

## **9th Mayor's Report to the Assembly**

### **Mayor's Question Time 25 February 2025**

This is my ninth report to the Assembly, fulfilling my duty under Section 45 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. It covers the period from 3 January – 11 February 2025.

Please note that the information in the Mayor's Report is accurate at the time of publishing.

## **Executive Summary**

### **80th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp**

On 27 January, I was honoured to have been invited to join the official commemoration event in Poland to mark the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The powerful and poignant stories preserved here are an integral part of ensuring the victims are never forgotten and the horrors that took place here are never repeated.

The service was held at Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and Memorial, where I joined His Majesty the King, heads of state and political leaders from across the world alongside Holocaust survivors, their families and members of Jewish communities. Together we remembered the estimated 1.1 million people who were killed at Auschwitz and the millions more who were murdered by the Nazis. Around six million Polish people died in World War Two, one fifth of the pre-war population.

The Holocaust was one of the darkest times in history and a terrible example of what can happen when hatred is left unchecked. That's why it's imperative Londoners and others around the world are able to learn about the appalling events which took place at Auschwitz-Birkenau and the other camps.

The proliferation of fake news and unregulated content on social media means that the work of organisations such as the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, Holocaust Educational Trust and Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is more vital than ever in equipping young people with a full and proper account of history. Last year, the site was visited 1.8 million times and around 300,000 people, including school children, visit each year from the UK. In 2020, London provided a £300,000 grant to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, helping its work to preserve the site and ensuring future generations of Londoners and visitors from around the world can learn for themselves the truth about what took place. The contribution has helped towards preserving thousands of personal items like prisoner shoes, clothing, cutlery, eyeglasses and protecting the original camp infrastructure at Auschwitz-Birkenau site.

At a time of growing division and rising antisemitism and hate crime across the world, it's incredibly important that we all now redouble our efforts to remember the past and make sure we learn from it.

## **Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony**

I was honoured to mark Holocaust Memorial Day on 20 January, in a joint ceremony with the London Assembly at City Hall. Working in partnership with the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, the ceremony commemorated survivors and victims of the Holocaust and all those affected by other genocides. I felt privileged to welcome speakers; Holocaust survivor Eva Clarke BEM and Bosnian genocide survivor Smajo Beso OBE, both of whom shared their testimonies. Rabbi Epstein and Rebbetzin Ilana Epstein of the Western Marble Arch Synagogue, returned to recite the memorial prayer.

At a time of growing division and rising antisemitism and hate crime across the world, it's incredibly important that we all now redouble our efforts to remember the past and make sure we learn from it.

## **Lunar New Year**

On 2 February, Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Debbie Weekes-Bernard joined thousands of people to celebrate Lunar New Year on Trafalgar Square, organised by the London Chinatown Chinese Association (LCCA) and supported by Westminster City Council. This year, London marked the year of the Snake in one of the biggest Lunar New Year events to take place outside of Asia, attracting over 150,000 Londoners, Chinese and Asian community members and visitors.

Celebrations took place across five different sites with entertainment displaying the very best of South-east Asian and East-Asian culture, tradition and cuisine, right here on our doorstep. Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard joined the community for the opening ceremony to watch the powerful and inspiring lion dance, a joyous tradition to mark 2025 as a year of prosperity for all.

I'm incredibly grateful to London's South-east and East Asian communities who created this incredible event, and the contribution they make to this great city, highlighting once again that diversity is our greatest strength.

## **New Deal for Young People supports 100,000 young people to access mentoring**

On 14 January, Lib Peck, the Director of London's Violence Reduction Unit, and I had the privilege of visiting Chance UK, a mentoring organisation funded through my groundbreaking £34m New Deal for Young People (NDYP), to mark an incredible milestone: 100,000 young Londoners most in need accessing a quality mentor. This forms part of my ongoing commitment to providing positive opportunities for young people and tackling the underlying causes of crime. The target was reached by the end of 2024 – ahead of schedule – and coincided with the lowest number of teenage and under-25 murders in more than a decade.

During my visit, I met young people and mentors who shared their stories about the life-changing impact mentoring has had on them. From building confidence, improving relationships and educational outcomes to better mental health and well-being, their experiences demonstrated the power of mentoring to transform futures.

