

LONDON ASSEMBLY ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



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ASSEMBLY MEMBERS 2023-24

- [Marina Ahmad AM](#)
- [Shaun Bailey AM](#)
(The Lord Bailey of Paddington)
- [Elly Baker AM](#)
- [Siân Berry AM](#)
- [Emma Best AM](#)
- [Andrew Boff AM](#)
- [Hina Bokhari AM](#)
- [Anne Clarke AM](#)
- [Léonie Cooper AM](#)
- [Unmesh Desai AM](#)
- [Tony Devenish AM](#)
- [Len Duvall OBE AM](#)
- [Peter Fortune AM](#)
- [Neil Garratt AM](#)
- [Susan Hall AM](#)
- [Krupesh Hirani AM](#)
- [Joanne McCartney AM](#)
- [Sem Moema AM](#)
- [Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM](#)
- [Zack Polanski AM](#)
- [Keith Prince AM](#)
- [Nick Rogers AM](#)
- [Caroline Russell AM](#)
- [Dr Onkar Sahota AM](#)
- [Sakina Sheikh AM](#)

FOREWORD

Andrew Boff, AM
Chair of the London Assembly 2023-2024



The London Assembly is the voice of London, composed of 25 Members elected at the same time as the Mayor in order to hold him to account and scrutinise his policies.

For 24 years we have been hearing directly from Londoners in our work and 2023/24 was no exception. We are here to ensure that the Mayor spends his budget of over £20 billion wisely and that his plans deliver for Londoners.

This Assembly term was shorter than usual due to elections being delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As you can see from reading this report, we achieved a lot in the three years (instead of the usual four) that we had available to us!

The 2023-24 year was an important one, due to the May 2024 elections for the next Mayor and Assembly Members.

Throughout 2023-24, the Assembly regularly heard from those living in the capital, and investigated the issues that matter most to them.

During this Assembly year, we focussed quite specifically on two critical issues for Londoners: problems that predominantly affect **young people** and the **cost-of-living emergency**.

My annual Chair's event brought together young people from all over the capital. Throughout the year, I concentrated on engaging with young Londoners – whether that was through meetings with the London Youth Assembly to hear their views or ensuring Assembly Committees heard directly from young Londoners as part of their investigations.

The reception at City Hall celebrated young Londoners and their contribution to our great capital, with invitations extended to young people across the city and organisations that work with them. There was an allocation of three places per organisation for people under the age of 25 years old. We featured musical performances from young Londoners and held a panel discussion to hear from young Londoners about what they needed from the next Mayor of London and London Assembly. There was also a chance to meet and network with other young people and the organisations that represent them.

During the year, London Assembly committees also shone a spotlight on home ownership for young people, how London's youth have been affected by violence in our city, understanding the causes of violence affecting young Londoners and how police can gain the trust and confidence of young people in London.

We had a brilliant session with the London Youth Assembly where Members gave their insights on preventing violence and protecting young people, as well as young people's views on spending priorities for the Mayor's 2024/25 Budget.

We set up a Cost-of-Living Working Group because of the significant impact the crisis has had financially, physically, and mentally on Londoners.

Meeting and talking with the people of the capital was imperative to understand how a joined-up approach could help with the cost of living, so we put Londoners at the heart of our investigation.

We held a 'Cost of Living Conference' at City Hall, bringing together over 80 individuals, including organisations and those with lived experience.

Presentations and panels were followed by roundtable discussions with partner organisations including the Centre for London, Thrive LDN, Citizens Advice and the Policy Institute, Kings College London.

The result of our investigation was a series of recommendations to both the Mayor and government which we will encourage them to implement.

Our work programmes for the coming Assembly year will not forget this issue and we will continue to keep an eye on the financial, physical, and mental wellbeing of all Londoners.

We are well into the swing of this Assembly year, and Londoners continue to be our focus. We want to hear from you, seek your views, listen to your suggestions, and consult you on our priorities. Calls for Evidence offer businesses, academics and charities the opportunity to feed into our investigations. Residents can take part in surveys that we publish, so please take time to participate in your London Government, and help us to make a difference to every Londoner's life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Boff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Boff AM



CITY HALL

NO ENTRY

WHAT THE LONDON ASSEMBLY DOES

The London Assembly is a crucial check on the Mayor of London's powers. As the most powerful directly elected politician in the UK, the Mayor must be held publicly and democratically accountable.

The Assembly examines the Mayor's decisions and actions to ensure promises to Londoners are delivered; and the money he controls, collected from Londoners, is wisely spent.

The 25 London **Assembly Members** are elected every four years, at the same time as the Mayor of London. The 2020 election was suspended until 2021 due to the pandemic. Eleven Assembly Members represent the whole capital, and 14 are elected by constituencies. The Assembly holds the Mayor and mayoral advisers to account by publicly examining policies and programmes through committee meetings, plenary sessions, site visits and investigations.

In addition, the Assembly questions the Mayor ten times a year at Mayor's Question Time.

The Mayor must also consult Assembly Members before producing statutory strategies and the multibillion-pound budget for the GLA Group. The Assembly can reject the Mayor's strategies and amend the draft budget if a majority of two-thirds agrees to do so.

Assembly meetings are open to the public, so Londoners can stay informed about the activities of the Mayor and the Assembly.

As well as examining the Mayor's actions and decisions, Assembly Members act as champions for Londoners by investigating issues that are important to the capital.

Assembly investigations are carried out by cross-party committees that cover vital areas such as transport; policing; housing and planning; the economy; health; and the environment. The Assembly can press for changes to national, Mayoral, or local policy.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



Cost of Living Conference

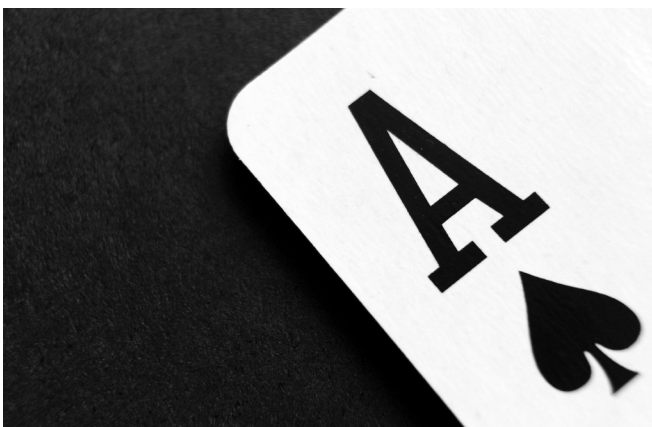
The London Assembly Cost of Living Working Group – made up of four Assembly Members from different political groups – was set up in 2022, in response to concerns about rising living costs for Londoners. As part of its work the Group heard from a wide range of organisations and individuals, including charities and third-sector organisations, academics, and Londoners themselves.

WATCH VIDEO



Young Londoners

The London Assembly focussed its 2023-24 work programme around young Londoners. Their views were sought throughout several investigations – none more so than the Housing Committee's investigation into young Londoners' access to homeownership. The Committee's survey received over 500 responses from young Londoners, and these were directly input into the Committee's report. Watch the video to see the challenges three young Londoners face with accessing housing in the capital.



The health implications of gambling addiction

The Health Committee carried out an investigation into the health implications relating to gambling addiction. It heard from Londoners directly affected by gambling harms, and produced a video with the Londoners who gave evidence to the Committee.

▲ **Top:** Andrew Boff at the Cost of Living Conference at City Hall.

Holding the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to account

The Police and Crime Committee continued to hold the MPS to account, using its work programme for 2023-24 to focus on the progress made by the MPS and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) since the Baroness Casey Review. The Committee also questioned the MPS in response to the Angiolini Inquiry, following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard by a serving MPS police officer.



Retrofit vs Rebuild

Following an investigation by the Planning and Regeneration Committee in 2022-23, the Committee held a launch at City Hall for its report, Retrofit vs Rebuild: Reducing Carbon in the Built Environment. It welcomed over 70 key stakeholders and guests to London's Living Room. At the launch, attendees discussed the recommendations of the report, and how each stakeholder would help push forward and implement the recommendations.



▲ **Bottom:** Chair of the Planning Committee, Sakina Sheikh AM, hosting the Retrofit vs Rebuild report launch at City Hall.

YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24, London Assembly Committees ran:



65
investigations

This included:



96
Committee meetings



11
site visits

We heard from:



over **400**
guests giving oral
evidence



9
Calls for Evidence/
surveys

We published:



19
reports



46
letters



399
recommendations

LONDON YOUTH ASSEMBLY

The LYA is a body formed to bring together representatives from different youth forums across London, to create positive change for young people.

Getting young Londoners engaged and involved in the running of their city is an important objective for the London Assembly. These young Londoners are enthusiastic about bringing issues that matter to them to the forefront of local politics.

The LYA holds quarterly meetings in the Chamber at City Hall. These meetings focus on matters of importance to young Londoners. Partnered with Assembly Members, the LYA will coordinate issues, promote campaigns and discuss key themes across London as they affect young people.

