



Young Citizens' Action Agenda for London

Presented to the Mayor of London and London Authorities
February 2009

A Campaign By



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MAYOR OF LONDON

The views expressed in this report are those of the young authors based on survey results and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organisations supporting the project.

For more information please see: www.citizen.org.uk.



About the Institute for Citizenship

Who we are...

- The IfC is a national independent charity that promotes
 - Democratic participation
 - Citizenship life skills
- The IfC was formed in 1992, following the work of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Commission on Citizenship
- The IfC has pioneered a range of Citizenship resources in response to the introduction of Citizenship Education as part of the National Curriculum in 2002.

What is Citizenship?

- Traditionally, it describes the relationship between the citizen and the state
- Citizenship Education is about acquiring skills that enable us to participate in the decision making that shapes our future by understanding the political processes, institutions, laws, rights and responsibilities of our democratic system
- Increasingly, Citizenship describes relationships between citizens, communities and our multiple identities

21st Century Challenges for Citizenship...

- Democracy matters, is fragile and should not be taken for granted
- The health of democracy depends on the quality of the relationship between citizen and state
- This relationship depends on an understanding of respective roles, rights and responsibilities
- The relationship between the citizen and the state has changed and is changing
- We need to redefine roles and responsibilities between citizen and state for the 21st Century .



What we do...

- From research to practical projects
 - We promote political literacy, social and moral understanding and active participation
 - We help bridge the skills and participation gap
 - We encourage people to play a positive part in politics and society.

Democracy, a just society, free elections, life skills...

Citizenship matters to everyone...

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Young Citizens' Action Agenda for **London**



“We can’t expect young people to participate in society unless we’re serious about listening to their views. We know that young people are passionate about the issues that affect their lives and we must give them opportunities to question those who make the decisions.”

David Dimbleby
President, Institute for Citizenship

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Young Citizens' Action Agenda

Be Part of the Action, Support the Agenda

The Project

Aims of the Young Citizens' Action Agenda Project

In May 2008 the Institute for Citizenship – together with the BBC, City of London Corporation, Greater London Authority (GLA), Parliament's Education Service, BT, Steljes and the Evening Standard – launched a project for young people aged 14-19 that aimed to:

- Give students briefings on 21st century social, economic and political challenges
- Promote skills to enable young people to have a voice in tackling problems
- Promote participation and active citizenship
- Help society to see young people in a more positive light.

Young Citizens' Say (YCS) Research Survey / Report

In June 2008, 2,000 students aged 14–19 were encouraged to take part in a *Young Citizens' Say* survey answering a wide range of questions on politics and society. Over 1,100 surveys were completed and returned to the Institute for Citizenship.

Young Citizens' Action Event – July 10th 2008

In July 2008, 1,400 students from London and across the UK met at Central Hall, Westminster, for briefings and debates on Politics, Economics and Citizenship. Leading BBC presenters, MPs and businessmen gave briefings and answered questions.

- Huw Edwards (Presenter, BBC News), David Dimbleby (Chair, BBC Question Time), Andrew Marr (BBC Andrew Marr Show), Mark Easton (BBC Home Editor), Jane Hill (BBC News 24), Mark Thompson (Director-General, BBC), Hardeep Singh Kohli (Comedian), Sir Mike Rake (Chairman, BT), Michael Cassidy CBE (City of London Corporation), the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP and the Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP.



Young People's Panels

After the July event, two panels of young people – for London and the UK – were formed to prepare Action Agendas for the Prime Minister and Mayor of London. The Agendas aim to:

- Inform the PM and Mayor of areas where young people need government support
- Inform the PM and Mayor of action young people could take to help with practical problems.

Young Citizens' Say... Research launched (19th November 2008)

The research findings from the *Young Citizens' Say* survey were launched at *The Crick +10 Event* at Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament on 19th November 2008. The event marked the 10th Anniversary of Professor Sir Bernard Crick's *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools* Report (1998), recommending the introduction of Citizenship as part of the statutory secondary curriculum.

Young Citizens' Action Agendas delivered to PM and Mayor (December 2008)

The Action Agendas produced by the Young Citizens' Panels, in consultation with other pupils, will be presented to the Government and the Mayor of London in December 2008 and February 2009.





The London Panel were randomly chosen from over 400 applicants who volunteered to take part. Their task was to use data from over 1,100 surveys and to prepare an Action Agenda, representing young people across London for the Mayor of London and London Authorities.



Viraj Patel, 18, Ilford

My education at Ilford County High School has spurred my fascination for economics and after obtaining a degree in this subject, I wish to embark on a career as a journalist. Growing up in one of the world's leading financial and cultural centres has enabled me to encounter a vast array of experiences, which I believe will help me achieve my future aspirations.



Emily Csizmazia, 17, Pinner

I am currently studying A Levels in Psychology, English, Spanish, and Sociology, and plan to start a Psychology degree next September. The London Action Agenda has made me feel that young people do have a voice, and there are things both we, as young people, and the Government can do to improve our community.