This huge achievement is testament to the incredible work of over 150 youth organisations, funded through City Hall and my Violence Reduction Unit, and the dedication of youth workers and mentors to supporting young Londoners. Whilst I am proud of this achievement, there is still more I want to do to ensure all young Londoners are supported and can grow up to fulfil their potential which is why I have committed to investing in 250,000 more positive opportunities for young people over my current Mayoral term.

## **TfL celebrates 25 years of supporting the growth and development of the capital**

On 27 January, London's Transport Commissioner, Andy Lord, launched celebrations to mark 25 years since TfL started transforming the capital's transport network, supporting jobs, homes and economic growth, and connecting Londoners to education, employment and leisure.

Flagship improvements over the last 25 years include the Elizabeth line, now the busiest railway service in the country, which has boosted economic growth and job creation across the UK and housing across London. Trams and the London Overground have revolutionised the rail network and the six London Overground lines have been given their own identities to make it easier for customers to navigate. The London Underground has been modernised, while the Night Tube and Night Overground services are supporting London's nighttime economy.

TfL pioneered the creation of pay as you go with Oyster and contactless payment and is delivering uninterrupted 4G and 5G across the network. Accessibility has also increased with more than 200 step-free stations on TfL's network, and work is underway to increase this number for a fairer, more accessible and inclusive network.

Cycle hire and more than 400 km of safe cycle paths have transformed London's streets, while Vision Zero, my bold action plan to eliminate deaths on London's roads, is working to create a safer London for all.

Andy Lord joined 25 buskers to celebrate TfL's 25th anniversary at Liverpool Street Underground station, alongside a new roundel and series of eye-catching new posters marking the improvements to public transport since TfL was established.

## **Work to start on making Leyton Tube station step-free**

Leyton Tube station will undergo a vital upgrade which will deliver step-free access to the station for the first time, via two lifts and an overbridge, as TfL works with partners to progress towards my ambitious goal of making 50 per cent of Tube stations step-free. The station, on the eastern end of the Central line, will also see the construction of a new, larger ticket hall, including additional ticket gates, to reduce congestion and meet expected future demand. TfL has awarded a contract to TWBN, a joint venture between Taylor Woodrow and BAM Nuttall, to deliver the upgrade.

Main construction work on the project is planned to start in February 2025 and expected to be completed in spring 2027. The station will remain open throughout, except for a small number of weekend closures around halfway through the construction programme. These closures will be fully communicated with both stakeholders and customers ahead of time to ensure Londoners can plan journeys around the work.

The upgrade of Leyton station is being jointly funded by TfL, Waltham Forest Council and the Government. To celebrate the works getting underway, my Deputy Mayor for Transport, Seb Dance, the TfL Commissioner, and the Minister for Local Transport, Simon Lightwood visited the station earlier this month. Two thousand new homes are being built near Leyton Tube station with a further 5,300 new homes proposed. The upgraded Tube station will increase capacity, improve accessibility and provide a more comfortable and welcoming environment for TfL's customers.

I feel strongly that everyone should be able to enjoy everything our great capital has to offer. This means making our transport network as accessible as possible.

It's great that TfL is working to make Leyton Tube station step-free, alongside other improvements. These works will not just improve accessibility, but also support major housing developments in the local area, as well as boosting local businesses and inclusive economic growth.

More than a third of Underground stations across the capital are step-free and we are committed to growing this number to help build better, fairer and more accessible London for everyone.

### **Universal Free School Meals event**

On 29 January, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney, opened an event at City Hall to thank stakeholders for their invaluable support to the delivery of universal free school meals in state primary schools. The event was attended by a huge range of representatives from boroughs, schools, parents, teachers and other key partners.

It was a fantastic event where attendees reflected on the huge success and impact of the first year of the programme, and brought their own experience and expertise to discussions. It was a chance to celebrate the huge success the policy has had since its launch. I am proud that since we launched over 63 million meals have been offered.

We heard from borough leaders and headteachers about their experiences of UFSM including one headteacher sharing stories that pupils are no longer avoiding going to school because of lunch debt.

We were joined by independent evaluators who have found that my programme has already led to improvements in family finances, parent and pupil wellbeing, parent and school relationships, nutrition, behaviour, concentration, and energy levels and that it is having even bigger positive effects on families who are most in need.

Stakeholders discussed ways we can continue to work together to maximise the potential of the scheme in its second year and beyond.