The LYA is composed of representatives, who also take part in four sub-regional groups:

- **North East:** Barking and Dagenham; City of London; Enfield; Hackney; Haringey; Havering; Islington; Newham; Redbridge; Tower Hamlets; and Waltham Forest
- **North West:** Barnet; Brent; Camden; Ealing; Hammersmith and Fulham; Harrow; Hillingdon; Westminster; and Kensington and Chelsea
- **South West:** Croydon; Hounslow; Kingston; Merton; Richmond; Sutton; and Wandsworth
- **South East:** Bexley; Bromley; Greenwich; Lambeth; Lewisham; and Southwark.



▲ London Youth Assembly.

The Chair of the LYA for 2023–24 was Margaret Johnson.

The LYA was given the opportunity to input into live investigations. These included the Police and Crime Committee’s investigation into preventing violence and protecting young people; and investigations into young people’s considerations on spending priorities.

Members met with the Chair of the London Assembly, Andrew Boff AM, to hear about the work of the Assembly, and reflections on some of the youth-focussed projects.

Members attended the Chair’s event as part of a panel discussion to hear from young Londoners about what they need from the next Mayor of London and London Assembly.

PLENARY

Plenary meetings are an opportunity for the whole Assembly to come together to discuss critical issues facing the capital; and to call for change on the issues that matter to Londoners. The Assembly uses its Plenary sessions to hold certain bodies to account, including Transport for London (TfL), London Fire Brigade (LFB), the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC).

After these sessions, Assembly Members debate and vote on motions put forward by different Groups or Members. These motions could relate to something topical in the news, or issues that matter to Londoners.

In May, the Assembly formally considered the LLDC's proposed boundary change to reduce the area that it covers. Under this change, the area would comprise only the core part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park estate in which LLDC owns, manages or operates land.

For the June Plenary session, the Assembly questioned key infrastructure stakeholders on what London's most pressing infrastructure needs are. Guests included TfL, GLA officers, Thames Water, the Environment Agency, London Councils and BusinessLDN.

The Assembly held its annual Plenary session on TfL. It questioned the Mayor (in his capacity as Chair of TfL) and Andy Lord (Commissioner of TfL) on how TfL is delivering for London; and what its priorities and challenges are for the forthcoming year.

In September, the Assembly looked at the issues facing refugees in London, and what work the Mayor is doing to support them. It spoke with senior GLA officials and the Refugee Council to outline what further work is needed to keep refugees safe.

The Assembly's annual Plenary session for policing took place in November. Members questioned the Mayor and Sir Mark Rowley QPM, Commissioner of the MPS, on how the MPS is delivering for Londoners, amongst the backdrop of the Baroness Casey Review and the 'New Met for London' plan.

In December, the Assembly held a housing Plenary session, looking at the delivery of housing in London, including housebuilding and building safety, housing supply, the private rented sector, and the London Plan.

In January, the Assembly questioned the Mayor, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, and the Interim Chief Finance Officer on the Mayor's Draft Consolidated Budget for 2024-25.

The annual fire Plenary session took place in February, giving Members the opportunity to question the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) on LFB's priorities and challenges for the forthcoming year.

The final Plenary session of the Assembly year saw the LLDC and the OPDC questioned on how the two functional bodies are delivering for Londoners.

MOTIONS

These are agreed statements and calls for action from the Assembly on issues facing Londoners. Amongst the highlights this year are the following:

**London Assembly
urges Arts Council
England to protect
London's opera
offering**

**Action needed
to avert complete
climate disaster**

**Action needed to
reduce the danger
on London's roads**

**Mayor urged to
revalue hydrogen
supply for London's
businesses**

**Scrap the two-child
benefit cap to
reduce child poverty
in London**

**Mayor urged to
investigate ULEZ
fines for EU citizens**

**Mayor urged to host
arts and culture
performances
at City Hall**

**Calls for repairs
and reopening of
Hammersmith Bridge**

MAYOR'S QUESTION TIME

The Assembly questions the Mayor, in public, ten times a year as part of its role of holding him to account. Questions put to the Mayor by the Assembly Members cover the full range of the Mayor's responsibilities (including police, the fire service, regeneration, and transport). They can also range into almost any issue of concern to Londoners.

Questions from Assembly Members that are not answered at the meeting are given written answers. These are published on the London Assembly website within a week of the meeting.

In total, 4,508 questions Mayor's questions were submitted in 2023-24. These questions – and the answers received – are an important part of ensuring Members are able to pursue matters of interest on behalf of their constituents and Londoners more widely in a transparent and open way.

▼ Mayor's Question Time.

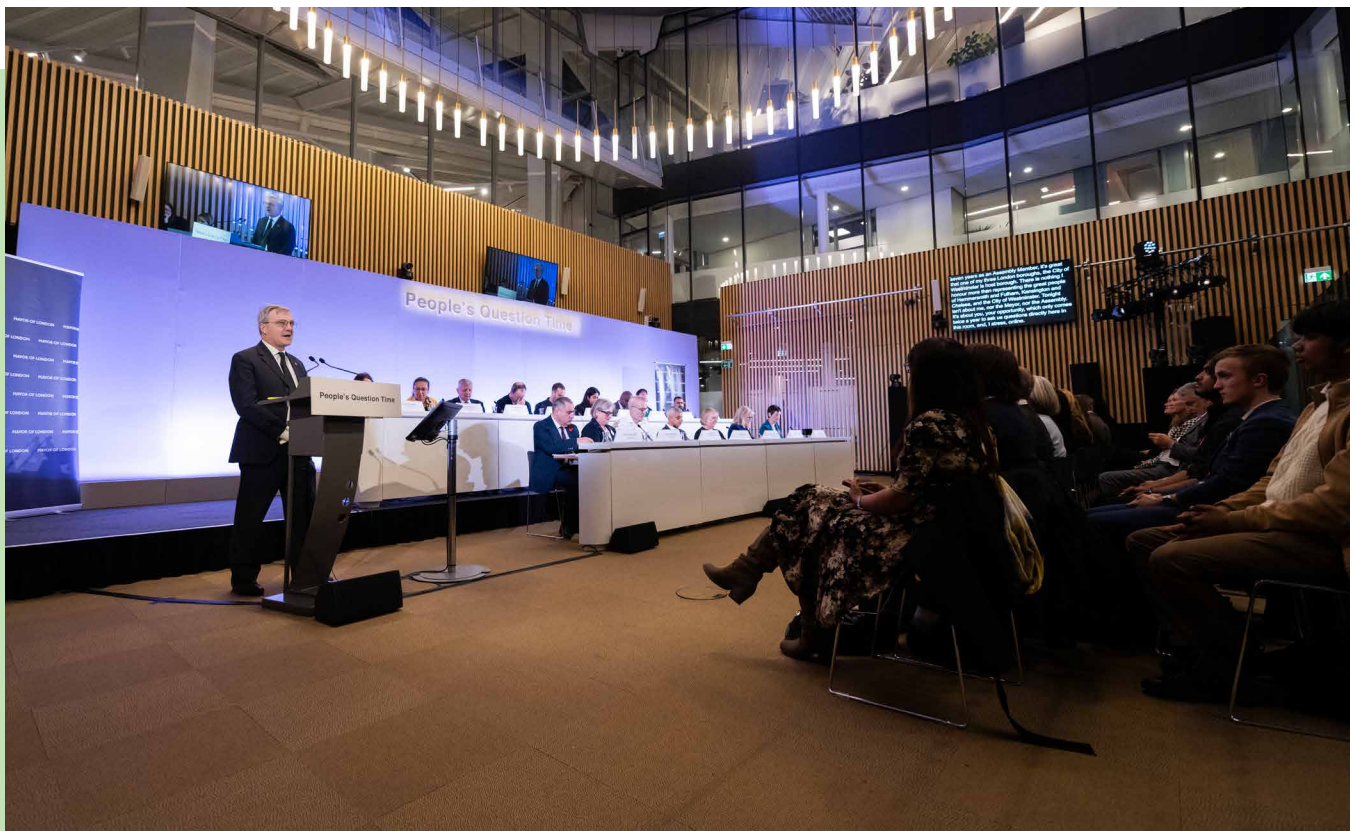


PEOPLE'S QUESTION TIME

People's Question Time (PQT) is a chance for Londoners to ask the London Assembly and the Mayor about the issues affecting them. It is a statutory event that we run twice each year, usually covering topics including transport, policing and safety, and housing.

The first PQT of 2023-24 was held in November at City Hall. Tony Devenish AM chaired the event, which was originally planned to be held in his constituency of Westminster.

In February 2024, PQT was held virtually, hosted by Nick Rogers AM. The event saw Londoners submit questions in writing and through a video link.



▲ People's Question Time.