David Shetcliffe, 17, Ruislip

I am 17 and I am in Upper Sixth at the London Oratory School in Fulham. I love Politics (I am good at arguing which will be handy when I eventually work in the House of Commons!) and I hope to study it at University. This has been a great opportunity to voice my opinion and represent London's youth.



Ben Brookes, 17, Epsom

I am seventeen years old and enjoy a whole range of activities from rugby to playing the guitar. I am currently studying to get a place in a University to read History and would one day like to work as a Barrister.



Rochelle Wilson, 18, Redbridge

I am currently studying English, Classical Civilisations, Biology and Chemistry & next year am going to study Medicine at University. As Head Girl at my school being a part of the panel for the London Action Agenda has been amazing and it's incredible to know that what we are doing will make a difference for young people in London.



Jack Pepper, 18, Finchley

I like to think of myself as an all-rounder. Whilst being a keen musician and sportsman, I like to keep up to date with current affairs and aspire to write for a newspaper.

Thank you to everyone who has taken part in the Action Agenda Panels including Matthew Duck, Maria Woodcraft, Vanessa Kwame, Christopher Donaldson, Elvige Pouli, Kashmira Gander, John McGlade, Olwuyemisi Adelana, Christopher Hennan, Jane Thomas, Paul McMillan, Eleanor Sturgeon, Tasmia Akkas, William Nicholson, Gemma Hawkins and all those who took part in the Consultation process.



Young Citizens' Action Agenda

- The Young Citizens' Action Agenda Project (YCAA) has placed a focus on deliberative democracy
- The 1,400 young people from London and the UK who attended the event in Westminster on 10th July 2008 received Economic, Political and Citizenship briefings
- The 1,112 young people who took part in the *Young Citizens' Say* survey were asked a broad range of questions to get them to think about their roles and responsibilities in wider society
- The young people randomly selected to be on the London Panel – from over 400 who volunteered to take part – have had the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities they face and to learn about some of the action being taken
- They have been encouraged to reflect not only on what they would like Government to do to support them and improve their lives and opportunities, but of equal importance, to consider what they, as young people could do to help build a better future
- Although the London and UK participants in the Action Event and the Survey were not randomly selected, the process has been inclusive and those involved are broadly representative of young people aged 16-18 though probably with more of an interest in politics than their peers
- **The views expressed in this document are those of the young people involved in the Young Citizens' London Panel and not necessarily those of the organisations involved in the project. The Action Plans are based on responses to the Young Citizens' Say survey and the deliberative process that the Panel has been through. Although curriculum pressures make it difficult to get responses from schools, a draft of the document was e-mailed to London schools for comment.**

(Unless otherwise stated, all statistics quoted in the document are from the Institute for Citizenship's Young Citizens' Say survey taken in July/August 2008 and the Young Citizens' Action Event voting taken on the 10th July 2008.)



Huw Edwards (Newsreader, BBC) talks about Economics with Michael Cassidy CBE (City of London Corporation), Sir Mike Rake (Chairman, BT), Nik Wood (BBC Two's Working Lunch) and 1,400 young citizens at the Young Citizens' Action Event at Central Hall, Westminster on 10th July 2008.



Young Citizens' Action Agenda
for
London



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Challenges & Opportunities

Growing up in 21st Century London

London is a world city.

It is at the heart of the UK's cultural, financial and political past, present and future.

As young Londoners we feel privileged to live in such an amazing and vibrant capital. Living in 21st Century London provides fantastic opportunities as well as continuous challenges for young Londoners – for all Londoners.

Our generation of young people is growing up at a time of unprecedented global to local change, including the biggest economic downturn for decades and the election of a new President in the United States, an election which has captured the imagination of many people of our age. These events offer the potential for a new era of political debate, accountability and participation, a development that we welcome and believe London – and the UK – must embrace.

Our Young Citizens' Action Agenda for London highlights some of the key issues faced by young people in the Capital. The London Panel has worked closely with the UK Panel and our proposals for London share many common themes and recommendations. However, our London Action Agenda is tailored for London's unique position as a local, regional, national and international centre.

Young people make up almost a quarter of London's population, and we want to be an active part of society. Our suggestions for London aim to close the generation gap and help us engage with our communities in ways that would be good for London. We believe that, given the opportunity to be more active and involved – particularly to take responsibility and have the chance to 'own' solutions to some of the problems – we can work together to build a positive image of young people.

We understand the serious challenges we face but we also want to enjoy the opportunities. We want London to be a successful and serious world leader as well as a fun city for us and others to enjoy.

Our Challenges

- From our survey, 49% of young Londoners do not feel safe from people of their own age and 53% of young Londoners feel like an outsider at least some of the time.
- Just under two thirds (64%) of young Londoners do not think there are enough facilities and things for them to do in their local area.
- Young Londoners believe there is a negative opinion of their generation: 59% believe adults have a negative opinion of young people, 65% feel they are portrayed unfairly by the media.

