

Area Committee – Neighbourhood CIL Funding Application Form

Title	Green Our Neighbourhood – Schools’ Greening project
Raised by (Councillor):	Cllr Giulia Innocenti
Ward:	Childs Hill
Member Request:	To support the Green Our Neighbourhood community group carry out the first phase of their schools’ greening project.
Funding Requested (£):	£20,942
<p>In consultation with (e.g. named Officer):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is within the parameters outlined in CIL statutory and regulatory definitions • Falls within the CIL Funding Priorities agreed by the relevant Area Committee • Links to priorities in any existing Council policy or strategy and/or whether any insight and intelligence may support the application • The scheme has considered any potential impact on the Council’s Strategic portfolio including those considered for strategic CIL funding • The scheme has no ongoing incremental revenue costs to the Council • That the scheme budget is forecast accurately • That the scheme deliverability has been assessed to ensure it can be resourced and successfully implemented • That the scheme outcomes and benefits have been assessed including benefits for the wider community and/or including those with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 <p>And Area Lead Officer (NAME), on (DATE):</p>	<p>The group have been collaborating with the following officers:</p> <p>Mat Gunyon – Greenspaces Alexander Sexton – Highways Frederic Micoud -Trees Harriet Duffield – Greenspaces – Biodiversity</p> <p>(Please note: This grant application is for the Green Our Neighbourhood community group who will deliver the scheme and pay all of the 3rd parties directly.)</p> <p>Project Outline The long-term aim of this project is to help protect school children in 5 local primary schools from the damaging effects of air pollution caused by the heavy traffic in Childs Hill. This will be achieved by planting dense hedging on either side of the school boundary and introducing more trees and shrubs along the routes most used by children to walk to school, in effect creating a “green shield” around these schools. Research has demonstrated that this is a simple, cost-effective way to protect children from the effects of air pollution.</p> <p>The Group</p>

The project will be run and delivered by the Green Our Neighbourhood community group whose aim is to improve air quality, biodiversity and increase healthy activity in Childs Hill ward. The group is chaired by local resident, Ingrid Posen. (See **Annex A – Group biogs for more info**). The community group are working in collaboration with ward Councillors and Barnet officers. This core Working Group will be supplemented by school and research representatives at appropriate stages of delivery.

Request from the West Area Committee:

I would like to ask the Area Committee for £20,942 to support the first phase of this project. This will allow the group to put in place a fully costed design for each of the 5 primary schools, ready for the final stage of the project’s realisation; engage the public with its long-term greening ambitions and place temporary planters outside all 5 schools.

Background/ Work carried out so far:

The Green Our Neighbourhood group have been working on this project for several months and have made significant headway, including:

- Site visits and officer liaison: The group have had a site walk with Frederic Micoud, (Trees) to look at possible tree and hedge planting areas for all 5 roads where the schools are based. Frederic’s team have completed preliminary underground surveys for all these roads.
- An initial meeting with all officers and the community group has already been carried out and officers have fed into this application.
- A member’s item was carried at the last Environment and Climate Change Committee asking the Council to support this project from it’s earliest stages. Senior officer, Matthew Gunyon has since been assigned to lead a working group to liaise with the Green Our Neighbourhood team.

- Air quality monitoring: The group were awarded a Breathe London Air Monitor which will be positioned at All Saints School. This will allow us to capture invaluable air pollution data (see **Annex B – research summary and air pollution**). We have also had preliminary meetings with Middlesex University who will be supporting this project by monitoring air quality within the schools before and after the greening, allowing this to act as a potential demonstration project for the rest of the borough.
- School Involvement: We have spoken to all 5 schools about this project (Childs Hill, Rimon, All Saints, Wessex and St Agnes). All head teachers have shown unanimous support for the proposal and expressed a desire to be involved in the various stages, from initial planning through to maintenance.
- Community engagement: The Green Our Neighbourhood Group has built up a team of local volunteers led by Teresa Casal who are doing extensive local planting. This aspect of public engagement is ongoing.