IN THE MEDIA

Highlights from the news:

BBC Home News Sport

NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | More

War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics

England | Local News | London

Sadiq Khan under pressure to ban gambling ads on Tube

15 March



[The Health Committee's Gambling investigation](#)
- The BBC and The Evening Standard

The Standard

NEWS | LONDON

Young Londoners on low incomes spend 77 per cent of earnings on housing, report finds

The capital's young are said in the report to 'face an almost impossible situation of high rents and house prices that are out of kilter with incomes'



THE AVERAGE LONDON HOUSE PRICE IN JUNE 2023 WAS £528,000
PA ARCHIVE

[Young Londoners on low incomes spend 77 per cent of earnings on housing, report finds](#)
- The Evening Standard

BBC Home News Sport

NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | More

War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics

England | Local News | London

Met Police: Not enough progress after Casey review - deputy mayor

6 March

The Casey Review



[Met Police: Not enough progress after Casey review - deputy mayor](#)
- The BBC

BBC Home News Sport

NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | More

War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics

England | Local News | London

Cost of living: Londoners shower at leisure centres to save on bills

22 October 2023



[Cost of living: Londoners shower at leisure centres to save on bills](#)
- The BBC

The Standard

NEWS | LONDON

Thames Water boss: I would 'take a dip' in 'fully treated' sewage water

The question was asked in relation to Thames Water's abstraction plans at Teddington Weir



LIB DEM AM HINA BOKHARI (LEFT) CHALLENGED THAMES WATER'S INTERIM JOINT CEO CATHRYN ROSS (RIGHT) TO 'TAKE A DIP' IN 'FULLY TREATED SEWAGE WATER'

LONDON ASSEMBLY WEBCAST

[Thames Water boss: I would 'take a dip' in 'fully treated' sewage water](#)
- The Evening Standard

EXPRESS Discount codes Puzzles Horoscopes Express Rated

HOME NEWS POLITICS ROYAL SHOWBIZ & TV SPORT COMMENT FINANCE TRAVEL LIFE

LIFE CARS TECH GARDEN PROPERTY FOOD DIETS HEALTH STYLE EXPRESS VHS

Pay-per-mile car tax schemes must address 'serious concerns over privacy'

A new analysis from the London Assembly has highlighted industry leaders are concerned about privacy if a new pay-per-mile system was launched.

By **LUKE CHILLINGSWORTH**, Cars Reporter
08:27, Wed, Mar 13, 2024 | UPDATED: 08:36, Wed, Mar 13, 2024

[Pay-per-mile car tax schemes must address 'serious concerns over privacy'](#)
- The Daily Express



COST OF LIVING WORKING GROUP

Cost of Living Working Group

Chair – Len Duvall OBE AM, Labour

The London Assembly **Cost of Living Working Group** – made up of four Assembly Members from different political parties – was set up in 2022 in response to concerns about rising living costs for Londoners.

As part of its work, the Group heard from a wide range of organisations and individuals, including charities and third-sector organisations, academics, and Londoners themselves.

As part of the investigation, the Working Group carried out several site visits, including:

- [Highams Park Food Aid](#) in north London, to speak with volunteers and service users about the services provided by the food hub; and how the cost of living has impacted volunteers and service users
- [Debt Free Advice](#) in east London, to hear how the number of people seeking help has increased in recent years, and how the staff are supporting Londoners with their debts
- [Sacred Heart RC Primary School](#) in south London, to speak with teachers and pupils about the Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) programme, and how that has impacted children and parents.

The Working Group held a [Cost of Living Conference](#) at City Hall, bringing together over 80 invitees to discuss the cost of living in London. including organisations and people with lived experience.

The conference consisted of presentations and panels followed by discussions around tables, facilitated by an Assembly Member. Partner organisations included the Policy Institute at King's College London; Thrive LDN; Centre for London; and Citizens Advice.

The visits and conference carried out by the Working Group led to [a report with 12 recommendations to the Mayor and Government to tackle the cost-of-living crisis](#).

Recommendations called for the Mayor to take steps to ensure that Londoners have the same access to mental health support across different boroughs, and to provide information for frontline organisations about support and funding; and for the Government to end section 21 evictions.

▼ The Cost of Living Conference at City Hall.



YOUR HEALTH

Health Committee

Chair – Onkar Sahota AM, Labour

Deputy Chair – Caroline Russell AM, City Hall Greens

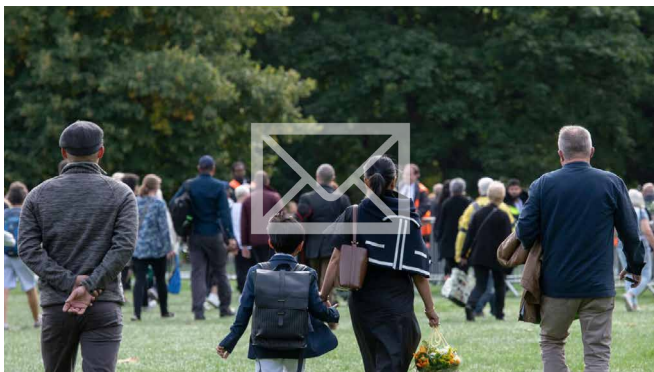
The **Health Committee** reviews health and wellbeing issues for Londoners with a particular focus on the Mayor's Health Inequalities Strategy (HIS).

The Health Committee began the year by holding a one-off meeting on trauma-informed approaches to youth violence. This is an approach that the GLA's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) has adopted through some of its funded programmes. The Committee also visited St Mary's Hospital in Paddington, and spoke to staff supporting young people who have been impacted by violence, in a trauma-informed way. The Committee's subsequent letter to the Mayor made three recommendations on how these forms of interventions could be strengthened.

with referrals to specialist eating-disorder services, ***in London having increased significantly amongst both children and adults in recent years.***

This two-part investigation also gave Committee Members an insight into people's access to, experiences of, and outcomes from eating-disorder services in London. As part of the investigation, the Committee carried out a survey of Londoners with experience of an eating disorder, or of supporting someone with an eating disorder.

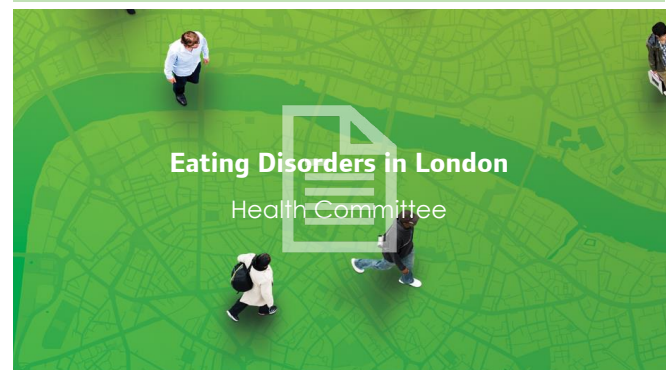
READ THE LETTER



The Committee followed this with an investigation into eating disorders in London. Its investigation looked at the prevalence and causes of eating disorders; the role of early intervention services; and what the Mayor can do to help,

The Committee's report, , Eating Disorders in London, called for the Mayor to advocate for improvements in the provision of the capital's eating-disorder treatment services, amid concerns that services are struggling to cope with demand.

READ REPORT



WATCH VIDEO



The Committee then held an investigation into the health impacts of gambling in London. The two-part investigation allowed the Committee to hear from health experts, gambling safety charities, and Londoners who have experienced firsthand the health impacts gambling can have.

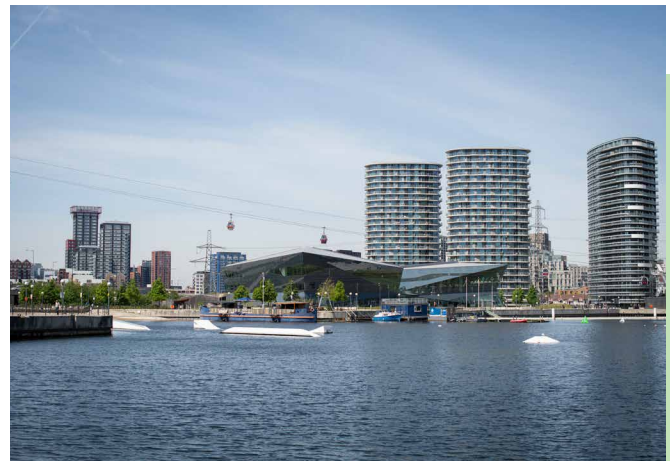
The Committee also carried out a call for evidence as part of the investigation into gambling harms. This helped shape the Committee's report, *Gambling-Related Harms in London*, which included eight recommendations for reducing gambling-related harms in London, including calling on the Mayor to ban all gambling adverts across the TfL network.

The Committee rounded off the Assembly term by questioning the GLA Health team on the actions taken by the Mayor to implement the HIS Implementation Plan during the current Mayoral term.

READ REPORT



In 2018, the Mayor published the HIS. This was updated in the HIS Implementation Plan 2021-24, published in December 2021. In April 2023, the GLA published the 2022 annual report for the HIS, which provides the most recent update on progress in implementing the strategy.



HEALTH - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Health Committee ran:



4
investigations

This included:



6
Committee meetings



1
site visit

We heard from:



37
guests giving oral
evidence



135
written responses
received to three
surveys/Calls for Evidence

We published:



3
reports



1
letter



33
recommendations

YOUR MONEY

Economy Committee

Chair – Marina Ahmed AM, Labour

Deputy Chair – Andrew Boff AM, City Hall Conservatives

The **Economy Committee** investigates economic issues that matter to Londoners.

WATCH VIDEO



The Economy Committee started the year with a two-part investigation looking at the costs and levels of provision of childcare in London, and the impact this has on children and parents alike.

Across the two evidence-gathering sessions, the Committee heard from organisations including Pregnant Then Screwed, Gingerbread, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, Early Years Alliance, and National Day Nurseries Association.