Our Opportunities

- Young people in London understand their role as citizens: 91% of young Londoners believe they have responsibilities as well as rights. They want to play an active part in their communities and already 72% volunteer formally/informally at least once a month and 76% of young Londoners would vote in a General Election tomorrow if they could.
- Young Londoners are eager to learn and acquire new skills: 70% of young Londoners like school and 89% would like schools to teach them about basic financial matters. They also care about the environment: 95% think it is important to recycle.
- Over half of young Londoners (55%) are excited about the London 2012 Games and think they will deliver lasting achievements, nationally and internationally. Nearly two thirds (65%) of young Londoners see themselves as global as well as local citizens.

All results are from the Institute for Citizenship's 'Young Citizens' Say Survey'.





1. Places To Be and Things To Do In London

As young Londoners, we feel that we do not have enough access to community-based spaces and activities. Almost two-thirds of young people in London do not think there are enough facilities and things for them to do in their local area. In order to feel part of a community, we need to have good places to go to, such as our own youth and community centres, as well as a range of activities to pursue in them.

More than this, in order to make such centres successful we need to be given a sense of ownership over them. By being given a say in how they are run, activities aimed at young people can be made more inclusive and popular locally. We feel that young people are best placed to know what they need in terms of services and that they can learn new and useful skills by being given the chance to help organise and run facilities in their community.

Young Londoners in general see their school as their main social community and source of information. As such, we would like our schools to play a larger part in providing us with information about positive activities to enable us to be more involved in the community and in giving us a place in which to pursue activities out of school hours.

What London Authorities Can Do ¹

- We would like the GLA and Local Borough Councils to provide further support to the Government's 'Extended Schools Strategy', allowing more access to school facilities out of hours in order to bring schools into the wider community. Schools are our main community, a central source of information and have both the facilities and equipment many youth clubs need. This makes them well-placed to make such groups successful locally. Schools are able to promote and provide information about youth clubs to us easily in school hours and basing community group activities within our schools makes them easily accessible and more visible to us as a group.
- We are aware that the GLA and the Government have already given £79 million to London Boroughs (London Youth Offer Scheme for 2008 - 2010) in order to support youth services.

We would like to see these funds targeted at:

- Facilities renting out equipment in play areas and parks, enabling young people to take part in positive outdoor activities for free.
- Support for the creation of more youth clubs and centres for 13 -18 year olds on weekends and evenings.

What Young Londoners Can Do

- We feel we can help support the opening of these spaces by volunteering time to help keep them clean and usable, which would also encourage more young people to take an active role in using community spaces.
- We can improve the quality and quantity of the clubs and activities aimed at young people locally by involving ourselves and our friends in running them and promoting them to other young people in our area. We can support these schemes by getting involved in their activities and by volunteering to help them in our free time.



2. Access All Areas: Universal Card for Young Londoners

London is a city full of diversity and culture and we feel privileged to live in it. However, the opportunities to interact with the attractions and facilities available in the Capital are often not fully realised by young Londoners. We would like to encourage young people to feel ownership and pride in their city by creating a young Londoners' pass card designed specifically for them for use across London amenities, shops and transport.

Young Londoners want a card which is universal, convenient and which can serve as a proof of age, oyster card, rail pass and student discount card all at the same time. Such a card would help us build a sense of London ownership and shared identity, as the card would be for young Londoners only.

Presently, Londoners in our age group have no means of proving their age in a way that can be recognised easily by businesses and people that require it. In order to access under-16 discounts or enter into 'under 18' nightclubs, cinemas etc, young people who are not old enough to qualify for universal IDs, such as driving licences and NUS cards, need a way of proving their identity

What London Authorities Can Do²

We would like to see a universal young Londoners card. This card would probably be an Oyster that would incorporate additional features for young people, such as:

- Providing identity and proof of age
- Acting as student/NUS card
- Incorporating the free bus and tram initiative 'Zip' for under 18s in full-time education and offering other discounts on travel
- Creating a young Londoners agreement with attractions, shops and amenities to provide exclusive discounts
- Giving young Londoners the chance to fully experience London and feel ownership of their city
- Providing, when topped up, various messages about free London activities and new initiatives specifically for young Londoners to make London an inclusive place to live.

What Young Londoners Can Do

- Earn the right to use these cards through good behavior
- Recognise that these cards are a privilege not a right and can be taken away from us



A universal card would encourage young people to utilise all of London's fantastic amenities



Our Communities

3. Getting Involved in Volunteering

Young people want greater and more visible access to volunteering opportunities in order to make full use of their enthusiasm for voluntary work. Currently, our generation is the most likely to volunteer in some shape or form. But whilst 72% of young Londoners already volunteer at least once a month, a further 25% would still like the opportunity to do so.

