of materials (glass, metal, plastic, paper &amp; card), will need to collect additional materials including foil, metal packaging, cartons, and plastic film &amp; and wrapping. Local authorities are likely to also need to provide food waste and garden waste collections. We do not yet know what the deadlines for any changes will be.</p>		

In the latest resident survey, 89% of Ealing respondents said they were satisfied with their refuse and rubbish collection service, and we will work hard to maintain that high level, and to retain our position as one of the top three London boroughs when it comes to recycling regardless of whether this government ever steps up and makes a decision on what changes are required and when.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Gary Malcolm	Following the Leader's recent announcement, he will note that extending the ULEZ scrappage scheme was proposed by London Lib Dem assembly members at the City Hall, and will he work together with myself to get the Mayor of London to make the changes needed to his scrappage scheme?	Darren Henaghan
<p>In the period since this question was asked, and following a letter sent by myself and the Leader of the Council (which can be found <a href="#">here</a>), the Mayor of London has announced a major expansion of the scrappage scheme which I very much welcome and which shows how closely he is listening to Londoners.</p> <p>The scheme will now be extended to cover all families with children, in addition to all small businesses in the capital. This is very good news and should help these motorists to switch to less polluting vehicles and to reduce the 160 deaths from air pollution that we see in Ealing every year.</p> <p>The mayor has put aside £110m for his scrappage scheme – the largest ever in London. In other cities such as Birmingham and Bradford, the government are providing funding to support scrappage schemes but in London they are refusing to contribute a penny, meaning the opportunity to make the switch to cleaner air even easier for Londoners has been missed. This is a real failure from government and yet again underlines how London gets a bad deal from this government.</p> <p>The extensions the mayor has announced to the scrappage scheme, which were announced on 1st June include: Allowing all Londoners receiving child benefit to apply. There are currently 874,710 London families in receipt of child benefit, with 578,315 in outer London.</p>		

Expanding the scheme to allow all businesses with fewer than 50 employees to apply. Currently, only those with up to 10 staff can apply.

Allowing charities to scrap up to three vans instead of just one.

Introducing a new grace period for sole traders, microbusinesses, small businesses, and registered charities who have ordered brand-new compliant vehicles, but have been informed that delivery will be delayed past 29 August when the larger zone goes live – or if they have booked an approved retrofit appointment for a non-compliant light van or minibus before that date.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Gary Malcolm	Can the portfolio holder outline what proportion of the Council's own estates and Car parks have been fitted out with solar panels to support renewables and progression towards net zero?	Darren Henaghan
<p>There are approximately 533 homes which are owned and managed by the council which benefit from solar installations, which represents roughly 5% of council-owned housing stock.</p> <p>This demonstrates the need for the government to match it's rhetoric and provide significant funding so that local councils can fit their homes with solar panel and progress towards net zero.</p> <p>The Council has committed £4.9m over 2 years to deliver energy efficiency projects on council-owned housing, many of which are already underway and some of which include the installation of solar panels.</p> <p>The Council is working with housing associations and developers to achieve high standards of energy efficiency and, where appropriate, the installation of solar panels on new build housing schemes across the borough. This includes, for example, at Acton Gardens, Havelock Estate and Dean Gardens.</p>		

In general, council-owned car parks are not fitted with solar panels at this time. There are different reasons for this:

- Ealing's multi-storey car parks don't have significant amounts of roof space (as this space is used to maximise available parking)
- Many of the surface-level car parks do not have roof coverings, and/or are overlooked by tall buildings, and/or are subject to planned or potential development interest. Therefore, the costs of installing solar infrastructure on surface-level car parks outweigh the potential benefits at this time.

However, of the 31 Pay & Display machines in our car parks, 8 are equipped with solar panels, 12 are inside in our multi-storey car parks and 11 are old legacy machines deemed to be nearing the end of their working lives and so it would not be prudent to retrofit them.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Gary Malcolm	Can the portfolio holder outline what they have been doing to clean up and also stop the many reported incidents on social and local media of human excrement found in Acton Park?	Darren Henaghan

Ealing Council does not tolerate anti-social behaviour in our parks and keeps them maintained to a high standard.

The incident that this question refers to was an isolated one, which was regrettable and quickly dealt with at the time. The perpetrator has been strictly warned.

There are publicly accessible toilets in Acton Park, and the council also runs a community toilet scheme, and continues to have discussions with partners including developers about how to broaden public access to toilets across the borough.

If a member of the public is concerned about any behaviour in our parks they can report it here. telephone: 020 8825 6999  
 email: [parks@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:parks@ealing.gov.uk)

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Jon Ball	Can the portfolio holder please ensure that there is a budget available for implementing minor traffic schemes (banned turns and similar) this financial year in order to deal with specific rat-running issues? I refer in particular to the long-standing issues in Hamilton Road, W5, though the problem is more general.	Earl McKensie
<p>The Transport and Highways programme for 23/24 was agreed at Cabinet in March this year and shows the budget for all schemes.</p> <p>There was a scheme designed to eliminate rat-running through Hamilton Road which was due for implementation in 2021. Unfortunately, TfL withdrew the funding for this scheme and council budget is not available to address the shortfall (though Hamilton Road is scheduled for resurfacing this financial year, 2023/24).</p> <p>Funding from TfL continues to be well below pre-pandemic levels due to Government-imposed conditions on TfL's funding. Therefore, we have had to prioritise based on a range of transport, safety, and socio-economic data, selecting those locations in greatest need.</p>		

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Athena Zissimos	What percentage of flats and flats above shops contribute to the existing recycling rate of circa 49% in Ealing?	Earl McKensie
Separate data is not held on the recycling rate from flats and flats above shops compared to other types of property or the overall, because they often form part of the same collection rounds as street properties.		