The Committee heard that London has the highest childcare costs in the country. It also found that parents in London struggle to access childcare to a greater extent than in other regions in England. This was the experience of many parents or carers who responded to a survey on

childcare conducted by the Committee, with some describing availability as “limited” or with long waiting lists for places.

This led to the Committee publishing its report, [Early years childcare in London](#), and calling on the Government to review childcare funding rates for London. The Committee recommended that a review of the sector in London, and an awareness campaign to recruit workers into the sector. It also recommended that the Government should help provide information to parents on the availability of childcare.

The Committee then set out to investigate the current state of London’s labour market in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. It focused on the impact that the pandemic had on the city’s labour market, effects on employment and unemployment rates, and levels of economic inactivity.

As part of the investigation, the Committee held a formal meeting at City Hall on 13 July 2023, where it heard from external experts on the pandemic’s impact on the labour market. The investigation also included an informal roundtable discussion with key stakeholders including think tanks, trade unions and employment agencies on 13 September 2023.



This investigation led to the Committee’s report, [London’s Post-Pandemic Labour Market and Working Practices](#) – which included 14 recommendations, including calling on the Government to devolve the Apprenticeship Levy to London; and on the Mayor to continue lobbying the Government to do this. The report also highlighted the dramatic impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on London’s labour market.

The Committee then carried out an investigation into child poverty and the impact of the Mayor’s Universal Free School Meals Programme programme. This included two evidence-gathering sessions, with the Committee hearing from organisations including 4in10, Child Poverty Action Group, Pecan and Trust for London.

The investigation found that while London is one of the wealthiest cities in the world, a third of children in the capital grow up in poverty, and parts of London have some of the highest child poverty rates in the country. This led to the Committee’s report, [Child Poverty and Free School Meals](#), being published in March, with nine recommendations to the Mayor. The Committee called on the Mayor to publish a child poverty strategy for London. It also recommended using the findings of the evaluation into his Universal Free School Meals programme as an evidence base for a long-term funding settlement from the Government for Universal Free School Meals in London.

The Committee’s next investigation looked at the impact of remote working on central London (specifically the impact on London’s Central Activities Zone and Canary Wharf) following the pandemic.

The Committee held a meeting in City Hall in December 2023, with guests including BusinessLDN, the GLA and the London Property Alliance. Members of the Committee heard that workers have gradually returned to the office since the pandemic; and that this return to the office is vital for the economic success of central London. This culminated in a letter from the Committee to the Mayor in March; it contained four recommendations for increasing footfall in central London during work hours.

WATCH VIDEO



READ THE LETTER



The Committee's next investigation looked at the impact of Brexit on London's economy. This included a formal meeting at City Hall, with experts from the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford and the GLA.

The investigation found that Brexit has undoubtedly created challenges for London's economy, but it also presents opportunities. This led to the Committee writing to the Mayor in March with four recommendations to help London's economy thrive post-Brexit.

READ THE LETTER



The Committee's final investigation looked at the impact of late payments on small businesses, and what factors are leading to small businesses receiving late payments.

The investigation consisted of a formal meeting in City Hall in February, with experts from the Federation of Small Businesses, the Office of the Small Business Commissioner and the GLA.

The Committee heard that, whilst there is some evidence to suggest the picture has improved over the last decade, late payments remain a widespread problem, harming London's small businesses and stifling investment. This culminated in the Committee writing to the Mayor with four recommendations for protecting small businesses from late payments in London.

READ THE LETTER



ECONOMY - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Economy Committee ran:



6
investigations

This included:



10
Committee meetings

We heard from:



47
guests giving oral evidence

We published:



3
reports



3
letters



43
recommendations

Budget and Performance Committee

Chairman – Neil Garratt AM, City Hall Conservatives

Deputy Chair – Krupesh Hirani AM, Labour

The **Budget and Performance Committee** examines the Mayor's draft budget before it is voted on by Assembly Members. The Mayor's budget totals over £20 billion, so the Assembly's work is crucial in ensuring that the best spending decisions are made for the city.

The Budget and Performance Committee investigated the 2024-25 budget plans for the whole GLA Group, which encompasses the core GLA, TfL, MOPAC, LFB, the LLDC and the OPDC.

This year saw the delivery of a new annual budget-scrutiny process. This included the following new meetings:

- a thematic meeting looking at the Mayor's proposed housing interventions planned for 2024-25 across the GLA Group
- a non-political session with GLA officers covering the GLA Group
- inviting a panel of external experts to two meetings - at the start and end of the budget process - to review the Mayor's Consultation budget
- a shorter, more focused session with the Mayor in January.

Outputs were structured into a series of letters instead of the single traditional comprehensive consultation response. This meant the committee could respond more directly and quickly on specific topics, while the budget process was ongoing.

To start the year, the Committee met with senior representatives from the GLA, TfL, MOPAC and the MPS to explore the GLA Group's 2022-23 performance. It assessed the implications for the delivery of the 2023-24 GLA Group Budget and the budget-setting process for 2024-25.

It then welcomed external financial experts, including Professor Tony Travers from the London School of Economics; Antonia Jennings, Chief Executive Officer at Centre for London; and Professor Jagjit S. Chadha, Director of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research. Panellists considered the effectiveness of the Mayor's budget priorities and discussed future financial trends and challenges ahead of the 2024-25 budget.

The annual budget-scrutiny process began in November 2023, with a meeting covering the Mayor's 2024-25 Budget proposals for the GLA Core. This was followed by meetings, running between December 2023 and January 2024, looking at the Mayor's 2024-25 budget proposals for the rest of the GLA Group.



READ THE LETTERS



Later in January, the Committee published a series of letters following its review of the Mayor's budget proposals. These letters covered the Committee's concerns around the Mayor's budget proposals, including errors in the presentation of staffing costs at the GLA; a lack of clarity around the timing of the

adoption of level-three emissions in the GLA's Climate Budget; a lack of detail around how the Mayor's budget proposals would deliver the MPS Commissioners' New Met for London plan; and a lack of detail around the delivery of the Mayor's Affordable Homes Programme.

The Mayor published a Draft Consolidated Budget in January 2024. The Committee used this session to scrutinise key budget decisions made by the Mayor, including the implementation of a fares freeze across the TfL network; and a trial of off-peak fares all day on Fridays, at a combined cost of £147 million for the budget year.

The Mayor published his Final Draft Consolidated Budget in February 2024. The Mayor's amendments to the budget were considered at a final Budget and Performance Committee meeting in February 2024, with the Mayor.



BUDGET - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Budget & Performance Committee ran:



4
investigations

This included:



12
Committee meetings

We heard from:



50
guests giving oral evidence

We published:



8
letters



37
recommendations

YOUR SAFETY

Police and Crime Committee

Chair – Caroline Russell AM, City Hall Greens

Deputy Chairman – Susan Hall AM, City Hall Conservatives

The **Police and Crime Committee** raises policing concerns from around the capital with the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and the Metropolitan Police Service.

Following a troubling period for the MPS, a key priority for the Police and Crime Committee has been scrutinising how the service is rebuilding trust and confidence.

The Committee holds regular scrutiny sessions with senior representatives from the MPS and MOPAC. In June 2023, the Committee held its first question-and-answer session of the year, with Assistant Commissioner Louise Rolfe and Assistant Commissioner Ade Adelekan, alongside Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

The Committee focussed all its Q&A sessions around the Casey Review throughout the year, examining the progress made by the MPS in response to Baroness Casey's review, which found the MPS to be institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic.

For its themed sessions, the Committee started the year looking at local policing. The Committee explored local policing structures in London and how the MPS's Basic Command Units are performing, including how local policing structures affect efficiency and accountability in the MPS; and what the MPS is doing to increase trust and confidence in local policing.

Another key area of focus for the Committee was preventing violence and protecting young people. London's VRU highlights poverty, inequality, deprivation and lack of opportunity as some of the key drivers of violence affecting young people. In the first meeting of the investigation in September, the Committee discussed violence affecting young people in London; and the impact of the VRU's initiatives on protecting young people.

In the second meeting of this investigation in October, the Committee examined the impact of interactions with the MPS on the trust and confidence of young people in London, including the role of safer schools officers and the use of tactics such as stop and search.



The work across this investigation culminated in the Committee's report, Preventing Violence and Protecting Young People, which was published in March. This outlined why the MPS must prioritise the safeguarding of children and young people who have been affected by violence as it continues its journey to fix the foundations of the MPS.



The Committee's recommendations included calling for the MPS to set out a plan to train every frontline officer in youth engagement by the end of December 2024, as it embeds its child-first approach; the Children and Young People's Strategy; and A New Met for London (the Committee looked specifically at this last area on several occasions).

In November, the Committee explored how the MPS investigates collisions on London's roads, in light of the Mayor's 'Vision Zero' action plan. This aims to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on London's transport network.

Members of the Committee heard from road safety charities, personal injury lawyers and those who work with victims of serious injury collisions on how the MPS currently investigates such collisions.

In January, the Committee questioned the MPS on how it approaches and responds to serious injury collisions, including how it defines a serious injury collision.