We support the recent launch of the first national full-time volunteering programme for 16-25s in England, run by "V", the youth volunteering organisation, as part of the Government's *New Opportunities White Paper*. However, we fear that even Government-led volunteering programmes like this still suffer from a lack of visibility among young people and we believe that initiatives of this sort can only work if we are aware of their existence and the opportunities they offer.

What London Authorities Can Do ³

- Young people are already enthusiastic about volunteering in their communities. But while many opportunities to volunteer or join voluntary schemes already exist, these opportunities are not always visible to us. As a group, we are often unaware of the volunteering projects and resources available and want to be better informed and connected to these opportunities.
- Young Londoners want a clear and highly visible 'one-stop' portal for volunteering opportunities and schemes that is 'user friendly'. This would help put a range of voluntary groups, from small to well established, in touch with young Londoners. Hosting a central portal for volunteering in London on a young London website such as 'WikiLondon' (please see point 6) would help to make the information highly visible and useful for young people in terms of convenience of access and identification. As the main users of the portal, we would want to take part in helping to develop the portal and contribute to its content, in order to make sure it is tailored to our needs. Being able to personally recommend local volunteering groups to our peers would also help boost volunteering locally, as peer-to-peer recommendations are highly valued by people of our age group. Ideally this dedicated London website could be linked to the national volunteering networks 'V' and 'Volunteer England'.
- We would like Local Councils and Local Education Authorities to encourage our schools to give us an hour during the school week, eg. during free periods or PSHE, in which we can volunteer to help in our communities. This could contribute to a Duke of Edinburgh Award or other certificate in recognition of our work.

What Young Londoners Can Do

Young people already want to volunteer, but we can choose to:

- Be pro-active in looking for opportunities to volunteer by ourselves.
- Encourage our peers to volunteer on projects we already work on.
- Publicise volunteering opportunities through social networking like Facebook and Bebo.
- Invite voluntary groups to give talks within our school to help promote school-wide volunteering.



The Duke of Edinburgh Award is one way we can get involved in volunteering



4. Bridging the Generation Gap

In London we are aware that different generations within the same community do not always have many opportunities to interact with each other. At the same time, we feel that many adults do not view us in a positive light. Indeed, only 19% of us feel that adults in our community view us in a positive way. This has led to a situation of mutual distrust between the generations, which we are aware of and would like to improve.

We feel that the best way to overcome the generation gap is to build bridges between the generations by approaching the issue from a whole-society perspective. Attempting to look at 'young persons' issues, such as gang culture or knife crime, in isolation from the community it occurs in, is not helpful. Instead of isolating young people, or stereotyping us as a problem, we would like London authorities to look at the relationships between us and the rest of society and the ways in which these can be rebuilt and strengthened.

We also feel that parenting skills play a large part in this and that the importance of good parenting is ignored at our peril. Parents are responsible for passing on modes of good behavior and values, both qualities that our generation is sometimes accused of lacking.

What London Authorities Can Do ⁴

- We recognise that many adults are intimidated by us when we gather in large groups in town centres. As indicated earlier in our document, we think the provision of more and better activities and dedicated spaces for young people will help to avoid perceived threatening behaviour by young people in their communities.
- In addition, we would like to see the creation and promotion of community based networking opportunities (eg. lunch clubs, discussion groups) that bring generations together to foster understanding and social cohesion, such as volunteering projects based in older people's day centres.
- We would like London Authorities to consult young people on a regular and structured basis about new policies and initiatives in order to give us a sense of ownership and enable us to feel an inclusive part of London life. We need to be included in the decision making process to achieve this.
- **'Gangs for Good'**: There is a powerful gang culture involving young people in many parts of London. These gangs exist for a variety of reasons. We would like to see a pan-London initiative in areas where gangs exist to harness the energy, creativity and potential of these groups of young people. We need to give gangs a sense of belonging and ownership – a stake in the future – and the ability for gang members to prove themselves to their peers and to make a difference in society. Their fight should not be with other young groups, but with poverty, exclusion and lack of access to information, education and opportunity. We believe that gangs can do good and gang members can be forces for good with the right support. We would like to see a pioneering initiative to explore the potential for good in gang culture.



Using the energy from gang culture in a positive way could help us to bridge the generation gap

What Young Londoners Can Do

As young people, we are aware that our behaviour in society is key to creating a positive relationship between us and the adults that make up the rest of our community. We believe that young people should be responsible for their own actions.

- We recognise that privileges such as free/subsidised travel can be taken away
- We can use free time for volunteering
- Understand that our behaviour in society reflects upon all young people





5. Learning How London Works

We would like to have a greater say in how London works and is run, but feel we are unable to access and interact with London's many institutions because we do not have enough knowledge about what they are, who they represent or an understanding of how they work. This problem is not unique to us, but something we think many people in London feel.