### **£10m investment to tackle rough sleeping**

On 29 January, I visited the No Second Night Out service in Lewisham to announce a record additional £10m investment, backing my commitment to end rough sleeping in the capital by 2030. The £10m funding will transform and expand a network of Ending Homelessness Hubs across the capital, providing 24/7 specialist support for people new to rough sleeping and prevention services. The hubs are safe places for people sleeping rough for the first time to be assessed by professional teams, so that plans can be made quickly to support them away from the streets in the long-term. The expansion will establish an Ending Homelessness Hub for every sub-region of the capital, with a brand new fifth hub set to open in early 2026, helping an additional 500 people per year. For the first time ever, a new focus on prevention will be built into the service, meaning that teams will step in and provide support to high-risk Londoners before they spend a first night on the streets.

## **Connected London Wi-Fi pilot programme**

On 30 January, the Connected London Wi-Fi pilot programme was launched in partnership with Westminster City Council. This initiative aims to provide free Wi-Fi access throughout the borough as part of a two-month trial. The pilot allows Londoners to use a single login system to access public Wi-Fi in 50 locations, including community centres, street markets, and various venues across the borough.

## **Local Area Energy Plans**

My Infrastructure team successfully completed work on three subregional Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) and launched the innovative LAEP DataHub. Developed in partnership with London Councils, boroughs, government agencies, industry, and regulators, the published subregional LAEPs now cover 27 boroughs and outline the most effective pathways to achieve local net-zero targets. They address key areas such as electricity generation (including solar PV), transmission and distribution systems, building retrofits, heat networks, transport systems, market mechanisms. The final subregional LAEP covering the remaining five boroughs in east London will be completed later this year.

The LAEP DataHub is a digital platform designed to provide a consistent evidence base to support local authorities in their net-zero and decarbonisation efforts while fostering sector-wide collaboration. Both the LAEPs and the DataHub reflect my commitment to making London a net-zero carbon city by 2030.

## **Sadler's Wells East Opening**

On 6 February, I attended the official opening of Sadler's Wells East, the first cultural building to open at East Bank in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, where I unveiled a plaque acknowledging the GLA's investment in London's biggest culture and education quarter for over 150 years. The venue features a 550-seat auditorium, six state-of-the-art dance studios, and a public performance space for free performances. Vicki Igbokwe-Ozoagu's *Our Mighty Groove* is the opening show, featuring a cast of both professional dancers and a young group of 30 dancers aged 16 – 21, who live or study in east London.

## Policing, Crime and Security

### **Urgent new funding for policing and safety in London**

Keeping Londoners safe is my top priority as Mayor and I'll always do everything I can to ensure the Met police and the London Fire Brigade have the funding they need.

The Government recently announced some welcome additional funding for policing in London, but the Met is still facing a budget shortfall due to over a decade of damaging real terms cuts by the previous government.

That's why, on 16 January, I announced my plans to increase the amount raised through council tax to provide an additional £54m for policing, which will help to keep neighbourhood police officers on the streets and bear down on violent crime and robbery.

Overall, my Draft Budget for the next financial year proposes investing £1.149 billion of council tax and business rates funding to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) in 2025-26 – an increase of nearly 103 per cent in annual funding compared to the previous Mayor's final budget.

I will continue to work closely with the Government, the Met Commissioner and the Fire Commissioner on the funding our police and fire brigade need to ensure we can continue building a safer London for everyone.

### **Thanking the officers and staff of the Met as it exits special measures**

On 23 January, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) announced that, as a result of improvements in performance and transforming culture, the Metropolitan Police Service would be returning to normal monitoring after being placed into 'Engage' special measures in 2022. I issued the following statement in response to this welcome news:

*"I welcome His Majesty's Inspectorate confirming that significant improvements are being made by the Met Police on both improved performance and transforming culture.*

*"This is down to the hard work of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Met officers and staff, who are rebuilding public confidence and trust in the force, as well as record investment and support from City Hall. Emergency calls are now being answered faster, vetting is being strengthened and neighbourhood policing is being revitalised.*

*"Having asked the HMICFRS to look in particular at concerns around child sexual exploitation, it's reassuring that the Met Police have made significant improvements in this area, including around missing children and victim blaming language.*

*"There's still more to do, and as Mayor, I'll continue to work with the Commissioner to ensure we drive through the further improvements needed as we build a safer London for everyone."*

### **Two new members of London Policing Board to support and scrutinise reform of the Met**

On 26 January, I was pleased to announce that former Chief Constable of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary, Olivia Pinkney CBE QPM DL and Dal Babu OBE, who served for over 30 years in the Metropolitan Police and is the former Borough Commander of the London Borough

of Harrow will join my London Policing Board. Neil Basu (QPM) – Retired Metropolitan Police Officer, formerly Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations (ACSO) and national lead for Counter Terrorism Policing has now stepped down from the Board.