The Committee published its report, Police investigation of serious injury collisions in London, with 11 recommendations for the MPS and the Mayor to improve the current investigative process when responding to serious injury road collisions. The Committee's recommendations included for the MPS to develop an action plan for how it will ensure all officers involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions are equipped with the most up-to-date guidance and training.



In January, the Committee explored money laundering in London. At the meeting, Members heard from specialist MPS officers on the challenges the MPS faces in preventing and tackling money laundering in London.

Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the MPS Commissioner with recommendations to reduce and prevent money laundering in London – including recruiting to vacant staffing positions, and continuing to work with stakeholders to increase awareness in London.

READ THE LETTER



In February, the Committee began its investigation into the rollout of the MPS and NHS 'Right Care, Right Person' scheme. This focussed on making sure that the right agency responds to mental health-related calls, rather than the police being the default first responder.

Members heard from lead officers from the MPS; the NHS; the London Ambulance Service (LAS); and mental health experts including MIND and the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Following the investigation, [the Committee wrote to the MPS Commissioner, NHS England and LAS](#) with six recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the 'Right Care, Right Person' scheme, including developing and publishing metrics for gauging the success of the scheme.

Trust and confidence in the MPS formed a topic in the final formal meeting of the year, held in March. At this meeting, the Committee questioned the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime one year on from the Baroness Casey Review.

The 2022 review found the MPS to be institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic. The National Black Policing Association, the Independent Office for Police Conduct and MOPAC also attended the meeting.

Members questioned panellists on the progress made by the MPS and MOPAC in addressing the findings of the Baroness Casey Review and the work of the London Policing Board. They also discussed the Angiolini Inquiry into how an off-duty police officer was able to abduct, rape and murder Sarah Everard.



▲ Members of the Committee visiting Cranstoun Arrest Referral Service with West Midlands Police

POLICE - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Police & Crime Committee ran:



7 investigations

This included:



16 Committee meetings



2 site visits

We heard from:



63 guests giving oral evidence



29 written responses to two Calls for Evidence

We published:



2 reports



5 letters



42 recommendations

Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee

Chair – Anne Clarke AM, Labour

Deputy Chairman – Susan Hall AM, City Hall Conservatives

The **FREP Committee** reviews the London Fire Commissioner's priorities and objectives.

The FREP Committee focused its attention on actions taken by London Fire Brigade to transform itself and implement significant change following critical reports. These include the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report, published in October 2019; inspection reports published in 2019 and 2022; and the Independent Culture Review of LFB published in November 2022. LFB was placed under 'special measures' in December 2022 by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

In May, the FREP Committee investigated LFB's training, including delivery and management of the 25-year Babcock training contract; firefighter development and driver training; and resourcing of planned improvements and upgrades.

In June, the Committee looked into emerging fire risks with a focus on the significant increase in fires caused by defective lithium-ion batteries, mostly those used for e-scooters and adapted

e-bikes. The Committee heard how unregulated batteries and accessories were largely the cause of up to two fires a week, with three deaths occurring in London in 2023. Following the meeting, the Committee wrote to the Government calling for regulation of online sales of lithium-ion batteries and accessories. In November, the Committee also responded to the Government's consultation, Smarter Regulation: UK Product Safety Review.

In July, the Committee investigated how LFB is adapting to a changing climate, in light of its review of the major incident declared in July 2022, arising from heatwave fires. It also examined action being taken by Thames Water and LFB to manage flash flooding; and progress made by LFB on meeting the Mayor's Net Zero target by 2030. This led to the Committee writing to the Deputy Commissioner about the unavailability of fire appliances and fireboats when responding to the major incident.

READ THE LETTER



READ THE LETTER





In September, the Committee looked at the safety of London’s high-rises, six years on from the Grenfell Tower fire; and the start-up of the new Building Safety Regulator. It was around this time that Government was taking action to address the problem of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete in schools.

As part of this investigation, members questioned the Deputy Mayor for Housing; the Deputy Mayor for Planning; senior officials from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; the Building Safety Regulator’s office; and senior GLA and LFB staff. These questions focused on the new building safety regulatory framework and its impact on LFB; and what the GLA and the Government are doing to press building owners and managers to progress remediation.

In November, the Committee scrutinised how LFB has improved representation, progression and facilities for women in the fire service.

The Independent Culture Review of LFB found evidence that the fire service is institutionally misogynist and racist; and that there are dangerous levels of ingrained prejudice against women. The review by Nazir Afzal OBE, published in November 2022, found that complaints about bullying, prejudice and abuse were predominantly made by women.

The Committee questioned the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, the Deputy Commissioner

for LFB, the Fire Brigades Union, GMB Union representatives, the Chair of Women in the Fire Service, and female LFB staff on the progress made in this area in the year since the report was published.

In December, the Committee investigated progress made by LFB in the year since Nazir Afzal OBE’s Independent Culture Review of LFB was published. The Committee questioned the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, the LFC and the Fire Brigades Union on progress made on the recommendations made in the review.

This led to the Committee writing to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) with several questions regarding the progress of the organisation since the independent review, including about a national barring register for firefighters dismissed for misconduct.

READ THE LETTER



In January, the Committee investigated the effectiveness of the Community Risk Management Plan –LFB’s overarching strategy and plan – in representing LFB’s plans for 2023-29, and ongoing consultation and engagement since it was published in January 2023.

The Committee closed out the year with a question-and-answer session with the LFC on how LFB is adapting to climate change, the culture of LFB and building safety plans; and managing the risks of lithium-ion batteries.

FREP - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Fire, Resilience & Emergency Planning Committee ran:



9 investigations

This included:



8 Committee meetings



1 site visit

We heard from:



32 guests giving oral evidence

We published:



1 report



5 letters



11 recommendations

YOUR TRAVEL

Transport Committee

Chairman – Nick Rogers AM, City Hall Conservatives (May 2023 – July 2023)

Keith Prince AM, City Hall Conservatives (July 2023 – April 2024)

Deputy Chairman – Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, London Assembly Liberal Democrats

The **Transport Committee** presses the Mayor for improvements to the capital's travel network.

The Transport Committee began the year with an investigation into river transport services in London. The formal meeting in June saw Members of the Committee question TfL, Thames Clippers and the Port of London Authority on the challenges and opportunities of using river transport in the capital.

The Committee also boarded a Thames Clipper in November, where the Chief Executive Officer and the Head of Business Development at Thames Clippers gave Members a presentation on light freight on the river, including a stop to showcase the zero-emission vessels and the Thames Clipper infrastructure project.

Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the Mayor recommending that he appoint a River Commissioner to oversee growth of river transport provision.

In July, the Committee's focus turned to outer London and the transport links available for those living and working in outer London. On 15 July 2023, the Mayor launched the Superloop bus service, consisting of 10 additional orbital bus routes, connecting outer London town centres, hospitals, schools and transport hubs. On 29 August 2023, the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) was expanded across all London boroughs, including outer London.

READ THE LETTER



The Committee's first meeting saw the Deputy Mayor for Transport, TfL officials, London Travel-Watch and two outer London boroughs – Havering and Sutton – answer questions on the challenges outer London residents face; and what work the Mayor is doing to ensure outer London connectivity is suitable for the needs of its residents.

The Committee held the second part of the outer London investigation in September, looking at how rail services differ in outer London, and what impact the ULEZ expansion may have had on outer London boroughs.

Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the Mayor and Government calling on the Mayor to further expand the Superloop bus service, and add more buses and routes to the scheme. The Committee reiterated its stance on station staffing to Government, as part of a consultation by London Travelwatch, amidst discussions around potential ticket office closures, which were subsequently called off.

READ THE LETTER



The Committee then looked at the use of trams in London. London's tram network opened in May 2000. Despite various plans to expand it across the city, there have been no new routes added since, due to funding issues and the impact of the pandemic.

On 9 November 2016, a tram overturned when approaching a sharp curve around Sandilands junction, a stop in a residential area east of Croydon. The tram was travelling at over three times the speed limit. This crash resulted in seven deaths and 61 passenger injuries, 19 of them serious.

In July 2023, TfL was fined £10m, and Tram Operations Limited was fined £4m, for the Croydon tram crash failings. Both had pled guilty to offences under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

Members questioned TfL officials and tram operating companies on the rollout of trams in

London; and what progress, if any, should be made towards increasing the rollout. Members also asked what lessons were learned after the Sandilands crash.

In November, the Committee carried out a two-part investigation into transport safety across London, looking at the risks for drivers and passengers on the TfL network.

In the first formal evidence-gathering session, Members spoke with bus safety campaigners to hear the risk of injury on the transport network. They also heard from a trade union on the fatigue some drivers are dealing with.

The second meeting saw Members of the Committee scrutinise the work of TfL and the British Transport Police in reducing and preventing crime on the network.

This investigation, alongside evidence gathered in the Committee's tram investigation, led to the Committee publishing its report, [Bus, tram and tube safety in London, in March 2024](#). The report made 13 recommendations for the Mayor, TfL and bus operators in London, highlighting the need for TfL and bus operators to change the culture around self-reporting and ensure that fatigue is taken seriously.



▲ Members of the Transport Committee on a site visit to view the Central Line refurbishment programme.

In December, the Committee turned its attention to fare evasion on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR). Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, an estimated £10.9m worth of fares were evaded.