We also feel that young people and society in general, often take our institutions, Local Borough Councils and police force etc. for granted because we do not understand much about what they do, how they do it or the challenges they face. In order to improve our relationship with the organisations that run London, we feel that young people need to be educated about how these powerful bodies work, in order to create a greater understanding and appreciation of London's services and teach people how to interact with and influence them.

What London Authorities Can Do⁵

- Set up a structured campaign through adverts on buses/tubes/trains to promote how the GLA and London Borough services are delivered, to allow young citizens – all citizens – to understand why and how services are provided and how anti-social behaviour can affect their provision.
- Encourage Local Borough Councils to visit schools and educate young people about the roles of these institutions. This will create a relationship between young people and these institutions and will encourage young Londoners to get involved with Young Mayor Schemes or the UK Youth Parliament and other participatory schemes.
- Encourage schools to visit the GLA, House of Parliament or other bodies, such as the City of London Corporation at the Guildhall, in order to give young people a chance to learn more about the history of their Capital, its structure and how it works.



What Young Londoners Can Do

- We can understand that, as citizens, we have a duty to do what we can to help improve services for all. We can provide constructive feedback to GLA and Local Borough Council consultations online or in person, we can attend Local Borough Council meetings, report anti-social behaviour in our area and behave responsibly in our communities.
- We can take part in Young Mayor or School Council programmes and other participatory schemes in order to learn more about how our Capital works. By joining such schemes, we can play an active part in improving the way services are provided and strengthen our relationship with government institutions.



6. WikiLondon – A Young London Portal

London is a great place to live and learn in. However, in order to get the most out of the large number of opportunities available to us, we need an easily recognisable way in which to find out information that we both feel ownership over and can trust. Young Londoners would like a way of sharing positive information about their local area with other young people.

Young Londoners would like to share news and views about good quality after-school clubs and activity centres with one another. We would like to be able to access information about volunteering opportunities, positive places to go, young person's discounts and days out from a reliable and highly visible source, such as a dedicated WikiLondon portal.

We think this WikiLondon portal would be best supervised by adults although most of its content should be created by us, as we feel young people themselves are best placed to know what others of their age group want in terms of services and amenities. We would like anyone to be able to submit information about their area to the website and for the website's adult editors to then be able to post our thoughts and recommendations in the right area of the website.

What London Authorities Can Do⁶

- Provide a one stop WikiLondon Portal for information on activities, services, volunteering opportunities and current events designed for young people. Advertise this service throughout schools, community groups and charities to ensure young Londoners own the service and in order to encourage these groups to sign up it. Encourage Local Borough Councils and schools to promote this service to their young people in order to make them aware of it.
- Encourage young Londoners to take part in the creation and design of the website and its content in order to make it feel relevant to them and give them a sense of ownership over it.
- We believe this site would have potential for development in a number of ways, for example, it would create a WikiNetwork of engaged young people across London who could be consulted on their views on relevant policy issues.
- We have said elsewhere in this Action Agenda that, as young Londoners, we are well aware of the economic and social problems to be tackled, but we also sense the opportunity for change – for rethinking the future. We want London and young Londoners to be at the forefront of that initiative. There is already an initiative for London Leaders. We want the vision to go further than that. Young Londoners want to see 'London Leading' on 21st Century ideas and action.



What Young Londoners Can Do

- To help young Londoners feel a sense of ownership over the website and its content, we should help co-create the design and basic content of the website portal.
- Rather than just use the website, we should contribute to its content. By taking some time to put forward and recommend good places to go to and things to do in our local area we can make the website richer and more useful for everyone in our community.



7. TfYL – Transport for Young London

We need better access to public transport in order to give us the basic freedom to participate independently in a variety of activities across the Capital. Access to regular, reliable transport helps us become active, independent and able citizens within our communities. The ability to safely use and conveniently access transport links is especially important to those of us who live away from the centre of the Capital and rely on the public transport system as our only means of travel.

What London Authorities Can Do ⁷

- Provide consistent public transport coverage for all communities that is reliable and affordable.
- Ensure that peak travel times on the tube and buses (especially school starting and closing times) are catered for, in order to encourage young people to take public transport instead of taking lifts with parents/guardians.
- We would like Transport for London to encourage young people to use public transport by providing buses and tubes with more space or storage areas for items such as sports equipment and bags.
- We welcome the introduction of the Cycle Hire Scheme in 2010, but feel that for such a scheme to be successful, and for cycling in general to be made more popular, it must be made safer to cycle in London. We would like the GLA to work with Local Councils to improve London's cycling lane infrastructure in order to take more cyclists out of general traffic. London's cycling lane infrastructure is often sporadic, with cycle lane provision changing from Borough to Borough. A more consistent and reliable 'pan-London' system would make cycling safer and more popular as an alternative to other forms of transport.
- In order to encourage us to use bicycles, we need safe and reliable places in which to park them. We would therefore like to see the introduction of more bicycle racks throughout London in order to discourage the chaining of bikes to railings and bicycle theft and in order to support and promote cycling. The ability to park bicycles safely is an issue now more than ever with *The London Local Authorities and Transport for London (No. 2) Bill* currently passing through Parliament. With no alternative to parking bicycles on the street, young people will be discouraged from cycling altogether.
- Extend the late running hours of the tube on the weekend in order to encourage more young people – all people – to make full use of the Capital's attractions and amenities.