I'm delighted to welcome Olivia and Dal to London's Policing Board. They both bring a wealth of experience, strong track record of change and really care about how all of London's communities are policed.

I look forward to working with them to deliver a safer and fairer London for all and turning the recommendations of the Baroness Casey review into long-lasting and meaningful change. I would also like to thank Neil Basu for his expert advice and contribution to the work of the Board as one of its founding Members.

### **Ensuring vulnerable adults are properly safeguarded when in contact with police**

Providing eye-witness statements and giving voluntary police interviews can be an extremely stressful time for anyone, so it is vital that the right support is available for those who are vulnerable and need assistance to help them understand their situation and ensure they are treated fairly and appropriately.

In the UK, it's a legal requirement for any child or any adult assessed as vulnerable to have an independent appropriate adult with them in any police interview, but until now, in London no single agency has been responsible for providing this support, leading to inconsistency and gaps in provision, costly delays and pressure on resources.

So on 3 February I was pleased to announce a new £5.4million service set up by my Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to ensure vulnerable adults in contact with the police, including those taking part in voluntary police interviews, have timely access to an independent appropriate adult to support them.

The first ever London-wide scheme will safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of vulnerable adults, ensuring that they are treated in a fair and just manner, and are able to participate in police proceedings effectively.

# Transport

## **Transformational Elizabeth line reaches 500 million passenger journeys**

More than 500 million passenger journeys have been made on the Elizabeth line in its first two and a half years, making it the single busiest railway service in the UK. Journeys made on the railway have powered the creation of jobs, homes, and other forms of regeneration across the route, as shown in new reports published by TfL and Arup.

The reports capture key outcomes, benefits and insights about the railway to get an early picture of its performance and will also serve to increase confidence in the impact of future transport investment in London and across the UK.

More than 90 per cent of customers surveyed as part of the evaluation study interim findings report say that the Elizabeth line has had a positive impact in their area, with many welcoming the increased transport connectivity to London suburbs and improved access to Heathrow Airport.

The Elizabeth line has been a game-changer for the city, transforming travel in London and unlocking investment through the creation of new jobs and homes. With its growing popularity, the Elizabeth line is proving itself to be essential to London and the UK's transport network and helping to build a better, more prosperous London for everyone.

The evidence from the success of the Elizabeth line is clear - when you invest in high-quality transport infrastructure it can provide huge benefits for increased jobs, growth and the new housing we need in London and across the country.

## **Silvertown Tunnel planned to open on 7 April 2025**

On 6 January TfL and Riverlinx Limited, the consortium designing, building, operating and maintaining the new tunnel, confirmed that the Silvertown Tunnel is planned to open on 7 April 2025.

New bus routes serving the tunnel, which will be free for at least the first year, will also launch the same day. The introduction of these new buses, including the Superloop 4 (SL4) between Canary Wharf and Grove Park, will increase the hourly number of buses able to cross the river in the area from six to 21, meaning more Londoners will benefit from using the tunnel.

With construction work on the Silvertown project now coming towards a close, and operational readiness testing underway ahead of the tunnel opening, work is moving to installing the infrastructure which will support the new zero-emission bus routes that will serve the Silvertown Tunnel, including the new cycle-shuttle service under the Thames. For at least 12 months from 7 April 2025, the new cross-river bus routes serving Greenwich, Newham, and Tower Hamlets, including the new Superloop SL4 which runs from Grove Park to Canary Wharf, will be free.

Following years of hard work and close collaboration between TfL and Riverlinx Limited the tunnel is on track to open in the coming months and is a testament to brilliant and ground-breaking engineering. It will support growth in the local area and provide new public transport connections across the river.