The Committee questioned TfL on fare evasion, as well as potential expansion, with TfL's 2023 business plan highlighting opportunities for expansion on the DLR network.

In January, Members of the Committee investigated the growth of private hire vehicles (PHVs) against a decline in black taxis in London.

Committee Members questioned TfL, PHV operators and the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association on the workforce challenges facing both PHV drivers and taxi drivers. This includes the impact of recent licensing changes and speed limits on the retention of drivers.

This led to the Committee writing to the Mayor in March with eight recommendations. The letter called on TfL to set out an engagement plan for developing the updated Taxi and Private Hire Vision; and the Mayor to work with Government on any legislative changes required to achieve the vision.

READ THE LETTER



In February, the Transport Committee held a question-and-answer session with the TfL Commissioner. The session focussed on the Mayor's Transport Strategy; the impact of the ULEZ expansion on outer London, including traffic flows and public transport use; and TfL's 2024-25 fare freeze, announced as part of the Mayor's Budget.

The Committee rounded out its year in March, with an investigation into the future trends of transport in London.

In recent years there have been many innovations in personal mobility in London – including new forms of micromobility, such as e-scooters and e-bikes, and app-based payment options.

The Committee welcomed TfL, Drone Major Group, the International Transport Forum and the Korea Transport Institute. Members of the Committee questioned guests on what the future of London's public transport network will look like; and how recent technologies could make journeys better for Londoners, and reduce carbon emissions.

They also sought to find out what other emerging technologies could benefit Londoners accessing transport; and which technologies could be implemented in future transport strategies.

The Committee also undertook visits to understand progress of key transport projects affecting Londoners, including a visit to TfL's Acton depot in January to see the refurbishment of Central Line trains, and a visit to the Silvertown tunnel in March to view progress.

In March, the Committee published its report into Road User Charging, after an investigation during the [2022-23 Assembly year](#). Road user charging – also known as congestion charging, road pricing or smart road charging – is, in broad terms, any process whereby motorists are required to pay for driving on public roads.

A Committee call for evidence received over 3,300 responses from individuals and organisations. It identified significant concerns about the prospect of any new scheme, privacy, and the provision of alternative transport to driving. The Committee's report, Future Road User Charging in London, included 11 recommendations for the Mayor, with key principles and steps that should be taken if any future Mayor is to consider further road user charging schemes.

TRANSPORT - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Transport Committee ran:



7
investigations

This included:



10
Committee meetings



2
site visits

We heard from:



54
guests giving oral evidence

We published:



2
reports



6
letters



60
recommendations

London TravelWatch

Officially known as the London Transport Users' Committee, London TravelWatch is the capital's independent transport watchdog. It uses evidence to campaign for improved journeys, and to advocate for all people travelling in London.

London TravelWatch is sponsored and funded by the London Assembly, and is independent from the transport operators. The Assembly also appoints the board members, supported by staff who carry out the day-to-day work. In 2023-24, the Assembly appointed a new Chair for London TravelWatch. The Transport Committee meets with the Chair and Chief Executive twice a year to hear about their priorities and delivery against London TravelWatch's business plan.

London TravelWatch is interested in the passenger experience of all the services operated and licensed by TfL. However, it does not take appeals from individual passengers for taxis, private hire, private car hire or river boat services.

The services it focuses on are:

- London Underground
- London buses
- London Overground
- Elizabeth line
- Docklands Light Railway (DLR)
- Croydon Tramlink
- Dial-a-Ride services
- London River Services
- Woolwich Free Ferry
- taxis
- private hire cars
- most of the major roads in Greater London.



YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Environment Committee

Chair – Leonie Cooper AM, Labour

Deputy Chairman – Zack Polanski AM, City Hall Greens

The **Environment Committee** investigates key environmental issues including the impact of poor air quality on Londoners, access to green spaces and the Mayor's Environment Strategy.

The Environment Committee kicked off its year with a formal meeting in May, looking at community energy in London. Community energy projects bring together a range of stakeholders to provide advice and support to reduce, manage and generate energy in local communities across London.

At the formal meeting, Members heard from the GLA and community energy organisations on the impact of community energy projects in London and what potential there is for further growth in the sector.

The Committee then visited the Leaside Trust as part of its investigation into community energy in London. Operating within an educational framework, the Trust leads activities including

canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding, mountain biking, and Nordic walking. Members were given a tour of the building, which has benefited from a range of energy-efficiency improvements and the installation of renewable energy.

This investigation led to the Committee publishing its report, *Community Energy*, in January. This included eight recommendations for the Mayor and Government to improve and increase community energy projects in London. A key recommendation called on the Mayor to: support London boroughs to develop their own community energy funds through carbon offset funds; and for the Mayor to provide clear examples and case studies in future guidance and monitoring reports about how this can be done.

WATCH VIDEO



READ REPORT



In July, the Committee began its investigation into London's rivers and waters. At the time of the formal meeting, news broke that Thames Water was facing debts of billions, and was in urgent funding talks with Government.

At the formal meeting, the Committee questioned then Interim Chief Executive of Thames Water, Cathryn Ross, over the company's future, and on several pollution incidents. These include Thames Water being fined for discharging 2 billion litres of raw sewage in the River Thames over two days in 2020.

The second formal meeting for the investigation took place in September, looking at how the Thames could be used to produce renewable energy for London. It explored a range of other topics as well, including water quality; river emissions; and progress on the Tideway tunnel and towards a new Thames Barrier.

The Committee's water investigation also included two site visits. The first was to the Thames Barrier, with the Environment Agency and the Port of London Authority; the second was to the Mogden sewage treatment works in west London, with Thames Water.

This investigation culminated in the Committee's report, published in March: [Water and London's Rivers](#). This includes 21 recommendations to the Mayor, Thames Water and the Government,



▲ The Environment Committee on a site visit to Mogden sewage treatment works.

covering four main areas; drinking water and water scarcity; wastewater and pollution; flooding; and maximising opportunities to create a sustainable water system.

In October, the Committee looked at the skills gap for green jobs in London, and how this would impact on the Mayor's preferred pathway for achieving net zero-carbon in London by 2030. Members of the Committee quizzed the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, along with GLA officers and green skills organisations, on where the gaps are, and how effective the Mayor's existing strategies and programmes have been.

WATCH VIDEO



WATCH VIDEO



Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the Mayor with 12 recommendations for bridging the low-carbon skills gap in London. The Committee's recommendations included a call for the Mayor to convene local authorities to drive better collaboration on vacancies and recruitment in professions and trades associated with the low-carbon transition.

READ THE LETTER



In November, the Committee held a meeting to assess progress on recycling in London. In 2018, the Mayor set a target for London's households to recycle 50 per cent of its rubbish by 2030. Figures at the time of the investigation showed London's household recycling rate at 33 per cent – the same level it has been for the last 10 years.

The Committee questioned GLA officers and local waste authorities on the challenges associated with recycling in London – particularly looking at the different challenges and opportunities across the different boroughs.

The investigation led to the Committee writing a letter to the Mayor; the Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Steve Barclay; and London's waste authorities. The letter, written in February, contained recommendations aimed at helping London meet the Mayor's 50 per cent household recycling rate for 2030.

READ THE LETTER



In December and January, the Committee turned its attention to London's green spaces. The first meeting focussed on the Mayor's environmental commitments and how green spaces are protected in London.

The second meeting focussed on how TfL and local boroughs protect and enhance the number of trees on the road network in London; and on progress in implementing sustainable drainage systems across the capital to absorb and capture rainfall to prevent flooding.

The investigation led to the Committee writing to the Mayor in March, with eight recommendations for protecting and improving green spaces; and greening London's 'grey' infrastructure, such as roads and drainage systems. A key recommendation in the letter is for the Mayor to review the 10 per cent biodiversity net gain level in the London Plan, and consider increasing it to 20 per cent.

READ THE LETTER



In February, the Environment Committee focussed on the resilience of London's food network. Figures from ReLondon show that around 99 per cent of the 6,347,000 tonnes of food and beverages that supply London are imported from outside the city. Local production and farming account for less than 1 per cent of the capital's food supply.

Members of the Committee spoke with food journalist, Sheila Dillon, the National Farmers Union, the GLA and the London Food Board about the challenges around food security in London.

Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the Mayor with five recommendations for strengthening London's food security. These include calling on the Mayor to publish an action plan by September 2024 at the latest, setting out how the GLA will take steps to improve the resilience of London's food system.

The Committee's final investigation of the year came in March, when it held a question-and-answer session with the Deputy Mayor for Environment. The session focussed on the Mayor's Environment Strategy; and included questions around various topics such as renewable energy, air quality and London's biodiversity, drawing on findings from the Committee's previous work.

READ THE LETTER



ENVIRONMENT - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Environment Committee ran:



6 investigations

This included:



9 Committee meetings



3 site visits

We heard from:



50 guests giving oral evidence



6 written responses to three Calls for Evidence

We published:



2 reports



6 letters



54 recommendations

YOUR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

Housing Committee

Chairman – Lord Bailey of Paddington AM, City Hall Conservatives

Deputy Chair – Sem Moema AM, Labour

The **Housing Committee** examines matters relating to housing in London and leads on the scrutiny of the Mayor's housing responsibilities, including the Mayor's delivery of affordable housing.