This Activity

This first phase of this project is to: scope, cost and design the schools hedging; engage and consult schools and local residents; place planters outside each of the schools.

The main activities to be carried out between April – November 2023 are:

1. Consult with Barnet officers about the feasibility of different types and positioning of hedge planting.
2. Prepare designs for each of the 5 schools.
3. Install temporary planters outside each of the 5 schools, with an additional planter and signage map at the Dunstan Rd/ The Vale corner.
4. Consult with heads, boards of governors and parent bodies about proposed designs and finalise proposals.

5. Prepare costed proposals for installation of hedges.
6. Hold a community event for all schools including exhibition of overall designs and encouraging engagement of schools and local community in next stage of project.
7. Agree plan with Barnet Green Spaces for additional tree and shrub planting along principal routes used by children to walk to school.

Process

- Schools will be asked to prepare an analysis of principal walking routes to school.
- Site 3D models and initial designs prepared for each school. These designs, including planting proposals, will be undertaken by the group's volunteer architect Adrienne Lau, and volunteer horticultural advisor, Benny Hawksbee. They will require technical assistance which is costed in our application. The group also intend to obtain advice and information from the Royal Horticultural Society and Warwick University who continue to research the impact of hedges on schools.
- Each school will receive its individual design proposal. Initial meetings will be with the Head, Governors and PTA. This will be followed by an engagement event with the parent body where the proposals are shown and parental discussion and feedback received. These events will be facilitated by Paulette (Clitterhouse Farm) who has vast experience of engaging residents in environmental projects. The cost of presentation materials are included in the application.
- Temporary planters will be installed in front of each school, with a notice about the project. This is to engage the school body in the process and encourage them to demonstrate a commitment to maintenance. These planters will be redeployed in the school grounds once the main installation is complete. A

planter and signage map showing the areas of greening will also be placed on the corner of Dunstan Rd/ The Vale to increase awareness and build interest in the project.

- The initial designs will be modified in the light of feedback, then agreed with Barnet and prepared for a presentation by designers. Costing of construction will be carried out by a quantity surveyor.
- Final design presentation - a community event which will engage parents and local residents in the next stages of the project, including greenways and additional planting in front gardens and balconies. It will also present future volunteering opportunities. Event costs are included in this application.
- During this stage air quality baseline information will be collected by Middlesex University students and the Breathe London monitor (at All Saints School). This process will continue after hedge installation to evaluate impact.

*Please see **Annex C** for a proposed timescale.* It is worth noting that certain timescales are liable to shift. The group will be working closely with officers, with monthly meetings taking place from April onwards.

Main Project Outputs:

- A fully costed design proposal for 5 local primary schools in Childs Hill.
- 5 temporary planters to be placed outside each school
- Collection of air quality baseline data, including PM 2.5 (outside of this budget)
- Public engagement through public consultations and final presentations.

The Next Stage:

The Green Our Neighbourhood community group will use the detailed proposals emerging from this stage to raise grants for the final installation. Sources of grants for

greening have already been identified (*See Annex D*) and a mix of charitable and local government funding is anticipated.

Budget

Please see Annex E - Budget

Financial notes:

- Support in kind: This project will benefit from free professional input by volunteer members of the group. Adrienne Lau is an architect and Benny Hawksbee, a horticulturalist (*see Annex A – Group Biogs*). Schools are supporting this project by offering their halls free of charge for the engagement sessions.
- Contingency has been worked out at 8% of overall expenditure. This is to cover any unforeseen expenses, such as the impact of inflation on the cost of design materials. This money will not be spent for anything other than contingency costs. If unused, the contingency will be refunded/ not claimed for by the applicant, as per Council procedures.
- The group is committed to fundraising once this phase is completed (*see Annex D – Sources of grants for tackling air pollution through greening*). Ingrid Posen, Chair has an impressive track record of fundraising for Childs Hill Park and will lead the way for future fundraising.