## **Silvertown and Blackwell tunnel users invited to pre-register for discounts**

With the Silvertown Tunnel opening on 7 April, TfL is encouraging low-income residents, local businesses and charities to pre-register for Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel user charge discounts.

The discounts are just one of the ways TfL is supporting the local community and those on certain benefits, such as Income Support, Universal Credit, Carer's Allowance and Housing Benefit, to use the tunnel affordably.

Residents who live in 12 boroughs across east London, plus the City of London, and are eligible for the discount can now register to benefit from the discount from 7 April by visiting [www.tfl.gov.uk/tunnel-discounts](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tunnel-discounts). The website sets out the full range of eligible low-income benefits, as well as the documents required to complete the registration. Small businesses, sole traders and charities in Newham, Greenwich and Tower Hamlets can also now register to receive a £1 discount on the standard off-peak charge for up to three vehicles for at least 12 months from the tunnel opening. These discounts are different to the off-peak discount available to all drivers via TfL Auto Pay and must be applied for separately.

TfL is also encouraging all drivers to pre-register for TfL Auto Pay now, to ensure they benefit from off-peak charges from 7 April.

I am pleased TfL has opened pre-registration for discounts for low-income residents, local businesses and charities for Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel user charges. Registration is easy and I would encourage all those who are eligible to sign up to ensure they can benefit from reduced charges. These discounts and concessions are in addition to the free cross-river bus journeys we are offering on routes serving both the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels for at least a year, and the cycle-shuttle service which will allow cyclists to safely cross the river.

## **TfL sets out plans to regulate pedicabs in London**

TfL is inviting people to have their say on proposals to regulate pedicabs in London for the first time. Pedicabs can provide a unique and green way to see parts of the capital. However, pedicabs are the only form of unregulated public transport in London, and this has led to inconsistencies in the way services operate, with some customers being charged well-documented rip-off fares. There is a need to ensure any regulations prioritise the safety of passengers and pedestrians, and minimise fare issues as well as anti-social behaviour caused by loud music and poor driving.

To support the pedicab industry to offer a safe, professional and reliable service, TfL is seeking views on several proposals, including that:

- All pedicab drivers would be required to have a one-year pedicab driver's licence and would need to meet a set of safety standards such as criminal backgrounds checks
- Drivers would need to demonstrate they understand their role and responsibilities
- Drivers would be required to have appropriate insurance
- Regular vehicle inspections would be required to check the condition of the vehicle to ensure it remains safe and roadworthy

The regulations and licensing requirements for pedicabs would be similar to those that apply to taxis and private hire vehicles (PHV), but tailored to the unique nature of the pedicab and the market they operate in.

Pedicabs should be a fun and sustainable way for people to see London but, without regulation, some drivers are behaving unsafely or antisocially, and charging extortionate prices. I'm pleased that TfL are launching this consultation on how to regulate the pedicab industry, ensuring the safety of customers, pedestrians and other road users.

### **'Bakerloop' bus consultation launches, with Londoners invited to have their say on proposed new service**

TfL has launched the consultation for the proposed new 'Bakerloop' express bus service. I launched the consultation on 31 January with TfL, at an event in south London, where I was joined by my Deputy Mayor for Transport, TfL teams and local and pan-London stakeholders. Last year, I made a commitment to Londoners to introduce a new 'Bakerloop' service to enable people to travel between key south London destinations and beyond more quickly and easily.

Working alongside local councils and partners, the plans for the brand-new bus service would largely mirror the proposed Bakerloo line extension route, running between Waterloo, Elephant & Castle and Lewisham via Burgess Park, Old Kent Road, New Cross Gate, Lewisham station and Lewisham town centre. The route will help demonstrate the opportunities presented by the Bakerloo line extension to better connect people in southeast London. The new route would build on the success of the game-changing Superloop, a 138km network of express bus services completed last year that has transformed travel in outer London and added more than six million kilometres per year to the capital's network. Since the first Superloop was launched in June 2023, figures show the average increase in passengers on all Superloop corridors (including parallel routes) is 11 per cent, which is nine per cent higher than the network average.

Londoners are now invited to provide feedback on the proposed bus stops for the new route during a consultation that will run until 14 March 2025. The route, which would eventually be known as the BL1, would make it easier for residents to connect to services in the wider public transport network, including the London Underground, London Overground, DLR, National Rail and other bus routes, creating new and direct journey links in southeast London. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, passenger service could potentially start in autumn 2025.