The London Assembly Housing Committee began the year with a two-part investigation into young Londoners' access to home ownership. At the first formal meeting in June, the Committee quizzed the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development on the affordable home products available to young people in London; the impact of these interventions; and what more the Mayor could do to support young people to access home ownership.

The second formal meeting, in July, saw the Committee welcome housing thinktanks, policy organisations and charities that are well placed to explore the issue of young Londoners and home ownership. Members sought to find out the impact of housing affordability on young Londoners, and the social and economic impacts on London; how effective intermediate housing schemes (such as Shared Ownership and London Living Rent) are at helping young Londoners access home ownership; and the extent to which Lifetime ISAs and mortgage rates impact young Londoners and home ownership.

The Committee launched a call for evidence as part of the investigation. This is open to anyone, but particularly targeted councils, housing associations, policy organisations and academia. The responses contained evidence that informed the findings in the output.

Alongside the investigation, the Committee also launched a survey targeted at young Londoners (for the purpose of this investigation, a young Londoner was defined as anyone aged 40 or younger). The survey was the London Assembly's most-responded-to survey of the year, with almost 500 responses from members of the public. Respondents highlighted the challenges young people face in relation to home ownership; their opinions on the various home ownership models that aim to support young Londoners (such as Shared Ownership); and how effective respondents believed Mayoral and Government policies and programmes are for young Londoners.

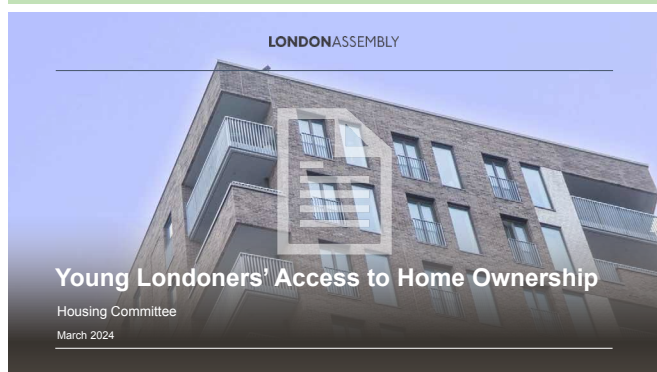
Watch the video to see the challenges three young Londoners face with accessing housing in the capital.

WATCH VIDEO



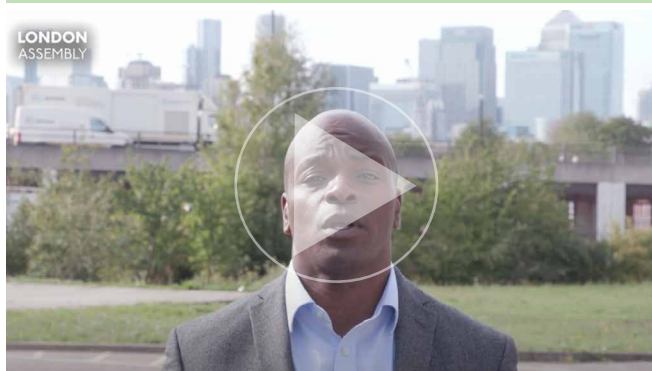
The investigation culminated in the Committee's report, *Young Londoners' Access to Home Ownership*, published in March. The report covered key findings from the two formal evidence-gathering sessions; and information from the survey responses and call for evidence. The report included 10 recommendations for the Mayor to improve access to home ownership for young Londoners.

READ REPORT



In May 2023, the Mayor announced that he had met his target of 116,000 starts for his Affordable Homes Programme 2016-23. In June, the Committee held a meeting to investigate when these homes will be completed, if they meet the needs of Londoners and what the finances looked like.

WATCH VIDEO



In September, the Committee began its investigation into temporary accommodation (TA). Members visited a TA hostel with Setting the Standard – a pan-London scheme that inspects and grades nightly let TA, to ensure that it meets minimum safety standards.



▲ The Housing Committee on a site visit to a TA hostel with Setting the Standard.

In November, the Committee held a formal meeting at City Hall, where Members spoke with local authorities, public sector organisations, grassroots organisations, and campaigners on the TA situation in London, including prominent housing campaigner Kwajo Tweneboa. Members of the Committee then scrutinised measures taken by local authorities, the Mayor and the Government to address challenges in TA.

This investigation led to the Committee's report, London's Temporary Accommodation Emergency, published in March. The report contains 16 recommendations to the Mayor and Government to tackle the issue. It also made a key finding of an urgent need to improve the national standards and regulations around the quality of TA.

READ REPORT

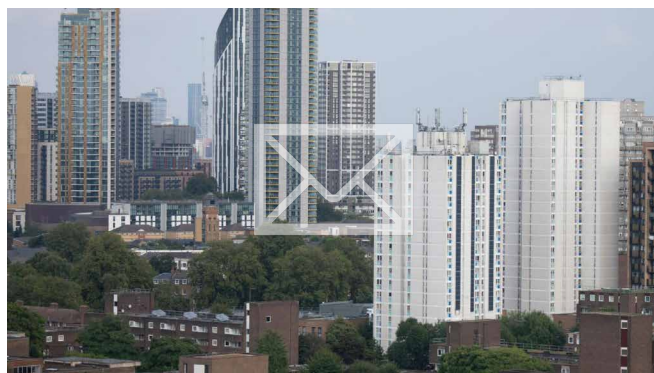


In October, the Committee examined the Mayor's 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme, following delays to the programme through the pandemic. The Committee questioned the Deputy Mayor for Housing and GLA officers on the progress of the programme to date; updated delivery targets; and how the GLA planned to manage challenges to the delivery of affordable homes in London including inflation, rising interest rates, and costs of construction.

In December, the Committee began its investigation into the financial sustainability of the housing sector. Members of the Committee looked to assess the financial resilience of private housebuilders in London, in light of high inflation and increasing construction costs. The Committee also sought to hear market trends in housing delivery post-Brexit and post-pandemic, including drops in private housebuilding, and the impact of these on housing supply in London.

Following the investigation, the Committee wrote to the Mayor with eight questions on how he is using his convening powers to support small house builders.

READ THE LETTER



In January, the Committee scrutinised the build-to-rent sector. Nearly one-third of new housing starts in London over the past five years have been through the sector – accommodation purpose-built for private renting that tends to be delivered in large schemes in mid-to-high-rise blocks.

Members questioned house builders and build-to-rent specialists on the challenges and opportunities the sector offers London's housing market.

The Committee's final investigation of the London Assembly year focussed on the Kerslake Review, two years on from the publication of the review into improving housing delivery on GLA Group land. The review, carried out by Lord Kerslake in 2021 and published in 2022, outlined 15 recommendations for the GLA Group to maximise and streamline housing delivery.

The Committee questioned the Deputy Mayor for Housing, alongside senior staff from TfL and the LLDC on what progress has been made on the recommendations in the Kerslake Review.

HOUSING - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Housing Committee ran:



7 investigations

This included:



9 Committee meetings



1 site visit

We heard from:



38 guests giving oral evidence



496 written responses to three Calls for Evidence/surveys

We published:



3 reports



1 letter



26 recommendations

Planning and Regeneration Committee

Chair – Sakina Sheikh AM, Labour

Deputy Chairman – Peter Fortune AM, City Hall Conservatives

The **Planning and Regeneration Committee** investigates the key issues for London around spatial development, planning and regeneration.

The Planning and Regeneration Committee began the London Assembly year with a meeting on the Draft Affordable Housing and Development Viability London plan guidance. It wrote a letter to the Mayor in response to the consultation.

READ THE LETTER



The Committee's first investigation, in September 2023, was a look at the architecture and design of social housing in London. This investigation consisted of a site visit and a formal meeting.

As part of the site visit, Members visited two estates owned and managed by Peabody, one built in 1871, the other in the 1930s. The aim was to show the architectural differences of housing estates implemented pre- and post-war.

Later in September, Members put questions to the GLA and housing providers on how the design of social housing has changed over the

WATCH VIDEO



years, and what impact the design has on social housing residents' quality of life.

In October, the Committee turned its attention to the often-debated 15-minute city concept. The idea of a 15-minute city is aimed at reducing car usage, where the necessities of modern life – including access to jobs, public services, recreational facilities, and other basic amenities – should be available within a 15-minute walk, bike ride or public-transport journey from home. London has more than 600 high streets, and 90 per cent of Londoners live within a ten-minute walk of their high street. This led to the Committee seeking to answer whether London is already a 15-minute city. Members of the Committee asked a panel of experts about the challenges and opportunities of the 15-minute city concept, and whether the name was causing more harm to the concept than good.

Moving into November, the Committee investigated how accessible London is. According to 2021-22 estimates, 1.6 million Londoners are disabled, representing 17 per cent of the population.

At the formal meeting, the Committee heard from disability groups and architects on the impacts of poor planning design disabled Londoners. It then questioned the GLA on how it ensures inclusive design is at the heart of all planning decisions made.

In January, the Committee examined how specific planning designs can help prevent and reduce crime. The Committee heard that, whilst there is no statutory legislation for the police to be involved in the planning process, for large-scale developments the police can provide advice regarding safety in design.