What Young Londoners Can Do

- We can behave well when using public transport in order to retain our right to free or subsidised travel and to promote its extension.
- In order to encourage the creation of a consistent infrastructure of cycle paths across London we can inform Councils of where cycle paths stop or become dangerous .
- We can continue to support the maintenance of public transport links through our responsible use of them instead of private vehicles. This will also helping to protect the environment and prevent congestion.
- We can take advantage of existing schemes such as the Community Cycling Fund for London. By joining community backed cycling initiatives like these we can participate in bicycle share schemes, learn how to cycle safely in the Capital and promote cycling to our peers.



8. Relating to Decision Makers

In addition to learning 'How London Works', young people want to have a say in how their schools and government provided services are run and be able to relate directly to decision makers. We would like to be consulted on a range of issues, in order to feel connected to the political process and we would also like to be informed of what work our Local Councils and the GLA are doing to help us. Currently, many different government-led schemes are in place to help young people, but as a group we continue to remain unaware of many of these initiatives.

What London Authorities Can Do ⁸

- Encourage young people from across London to attend Mayor's Question Time (including Young Person's version) and promote other opportunities for children of all ages to interact with the Mayor and the GLA.
- Young Mayor and Youth Council schemes are an excellent way of promoting better links between young people and their local government. Taking part in these schemes can teach us skills and give us a taste of what it is like to vote in later life. Joining Youth Councils can teach us about responsibility and decision-making and help us feel connected and listened to by those in power. We would like to see these schemes consistently implemented in a 'pan-London' approach across all London Boroughs, so that all young Londoners can be included in the political process. We would also like these schemes to be extensively promoted by Local Councils within our schools in order to raise their profile and encourage more of us to take part in them.
- Encourage schools and community groups to teach young people how to communicate with London organisations, through activities such as submitting petitions and learning how to lobby the GLA/Local Councils and Central Government about specific issues. For example, School Councils could have structured access to Mayor's Question Time, London Assembly meetings and other initiatives.
- Encourage decision-makers from Local Councils, such as Local Councillors or representatives from Children and Young People's Units, to visit local schools, in order to keep those in power connected with us and our needs.
- Since young people are part of the London community, we believe we should be involved in the consultation process at every stage of new policy development. Any new initiatives will affect young people in the future and by consulting with us now, it will improve our ownership of change and the quality of life in London for us in the future.



The Young Citizens' Action Agenda has allowed us to relate to decision makers but by working together we can create even more opportunities

What Young Londoners Can Do

- We can choose to get involved by joining schemes, such as the Young Mayor and Youth Council Scheme and other participatory schemes.
- We can recognise that some opportunities to get involved in the consultation process already exist and we can promote these schemes by word of mouth and through peer recommendation.
- We can create an area on a Young Persons London Portal (WikiLondon) where other young people can access all this information.



9. Relating to the Media

Young Londoners are very aware that their relationship with the rest of society has been profoundly affected by current events and news headlines surrounding anti-social behaviour and knife crime. Indeed, when questioned, 59% of young people said they thought adults viewed them in a negative light. Even among ourselves, 49% of us fear other young people. We would like to promote a better image of young people in our Capital. We have many talents, volunteer widely and enjoy contributing to the life of our Capital in a number of ways and would like this to be recognised by the public.

Knife crime and gang culture are not new concerns but their coverage in the media has done much to alter the way in which generations of Londoners see each other. In order to rebuild relationships and promote positive behaviour among young people, we would like to see more balanced and positive media coverage of young people acknowledging, for example, the contribution they make to their communities.

Many media outlets already do this. BBC London's website celebrates young Londoners through 'The Real London' webpage, which features videos and articles by young Londoners talking about their challenges, as well as the positive things they do in society.

9

What London Authorities Can Do

- We would like the GLA to create a pan-London initiative promoting the positive actions of young people in London to combat some of the negative press that a minority of young people have caused us to receive. We believe this would help young people to gain greater respect within the community and also to help bridge the generation gap.
- We welcome the Mayor of London's appointment of an Ambassador for young people in London. We would like the Ambassador's role to include a requirement to promote a more positive image of young people, by highlighting the various ways in which young people make a positive contribution to the London community.