I'm pleased TfL is launching this consultation as the first step towards delivering on this commitment, building on the continued success of the Superloop express bus services.

The new proposed route will mirror the route of the potential Bakerloo line extension and better connect people around southeast London, while also helping to demonstrate how much the capital needs the Bakerloo line extension. This vital infrastructure would not only provide better transport links and upgrade the existing line, but also unlock thousands of new homes and jobs, boosting the economy and building a better, fairer and more prosperous London for all.

### **TfL calls on London schools to support walking and cycling to school**

As the new school term started, TfL called on London schools to join its accreditation programme to encourage sustainable travel to school, to help improve air quality, health and safety. It follows a 10 per cent increase in schools achieving the highest 'Gold' status last academic year.

TfL's Travel for Life programme supports the next generation of Londoners to travel towards a brighter, safer and more sustainable future. By completing activities that promote walking and cycling to school and the safe use of public transport, primary and secondary schools can become Bronze, Silver or Gold accredited. The programme is administered by London Transport Museum in partnership with London's Borough Officers.

To achieve Gold accreditation, a school must have reduced car use by six per cent or achieved 90 per cent of the school run being made using sustainable transport. The number of schools awarded Gold in 2024 was 735, a 10 per cent increase compared to 2023.

I would encourage as many schools as possible to join this fantastic scheme which improves the environment and supports fit and healthy lifestyles. We know that children who are introduced to active travel from a young age are more likely to continue the habit into adulthood - and it would be great to see even more schools involved this year.

### **Keep tabs on fares and journey history with TfL Go app**

TfL has released its latest update to the free TfL Go app, which will make it easier for customers to keep tabs on their fares and journey history while on the move.

The update will allow customers to easily access their contactless or Oyster online account and then view their journey history directly in the TfL Go app, rather than having to do so via the TfL website or Oyster and Contactless app. They will also find it easier to check and apply for a refund for any incomplete journeys, top up pay as you go credit and buy adult rate season tickets for their Oyster card via the app. Customers can also create a contactless or Oyster account on the app if they don't already have one. The update is being rolled out to all TfL Go users over the next few weeks, to be followed by TfL will looking to close its Oyster and Contactless app, which launched in September 2017.

The free TfL Go app has now seen more than seven million downloads since it launched, and is a key way for both regular users of our network, and those visiting for the first time, to plan their routes around London.

### **TfL begins next phase of work to improve safety at Lambeth Bridge**

TfL has started the next phase of works to install important new safety measures at Lambeth Bridge, which includes replacing the unsignalised roundabouts at either end of Lambeth Bridge with signal-controlled junctions.

Lambeth Bridge's northern junction is the most dangerous in London in terms of cycle collisions. These changes will improve safety in the area, particularly for people cycling. Other improvements include the addition of a cycle lane on the bridge itself and new signalised pedestrian crossings to improve pedestrian safety and access.

Making roads and junctions safer for everyone is a key part of my Vision Zero goal of eliminating death and serious injury on the transport network by 2041. These works are part of TfL's Safer Junction programme to improve safety in areas across London with higher-than-average collision rates. The Grade II listed structure also requires urgent maintenance, including waterproofing, bridge deck repairs and replacing temporary security measures with permanent measures to protect pedestrians and cyclists. TfL is completing these works at the same time to reduce the need to close the bridge at a future date.

## **TfL announces new artworks as it celebrates 25 years of Art on the Underground**

In early January TfL revealed plans for four major artworks from contemporary artists to be introduced with its Art on the Underground programme this year, as the programme marks its 25th anniversary and continues to be at the forefront of ideas around art and public space.

Since Art on the Underground came into being in 2000 the programme has had a renowned history of commissioning site-specific artworks. These existing works, which include Alexandre da Cunha's kinetic sculpture at Battersea Power Station Underground station and Mark Wallinger's Labyrinth across London Underground network, speak to people, places, and histories, placing trust in artists and the creative process.

The new 2025 programme continues this tradition with a series of commissions, to be introduced over the course of the year, that encourage meaningful conversations between artists and the public and reflect on the history and movement of London today.

Art on the Underground is renowned around the world for transforming London's Tube into a large public art gallery. Offering free art to the millions traveling every day, it builds on our rich history of inspiring art and design across the transport network and has become an integral part of London's story as a creative capital.