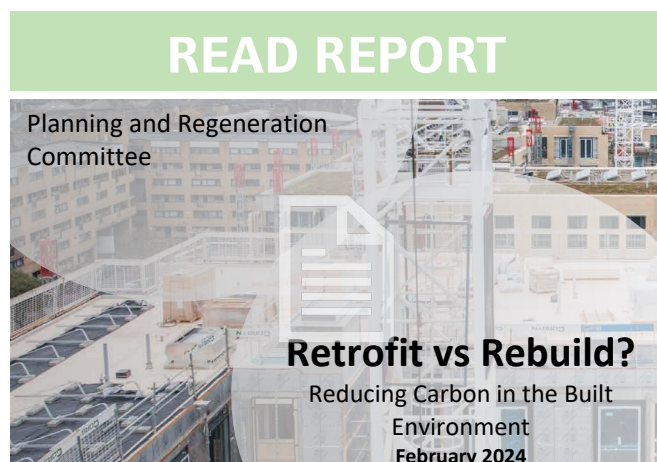
Members spoke to one of the Metropolitan Police Service's Designing Out Crime Officers, who work with large developers on their plans to ensure that car parks are well lit with secure fencing; and that they avoid installing unnecessary alleyways.

The Committee's final investigation of the Assembly year focussed on gender informed planning, and the impact poor planning design has on women and girls in London.

The Committee spoke with guests about gender-bias in the built environment. It heard how women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities are faced with challenges – including design that prioritises commuting over caregiving, and inadequate lighting and toilets in public spaces.

In February, the Committee held an event at City Hall to launch its report, Retrofit vs Rebuild, which focussed on the Committee's investigation into the topic in 2022-23. Over 70 guests attended, and heard from the Chair of the Committee and other key stakeholders on the findings of the report, and how to best implement the recommendations included within the report.

The Committee published a report in March focussing on how the Committee's 2023-24 work programme findings can feed into the new London Plan. The report covers each investigation carried out by the Committee, with several recommendations to the Mayor to ensure the next iteration of the London Plan is inclusive, and puts Londoners' needs at the forefront.



PLANNING - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Planning & Regeneration Committee ran:



5 investigations

This included:



6 Committee meetings



1 site visit

We heard from:



38 guests giving oral evidence

We published:



1 report



5 letters



23 recommendations

GLA OVERSIGHT

GLA Oversight Committee

Chairman – Emma Best AM, City Hall Conservatives

Deputy Chairman – Len Duvall OBE AM, Labour

The **GLA Oversight Committee** leads the Assembly's scrutiny of issues not covered by the other committees. It also monitors scrutiny expenditure and oversees the programming of the Assembly's business.

The GLA Oversight Committee started its first investigation of the year in June 2023, looking at the scale and nature of GLA international and domestic trips; and the GLA's approach to selecting and scrutinising such trips. The Committee heard that in May 2022, American airline company United Airlines paid for flights for the Mayoral delegation on a trip to the USA, as part of a 'partnership agreement' that appeared to allow United Airlines to promote its business.

Following this, the Committee investigated how much progress has been made in the ten years since the establishment of the London Assembly's Devolution Working Group. It also set out to understand the impact of the Government's levelling-up programme on devolution in London.

As part of the investigation, the Committee submitted evidence to the Public Bill Committee on the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill; and wrote to the Minister for London about its findings.

The Committee published a report in December 2023 focusing on fiscal devolution, devolution of public services, health devolution, enhanced powers for the London Assembly and the impact of Levelling Up on London. The report identified 21 recommendations aimed at the Mayor, and at both regional and central governments, including calling on the Government and the Mayor to commit to working together, and with stakeholders, to develop a clear, long-term investment strategy for London.



The Committee's next investigation looked at best practice and delivery of consultations, due to their vital importance as a democratic tool for Londoners to have their say and shape their city. Members of the Committee heard evidence from external experts in a two-part investigation (in November and December 2023). It heard that consultation matters because it improves project and policy outcomes by ensuring they are informed by people's actual experiences, views and insights. It also heard that giving people a voice on the issues that affect them helps to build trusting relationships, community cohesiveness and people's sense of belonging in their city.

The Committee published a report in March 2024 that called for the GLA Group to develop a Group-wide set of consultation principles. This has the aim of ensuring Londoners know what

they can expect from a GLA Group consultation; and setting a minimum standard against which Londoners can hold GLA Group organisations to account. The report sets out 17 recommendations on what these consultation principles should include.



OVERSIGHT - YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2023-24 the Oversight Committee ran:



10
investigations

This included:



10
Committee meetings

We heard from:



38
guests giving oral evidence

We published:



2
reports



6
letters



70
recommendations



THE YEAR AHEAD

Our work holding the Mayor to account and investigating the issues that matter to Londoners continues in 2024-25.

The London Assembly will investigate and scrutinise the biggest issues affecting Londoners, including the ongoing housing crisis and London's confidence in its police and fire services. We will also ensure we have an effective transport system that works for everyone.

The Police and Crime Committee will continue its important work in scrutinising progress by the MPS in improving trust and confidence, particularly through the lens of the Baroness Casey report. It will also examine public order policing.

The Fire Committee will continue to investigate the progress LFB has made in addressing the serious cultural issues identified in previous years.

The Health Committee will examine dentistry and HIV in London.

The Environment Committee will examine local and community food growing in London; and the steps the Mayor is taking to build action to make London net zero by 2030.

Unlocking housing development in London will be the focus of the Planning and Regeneration Committee.

A large part of our work goes into scrutinising the Mayor's GLA Group budget, which the Budget and Performance Committee will begin in the autumn.

The GLA Oversight Committee will investigate Cyber Security and how London can prevent cyber-attacks on its important institutions.



LONDON ASSEMBLY AND SECRETARIAT BUDGET

The London Assembly's budget is agreed through the Mayor's annual budget-setting process. The Assembly's budget position for 2023-24 is set out below:

Assembly & Secretariat	Full Year Outturn								
	Budget			Actuals			Variance to Budget		
	£000's			£000's			£000's		
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net
Assembly Communications	421	0	421	420	0	420	(1)	0	(1)
Committee Services	803	0	803	694	(5)	689	(109)	(5)	(114)
Executive Director	318	0	318	474	0	474	156	0	156
Member Services	1,970	0	1,970	1,812	0	1,812	(158)	0	(158)
Member Services (Conservative)	883	0	883	746	0	746	(137)	0	(137)
Member Services (Green Party)	308	0	308	352	0	352	44	0	44
Member Services (Labour)	1,102	0	1,102	998	(0)	998	(104)	(0)	(104)
Member Services (Liberal)	197	0	197	202	0	202	5	0	5
Scrutiny	1,746	0	1,746	1,538	0	1,538	(208)	0	(208)
Special Projects	1,110	0	1,110	1,144	0	1,144	34	0	34
Total Assembly & Secretariat	8,857	0	8,857	8,379	(5)	8,374	(478)	(5)	(484)

For less than £1 per Londoner per year, the London Assembly performs the function of scrutinising the GLA Budget of over £21 billion.

The London Assembly maintains a separate reserve, which is predominantly designed to meet the cost of resettlement grants for Assembly Members following an election. Any underspends arising at the end of the financial year are added to this reserve. At the end of the 2023-24 financial year, the Assembly reserve stood at £2,621,053. This figure will change early in 2024-25 to reflect the impact of the 2024 GLA Elections.

Details of the London Assembly's budget are published as part of the Mayor's budget-setting process. The GLA Oversight Committee receives quarterly budget reports providing detail on in-year spend and forecasts.



KEEP IN TOUCH

City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London E16 1ZE
020 7983 4000

City Hall is open to all. Members of the public are invited to join us and watch Mayor's Question Time, Plenary sessions and our Committee meetings in person. You can also watch all of our [meetings live, or later, online](#).

You can also join us for PQT, both in person and online. It's a free event for Londoners, and you can [find out how to join here](#).

Details of all our Committees and current investigations are [on our website](#).

We welcome responses from members of the public when we publish a call for evidence; details on how to respond are on our website. If you have a question for the Mayor, [let us know](#) and we can put it to him on your behalf. You can also read the answers the Mayor and other key London officials have given to questions they have already been asked.



THE LONDON ASSEMBLY 2024-25





Marina Ahmad AM
Labour



**Shaun Bailey AM
(The Lord Bailey
of Paddington)**
Conservatives



Elly Baker AM
Labour



Emma Best AM
Conservatives



Andrew Boff AM
Conservatives



Hina Bokhari AM
Liberal Democrats



Anne Clarke AM
Labour



Léonie Cooper AM
Labour



Unmesh Desai AM
Labour



Len Duvall OBE AM
Labour



Zoë Garbett AM
Greens



Neil Garratt AM
Conservatives



Alessandro Georgiou AM
Conservatives



Susan Hall AM
Conservatives



Krupesh Hirani AM
Labour



Bassam Mahfouz AM
Labour



Joanne McCartney AM
Labour



Sem Moema AM
Labour



Zack Polanski AM
Greens



Keith Prince AM
Conservatives



Gareth Roberts AM
Liberal Democrats



Caroline Russell AM
Greens



James Small-Edwards AM
Labour



Thomas Turrell AM
Conservatives



Alex Wilson AM
Reform UK

London Assembly - as of May 2024

