national children's bureau

Children and young people's views on The London Plan: climate change

Children and Young People's Report

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★ Thank you! ★

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) would like to say a special thank you to all the children and young people who took part in the consultations and to the staff who helped organise the events.

The London Plan: Climate Change

The Greater London Authority (GLA) wanted to find out children and young people's views on climate change to help them decide what they should do to help slow it down. NCB spoke to children and young people from different areas of London then reported to the GLA what the children and young people thought.

The discussions that everyone had were really lively, interesting and inspiring and we had so many great views and ideas to report back to the GLA. During the sessions you were given the opportunity to talk about the new changes to the London Plan and you did a great job expressing your ideas, priorities and concerns.

What did we talk about?

The aliens have landed….

You were asked to imagine that a U.F.O had landed on Earth in the year 2020 and it was up to you to describe London to the aliens. The pictures that you came up with described London at both ends of the scale – from a place where you would be proud to live to a place which would be horrible to live in if climate change continues.

London Heaven…?

Many of you described a London heaven as a city in which climate change has been slowed down, somewhere you would be proud to live and work in, and somewhere that attracts more tourists and money.

"By 2020 everyone will realise that they have cut down on pollution"

"Shops will be more hygienic, streets will be clean, and the population will be more friendly"

"More buildings and cars will be eco-friendly"

"Solar panels and wind turbines on roofs"

"Tourism will be increased due to the changes made"

You made it very clear that for a London heaven to be possible, drastic action had to be taken NOW! The action that you suggested focussed on:

1. Finding and using other sources of energy that are renewable
2. Providing better education on climate change
3. Making recycling easier for people

Or London Hell…?

You were very passionate when describing to the alien what a horrible place London would be to live and work in 2020 if climate change continued.

"Streets will not be clean, shops will be unhygienic, there will be more litter and houses will be old and contain mice and rats. Boilers, waterworks and drain blockages. More dustbin cleaners"

"Some of the small parks may not be here"

"If London keeps on changing London will be a nasty place to live in"

"Climate change won't be able to stop as quickly because London will be overcrowded in 2020 there will be more pollution than 2007"

"There will be more cars, more congestion causing pollution, causing global warming"

What can we do to tackle climate change?

We asked what you thought YOU, YOUR SCHOOL and the MAYOR of LONDON could do to help slow down climate change. You came up with loads of bright ideas!

There were 3 main ways that you thought **YOU** could help:

1. Recycle more!

Lots of you said that you thought you should be doing more recycling but that at the moment it's not easy enough to recycle. You thought that the government should make the process easier and that would encourage you to do it more.

"Government should make it simpler to recycle and there should be more collections and actually pick it up"

2. Save energy, waste and water!

Many of you thought that finding other ways to travel to reduce carbon emissions was a good idea.

"Walk instead of using cars"

You said that there were things around your home that you could do as well which could make a difference.

"Not leaving water running when not in use e.g. brushing teeth and doing washing up"

"Turning of electricity when not in use e.g. computers & light bulbs"

You said that by switching off televisions and DVD players would be a good way for you to help save energy.

3. Growing or buying local organically produced food!

Another thing that you thought you could do to help is to eat food that hasn't been produced far away. Also to not waste food that you buy.

"Grow as much of your own food as possible to reduce the travel and pollution caused during transportation of the food"

"Only buy food which is necessary"

When asked what you thought **YOUR SCHOOL** could be doing to tackle climate change you said…

- **Schools should become recycling champions**, with recycling bins inside school buildings and recycling centres in the school grounds.

"Our school can get leaflets and it will inform our school about what is happening. Then our school an do something about it"

- If schools could **provide safer places to store bikes** then more pupils would ride to school.

- Schools should **teach us more about the planet and climate change.** You though that this would be a good way of making sure future generations don't continue to harm the planet.

You thought that there was a lot that the **MAYOR OF LONDON** could be doing to tackle climate change.

You would like to see **more money spent on creating new greener energy resources and greener public transport.**

One of the groups that we spoke to described how **buses should be powered differently** so that carbon dioxide is not released into the air.

Other suggestions were:

"Buildings should be more eco friendly like City Hall. I think the Mayor is doing a good job but he can do better to decrease pollution"

"Use light and motion sensors in public buildings so lights aren't on when they don't need to be"

"I think that under NO circumstances should London's green spaces be built on"

The London Plan

We asked you what you though of some changes to the London Plan, which gives details of the Mayor's solutions to slowing down climate change.

You thought the most important thing was that new buildings use renewable energy sources.

"Renewable sources can be used again and again. It's not expensive in the long run and the most effective sources. It is good for long term use"

"This priority will make the other ideas in the London plan not necessary as buildings will be producing their own energy"

Although you thought the ideas in the London Plan were good, you also thought that they **did not go far enough to alter the negative effects of climate change**.

"I think that the policies are not going far enough because people are not getting the message. And I think people are not putting enough effort into the environment"

"Yes, I agree with the plans made by the Mayor but I don't think he's taken it far enough. The plan made by the Mayor should have more effect on the community"

"The plan only addresses the issue of energy – when there are far more contributing factors to climate change e.g. food packaging"

You made suggestions that the Plan needs to be **more specific and stricter.**

"What makes a building an 'energy champion' – how efficient will it be?"

"Why just make new buildings energy efficient. All buildings should be eco-friendly"

"Enforce packaging laws and standards to reduce unnecessary waste"

Other important suggestions that you made were:

- Improve public transport so that it is a realistic alternative to driving
- Pass laws to make sure that all new buildings, extensions and improvements to buildings are environmentally friendly
- Make green alternatives cheaper and give grants to low income families to help them go green
- Everyone in England, not just London should make changes to the way they live to slow down climate change.

A selection of you will be presenting all 4 groups views to the Greater London Authority in on 24th January at City Hall.