Promoting the many positive images of young people in London could help to bridge the generation gap in the Capital

What Young Londoners Can Do

- We recognise that schemes and awards are already in place to help promote a positive image of young people in society. Projects such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme help acknowledge young peoples' achievements and we should take part and encourage our peers to take part in these schemes.
- Young people can be involved in promoting a positive image of their generation by getting involved in the media: these are ways in which we can do it:
 1. Young London Editors
 - Following the success of BBC London's promotion of young people in 'The Real Young London' we would like to see more young Londoners writing about the positive things they do. BBC London and the Times Online have websites dedicated to young people's voices, where young people can write and contribute in a positive way.
 2. 'Spanning the Generations'
 - We would like to see features in the media where young and old citizens can write about the same issue from their particular point of view, then come together to discuss how they can solve problems by sharing ideas that have emerged from their different perspectives.





10. Being an Environmental Citizen

Young Londoners care about the environment: 90% of us already recycle at home and we would like to see our attitude towards the environment reflected in the public domain. In our schools and on the streets, we would like our public organisations to be supportive of our desire to behave in a more environmentally-friendly way. Measures such as the creation of bottle banks, the distribution of reusable bags or a new recycling policy for London's free newspapers are ways in which the GLA and Local Borough Councils can help promote environmentally-friendly habits. We feel that London is well-placed to become an environmental leader in the UK and that it has the infrastructure and resources to help set an example to other cities in the region.

What London Authorities Can Do ¹⁰

- The GLA can set an example to citizens and Local Borough Councils through encouraging the introduction of rubbish sorting and recycling programmes in government-run buildings, offices and schools.
- The GLA can lobby to legislate to limit the use of plastic bags and packaging waste in shops and supermarkets.
- We would like recycling schemes across London to be clear and consistent, as currently variations between Local Councils are causing confusion and inconsistency.
- London enjoys many free daily newspapers. While widely-enjoyed, the popularity of these papers has raised issues regarding their disposal, especially on our public transport system. We would like the GLA and relevant Local Borough Councils to pressure the owners of the free London-based newspapers to provide recycling receptacles at major commuter terminals and tube stations in order to prevent the accumulation of excess amounts of rubbish on our streets.

What Young Londoners Can Do

- We can choose to help protect the environment on a day-to-day basis through responsible decision-making. We can use public transport, walk or cycle instead of driving in private vehicles. We can recycle at home and use environmentally friendly bags instead of plastic ones when we go shopping.
- We can encourage recycling in schools and on public transport (eg. recycling the free London commuter newspapers).
- Young Londoners are enthusiastic about the environment and we can help to encourage and educate our parents/guardians, relatives and peers to share our concerns and take action.



Promoting recycling in schools will help to teach young people about how they can help the environment



11. Being an Olympic Citizen

Young people in London want to take part in the enthusiasm and events surrounding the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. We are excited that our city will be hosting the 2012 Games. We would like to learn more about how we can get involved in London's preparation for the event and the ways in which we can take part in the spirit of the Games through such things as school events and buying tickets. From helping out in the Olympic Village to volunteering as an usher at cycling events, young Londoners want to feel included in the upcoming 2012 Games and our involvement could make a contribution to the success of the event.

Young Londoners see the 2012 London Games as a great opportunity to both showcase London as a global city and learn more about other cultures around the world. London is a city made up of many cultures living together and we would like the Olympic and Paralympic Games to celebrate this and give us opportunities to interact with the communities that make up the Capital.

What London Authorities Can Do ¹¹

- The GLA could create links with former Olympic and Paralympic cities so that young Londoners can learn from the experience of other countries that have hosted the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Organise twin Borough schemes to link London Boroughs with their counterparts in foreign cities. This would allow young people to interact with people from across the world and understand the different experiences in other cities.
- The GLA could advertise volunteering opportunities for young people at the Olympic and Paralympic events on the GLA and London 2012 Games website.
- Different London schools could also link with schools in other parts of the UK in order to share the Olympic message and to show that London is not isolated from *'North of Watford'*.



We need to ensure the London 2012 Games provide a legacy for the whole country



What Young Londoners Can Do

- We can embrace London's multi-ethnic diversity by taking advantage of its multiple museums and cultural events, such as the Notting Hill Carnival, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and other events.
- Through the Olympic and Paralympic Games we can celebrate London's diversity and links to other countries and cultures.
- Most importantly, we can help the Games to be successful by getting involved in sporting activities ourselves and encouraging our schools to support young people in sports activities. We can also encourage our families to support the Games and be healthy and active Londoners.

Young people can help make the London 2012 Games successful by getting involved in sport and making London a healthy and active city



12. Being 21st Century Citizens

As 21st Century citizens we live in an uncompromising, fast moving world. This is especially the case for Londoners and young Londoners.

Young people need to learn new 21st Century life skills (e.g. inquiry, analysis, opinion-forming, teamwork and debate etc) in order to address modern day challenges and to take advantage of new opportunities. There is too much information from too many sources (reliable and unreliable). We need these Citizenship skills to be able to choose between the many sources of information at our disposal (e.g. websites on the Internet or newspapers, magazines) in order to judge the quality of the opinions being expressed and form our own views.