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Seema Kumar	Given that Ealing tree overgrowth is causing a danger to pedestrians and buildings, and blocking vital safety signage, what measures are in being put in place boroughwide to assess priorities and determine where urgent pruning action needs to be taken?	Darren Henaghan
<p>The council is aware of and is working to rectify a delay in our tree surveying and pruning programmes. This delay was due to a national shortage skilled arborists. While the backlog is cleared, the team will continue to prioritise health and safety operations.</p> <p>The council's teams are working together to identify and quickly rectify any safety issues arising from overgrown trees. For example, street lighting team scouts and Highways Safety Inspectors keep an eye out for obstructions to lighting units, roads and pavements and report these to the trees team to remedy the situation.</p> <p>In addition to reacting to reports of unsafe or obstructive trees, there are two routine maintenance programmes in action – basal growth management and general pruning.</p>		

Basal growth is shoots emanating from the base or trunk of a tree. It's a seasonal issue that presents a challenge to all councils, but Ealing has three contractors working on this. The programme of work is as follows:

- Lime trees - Pruned twice (once during June/July and again during October/November).
- Other species - Pruned once (August/September).

The pruning involves:

- Bus routes - Removal of all growth from the base to either 5 metres up the trunk or to the crown break of the tree.
- Non-bus routes - Removal of all growth from the base to either 3 metres up the trunk or to the crown break of the tree.

Ealing Council owns and manages some 27,000 street trees, all of these are inspected as part of a general pruning programme. Every 3 years, each tree is surveyed to ensure they are healthy, structurally safe, and not likely to pose a legal nuisance in the ensuing three years.

Where pruning or removal works are prescribed by our surveyors, these operations are prioritised and then carried out in the months following the inspection.

If residents or Councillors notice have specific trees that require urgent attention, it is very helpful if they report these through the online portal on the council website.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Fabio Conti	There has been an increased number of rats seen in Hanger Hill Park and on Fox Lane. This has become a concern to residents using both the lane and the park. Could the portfolio holder please outline how the council plans to tackle the problem and the timescale for action?	Darren Henaghan
The council has recognised this issue as it has been raised by residents directly. As a result, the officer team has investigated the potential causes of an increased number of rats, and determined that this is being caused by people dumping food waste in Hanger Hill Park and on Fox Lane.		

The council will be putting up signage in the coming weeks to try to educate the public about this issue and deter the dumping of food, and will continue to ensure that the bins are emptied daily.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Julian Gallant	Given that all relevant permissions have now been granted, when will speed control works begin on Windsor Road W5?	Earl McKensie
Implementation is expected to begin in the next two months.		

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Julian Gallant	In order to retain any grant from TfL, by which date would work need to begin on the proposed St Stephen's Cycle Scheme?	Eugene Minogue / Tony Singh
<p>There is no TfL grant for work to St Stephen's roundabout in 2023/24.</p> <p>The grant secured in previous years was used for design and engagement, including collecting additional data.</p> <p>In line with our Travel in Ealing charter, for all transport schemes we start by listening to residents 'concerns and then we come up with initial ideas based on feedback. We then ask residents what they think before we come back with updated proposals. This scheme is no different and we are currently looking at feedback from residents who responded to the consultation so that we can design final proposals.</p> <p>It is expected that the final scheme will address some of the issues raise by local residents, and the council will request funding from TfL for implementation. If that bid for funding is successful, the project will likely start by March 2024.</p>		



**Questions for the Lead Member for Safe and Genuinely Affordable Homes (Cllr Mahfouz)**

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Gary Malcolm	What has Ealing Council done in the last year and what will it be doing in the future to promote and create mutual housing co-operatives in Ealing noting the Scrutiny report a few years ago covered this matter?	Cllr Bassam Mahfouz/Philip Browne
<p>The Council actively engages in regular meetings with local groups, cultivating discussions aimed at promoting and advancing the development of community-led housing of a range of types in the borough.</p> <p>We committed in the 22/23 council plan to delivering community-led housing and the council expects to make a public announcement regarding a community-led housing development by the end of the calendar year.</p>		

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Andrew Steed	Can Council provide a breakdown on the number of outstanding housing maintenance/repair jobs within the Council property estate with numbers broken down in 3, 6, 9-month categories.	Darren Henaghan
<p><b>Number of Repairs Job Outstanding</b></p> <p>Aug 2022 – 3,989</p>		

Oct 2022 – 3,475

Jan 2023 – 3,305

April 2023 – 1,024

Due to the poor performance of our repairs & maintenance contractor (MCP) in February 2023 the Council appointed an additional contractor, Wates LS, to cover elements of the repairs service which included addressing the backlog in repairs. Wates LS established a dedicated team to address all outstanding repairs works.