Community Benefit and Engagement:

Long-term - This project has several positive long-term benefits for school children, school staff and local residents.

- Health – helping to prevent damage to children’s health by reducing the level of NO2 and other particulate matter in the school playground and on children’s

walks to and from school which severely threatens the health of growing children (see **Annex D** - research summary hedges and air pollution)

This proposal also supports Barnet Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25 'Create a healthier environment' which states: 'We will create healthier choices locally, with a focus on improving access to clean air, water etc.'

- Environmental – helping to deliver Barnet's Tree Policy: more trees and hedges will reduce the amount of Carbon dioxide therefore improving air quality, and absorbing/ intercepting NO from diesel engines; providing shade and therefore reducing the urban heat island affect, reducing surface run off and therefore potential flood risk; increasing biodiversity and helping against noise pollution from traffic.
- Wellbeing - the greening of the schools and streets may also encourage more walking and cycling and fewer local vehicle journeys. Making the area greener and more attractive will contribute to the overall wellbeing of local residents.

*Please see **Annex F** – Pictures and preliminary light sketches by designer, Adrienne Lau for a flavour of what these hedge landscapes could look like.*

Immediate:

- Educational – this project is an opportunity for school children to get involved with an environmental project in its initial stages. Head teachers have expressed an interest in running educational activities alongside this project. For example, children can be involved in planting the temporary planters and learning how to monitor their development; they can also learn how to collect and implement data through a 'walking routes to school survey' and they can explore the role of plants in reducing flood risk, improving air quality and summertime cooling. The educational pay offs to this project are numerous.
- Data – the group bid for and received an air quality monitor from Breathe London, run by Imperial College, who will install and maintain it. They will also

	<p>transmit the data to their London wide air quality data base. This will ensure that we have baseline information to evaluate the impact of hedging, and high quality data to share with Barnet at no cost. This will include measurement of the smallest and most dangerous particles, PM2.5, which Barnet does not currently monitor. Green our Neighbourhood has already formed a group with other recipients of air quality monitors in Barnet so that they can share experience and learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community – this project is an opportunity for local residents to get involved in an environmental project, either as planting volunteers or to simply feedback on the designs. Public engagement is at the heart of this project and the group are keen to build a strong support network through this initial phase. <p>To conclude: I strongly urge this committee to support the Green Our Neighbourhood group in the first phase of this greening project. I believe they are a formidable team and their project is well-deserving of Council support. We must do all we can to mitigate against the dire effects of air pollution on our school children and local residents, and this greening project presents a positive first step in that direction.</p>
<p>Officer Comments</p>	<p>Officers are currently working to support opportunities for greening assets across the borough and have also initiated a new tree planting programme.</p> <p>There is opportunity to incorporate delivery of greening opportunities into existing programmes of work with officers working closely with members of the community to steer any design. It should also be carefully considered that any delivery of planting on the public highway will carry complexities that are yet to be worked through, this is it is likely that physical delivery will need to route through the highways department. There may also be a requirement for officer fees such as highways applications that could result in additional costs. These challenges could potentially be overcome.</p>

	<p>The output of the proposal is to provide a set of drawings that may be taken forward subject to securing additional funding. The delivery of any new planting is not currently within scope of this proposal. Therefore, there is a risk that committee should be mindful of that the project may deliver designs for greening but the subsequent project may not be achievable. This should be weighed up against the opportunity that an additional project of a greater value than the c.£20k ask of committee could be delivered through external investment achieved through the community.</p>
<p>Any additional information (please list any documents here to be published with the agenda, or circulated to the Committee):</p>	<p>Annex A – Group biogs Annex B - Research summary hedges and air pollution Annex C – Proposed timescale Annex D – Sources of grants for tackling air pollution through greening Annex E – Budget Annex F – Preliminary sketches by designer, Adrienne Lau</p>