We believe that London should lead the way in pioneering 21st Century Citizenship skills for Londoners – and all UK citizens – in its role as the UK's leading and most innovative city. As we mentioned in '*Challenges and Opportunities*', the economic downturn and the political changes in America are creating an era of opportunity for rethinking how we live our lives in the new Millennium. London has the opportunity, with the Olympics on the horizon, to champion these ideas for economic, political and social regeneration for the future and the benefit of all. We want London to lead on rethinking the future.

12

What London Authorities Can Do

- Help give us the resources and skills to understand the many sources of information available to us through school and youth groups. This will encourage responsible understanding and give us the skills to enable us to use the information to our best advantage.
- We would like the GLA to help fund and promote volunteer and youth groups that help to teach us essential life skills, we would also like these opportunities to be advertised widely (including on 'WikiLondon') so that young people have an opportunity to join them.
- Local Boroughs could encourage more schools in their Local Education Authority to teach young people about basic financial matters, as economic well-being and financial capability (although now a small part of PSHE) are still non-statutory elements of the secondary school syllabus.
- The City of London Corporation already runs a volunteer scheme where members of the Corporation and its Livery Companies visit primary and secondary schools to teach them about financial literacy, an essential life skill, especially in challenging economic times. We would like to see examples of practices like these encouraged and promoted across the whole of London consistently, so that all young Londoners could benefit from such positive initiatives.



Learning 21st Century life skills such as debate will encourage us to be more active in society

What Young Londoners Can Do

- As young people, we can be more pro-active. We can create or participate in students' newspapers, debating societies and radio stations, or even take up a part-time job where we can learn and practice these Citizenship skills in a working environment, and feel part of the community.
- Young people can volunteer to help teach ITC skills to older people in their communities.
- We can join school councils and other related bodies where we can learn leadership and transferable skills including employable skills, that will enable us to make our contribution as citizens to 21st Century London and 21st Century society.



Our Future

Young Citizens' London Action Panel Closing Statement

We agree with our peers on the Young Citizens' UK Panel that taking part in the Young Citizens Action Project has been an eye opening experience and we have learned a lot during the process. We, too, have seen that the ways in which we live in the 21st century are more complicated and joined up than we had realised and share some of the UK Panel's views with our own particular slant on London:

- The political, economic and Citizenship briefings we received made us aware of the size of the problems facing people globally and locally, from environmental pollution to the credit crunch. The London Panel sees the need to understand the problems and their complex causes before leaping to conclusions, and it is the case that politicians are not always to blame. Nonetheless, we should question what they do and what we have learned has made us more eager – and more able – to hold those in power to account.
- The project has also made us more aware of the valuable roles that our schools play in local communities and that this could be even more important as the idea of extended schools becomes a reality. We have also seen that there are many ways in which young people can engage with politics and society and make a contribution, acquiring skills and experience to help build a better London and a better world.
- As young Londoners, we have become more aware of the tremendous importance of the role of the City of London as a national and international centre, of the work of Parliament and political decision-making and of the part played by London's Authorities and institutions in contributing to the wellbeing of society. We have also seen that work is often underway, or schemes are available for young people and others, but we simply do not know about them and are therefore unable to benefit from them. We want to make the case for fewer uncoordinated initiatives and more pan-London ideas with impact that we can all subscribe to.
- We believe that many of our suggestions could make a difference, and are particularly keen to pursue ideas such as WikiLondon, Gangs for Good and London Leading in the 21st Century Citizenship.
- The aim of our work was to:
 - Inform the Mayor of London and London Authorities of areas where young people need support
 - Inform the Mayor of London and London Authorities of practical action young people could take to make a difference.

We believe we have done that. Most of all, this has made us aware of the importance of taking part. It has demonstrated to us, without a doubt, that as young people we have a part to play in shaping the future and that the way to do that it is to get involved. We look forward to the Mayor of London's response to our action proposals and hope there will be an opportunity to move forward with these ideas.

Institute for Citizenship Closing Statement

It has been rewarding for the Institute to witness the value of taking a deliberative approach with the Young People's Panels for London and the UK – an approach that spans economic, political and social aspects of Citizenship. It is vital for the future of democracy that we involve all people, and particularly the next generation of decision makers, in political debate and we have been very impressed with the ideas and enthusiasm of the Young Citizens' London Panel in preparing their Action Agenda for the Mayor of London and London Authorities. We look forward to working with them in the future.



References

Please note: By London Authorities we are referring to all major civic and civil London organisations. This includes, but is not limited to, the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority, the Government Office for London, London Borough Councils and the City of London Corporation.

1. These initiatives would be of special interest to the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority, the Government Office for London, London Borough Councils and the City of London Corporation.
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“The importance of involving young people – all people – in political decision making is greater than ever. Globally and locally we face new and complex challenges, it is important that everyone takes part in the debate.”

**David Dimbleby
President, Institute for Citizenship**



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