The Council has since terminated the contract with MCP and appointed Wate LS as its main repairs and maintenance contractor. The contract with Wates went live on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Andrew Steed	Can Council provide a breakdown on the number of outstanding housing maintenance/repair jobs within the Council property estate, compared with a year ago, two years ago and three years ago with the numbers benchmarked against other London local authorities.	Darren Henaghan

Due to the performance issues with contractor MCP an the subsequent termination of their contract, we are unable source data for previous years prior to 2022.

Benchmarking data is not yet available, but as part of the improvements being made to the repairs & maintenance service, we will benchmark our repairs & maintenance performance data via external agencies such as Housemark.

### Questions for the Lead Member for Good Growth and New Homes (Cllr Manro)

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Antony Young	When will the administration bring forward its proposals for the future of Perceval House?	Cllr Shital Manro/Jessica Tamayao
<p>Following the decision in April that the council would not be progressing with the redevelopment of the Perceval House site, we have started several pieces of work to progress options for a retrofit of the building and surrounding public realm.</p> <p>The ground floor will be opened up for community use and we have already started to gather views from the community about what this could look and feel like. A range of community engagement activities will be taking place over summer and autumn to gather a breadth of ideas. Depending on what comes out of these engagement activities, we hope that design of this space will start towards the end of this year.</p> <p>We are also engaging with council staff to consider their experience of working for Ealing Council and to plan workspace across the borough, including Perceval House. Early conversations have helped to shape the following draft vision for this work:            “Our vision is to co-create inspiring and energising experiences for staff which promote connections, wellbeing, inclusivity, sustainability, and productivity, allow innovation to thrive, and empower our teams to achieve exceptional outcomes with Ealing’s residents and communities’.</p> <p>Alongside this, there is a team working on retrofit proposals for the Perceval House building, with a focus on environmental sustainability, tackling the climate crisis and becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030. The council has started the process of securing relevant expertise for this work, and an options appraisal and business case will be produced by the end of March 2024.</p>		

Partners, such as the NHS, are keen to work with us on spaces for multi-disciplinary collaboration and to secure space for their own teams, and we are also speaking to the local business community to consider space for small and medium enterprises across the borough.

A new governance structure, overseen by the Chief Executive, has been established to ensure the programme stays on track, provides value for money, and supports our Council vision and priorities.

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Athena Zissimos/ Cllr Fabio Conti	We welcome the news that the Council will be reinstating a Conservation Officer. At what stage is the process of recruitment and when can we expect to see one in post?	Peter George
<p>Subject to job description review and costings, it's expected that the recruitment process will commence in the summer, with the hope of staff being in place by the winter.</p> <p>In the meantime, an interim member of staff is retained to support on conservation matters until the Conservation Officer can be appointed.</p> <p>Partners, such as the NHS, are keen to work with us on spaces for multi-disciplinary collaboration and to secure space for their own teams, and we are also speaking to the local business community to consider space for small and medium enterprises across the borough.</p> <p>A new governance structure, overseen by the Chief Executive, has been established to ensure the programme stays on track, provides value for money, and supports our Council vision and priorities.</p>		

**Questions for the Lead Member for Tackling Inequality and Crime (Cllr Anand) APPROVED**

From	Question	Lead Officer
Cllr Julian Gallant	What measures are currently being taken to prevent sale of large nitrous oxide cans for potentially harmful recreational use across the Borough of Ealing?	Jess Murray, Joe Blanchard and Anna Bryden
<p>We know there are concerns about the long-term effects of N2O and adverse health outcomes, as well as the impression of associated negative behaviours (littering and abusive or intimidating behaviour), which residents tell us cause them concern.</p> <p>Existing legislation in relation to Nitrous Oxide provides limited options for Police and Local Authorities to meaningfully address the sale and use of N2O. Unfortunately, the Council's Regulatory Services Team do not have the power to undertake trading standards or licensing-related enforcement activity to restrict the sale or supply of N2O.</p> <p>So in Ealing, the council has focused on harm reduction and working with the police to respond to residents' concerns where the sale or use of N2O is connected with anti-social behaviour or other criminal behaviour. The council and local policing teams are taking a targeting approach, and using community protection warning notices and other powers to deal with the individuals involved.</p> <p>Additionally, Ealing's borough-wide Public Spaces Protection Order makes specific provision for Police and authorised council patrol officers to tackle those using or suspected of using psychoactive substances (often referred to as 'legal highs' and including N2O) where there are concerns about anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>This was implemented as a response to the big conversation exercise in which over 1,500 residents, businesses and professionals told us what they wanted to see locally. The Public Spaces Protection Order prohibits people from possessing and/or smoking, injecting, inhaling, or otherwise consuming any psychoactive substances. Police and authorised council officers can disperse people involved in this activity and use fixed penalty notices and ultimately prosecutions to deal with those who repeatedly come to their attention.</p>		