## **TfL celebrates east London's creativity with community-woven London Overground Weaver line roundel**

TfL has unveiled a new roundel woven by Londoners at Hackney Downs London Overground station to mark the naming of the Weaver line.

In September, TfL partnered with Chingford Community Hub and Cockpit to give Londoners the chance to help create a lasting piece of artwork for the London Overground Weaver line. Two free weaving sessions took place at Chingford Community Hub, with each participant given a piece of the sign to weave. The creator Dalia James then wove together each individual piece to create the iconic roundel.

The new woven roundel is now in place above the stairs leading to the two London Overground Weaver line platforms at Hackney Downs station. It celebrates the historical significance of weaving and textile industries and communities along this line, in areas like Spitalfields Market, Bethnal Green and Hackney.

The new London Overground line names are not only helping customers to navigate the network with greater ease but are a great way to celebrate people who have made a positive impact on communities the London Overground serves. I hope that customers using the Hackney Downs London Overground station will take a minute to look up to take in the new roundel when they next visit the station, and I'd like to thank everyone who helped create it.

## **Investing in London's public transport network supports growth and opportunities across the UK, new analysis finds**

Investment by TfL through its UK-wide supply chain continues to support growth and opportunities right across the UK, a new independent report has shown.

The report produced by Hatch, a global engineering, project management, and professional services firm, shows how investment by TfL into London's public transport network has huge benefits for its UK-wide supply chain. This in turn delivers wider benefits for the economy

of the local areas where the suppliers are located, supporting jobs and economic growth across the country.

TfL's extensive supply chain delivers everything from new zero-emission buses in Falkirk and Ballymena to signage for the TfL network made by suppliers in East Sussex and the Isle of Wight, as well as in London. Across the past two years (22/23 and 23/24), TfL spent over £12bn with more than 3,000 UK suppliers. This expenditure supported 100,000 jobs per year and has helped generate over £11bn in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK economy over the period.

Around two thirds of TfL suppliers were based outside London, whilst nearly a third of TfL's overall spend and resulting economic benefit was felt outside of London. It has also helped drive activity in new and emerging sectors, with 30 per cent of TfL suppliers operating in low carbon industries and 10 per cent of TfL's supply chain in cutting edge technology and data businesses. Overall, 62 per cent of TfL's suppliers were small to medium enterprises (SMEs).

This report demonstrates TfL's instrumental role in creating growth and good jobs across the UK in engineering, manufacturing, and technology across the UK.

I am working with Government to ensure that London's transport network can continue to support new homes, economic growth, and productivity in London and nationwide. I look forward to working constructively to secure a long-term multi-year funding deal for TfL, which is essential to retain London's status as a global city that supports inward investment for the UK economy.

### **London's communities celebrated in new competition-winning campaign at Outernet London and with the Standard**

London's diverse communities are celebrated in a new campaign creative from TfL, VCCP and Wavemaker UK, after TfL emerged winners of one of the most coveted advertising competitions in the world.

The campaign, which launched at the London Outernet's immersive screens and in the Standard on 6<sup>th</sup> February, celebrates transport's role in bringing together the diverse communities that make London a vibrant city. Through their London's Greatest Advertising Competition, whose theme this year was Diversity in Advertising, the Standard and Outernet London asked entrants to optimise media platforms to drive positive societal change.

TfL's 'Fabric of London' creative is inspired by the iconic TfL 'moquette' seating fabric pattern that is seen on London's buses, trams, trains and the Tube. The creative entry includes a bespoke moquette design that tells real stories shared by Londoners, reflecting the vital role TfL plays in bringing people from all backgrounds together. Comprising an animated tapestry, the creative display constructed by VCCP's digital experience agency – Bernadette – tells the stories of ordinary Londoners through the London Standard's cover wrap and Outernet London's immersive screens.

London is and always will be a city for everyone and this is part of why it's such a great place to live or visit. I'm proud that TfL's 'Fabric of London' has won London's Greatest Advertising Competition, for its ability to drive positive societal change. The campaign leverages the iconic TfL moquette and uses real-life stories to bring to life how our transport network connects people from different backgrounds every day, building a better London for everyone.

## Environment

### **Friends of the Earth meeting**

On 13 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met with Edward Burke and colleagues from Friends of the Earth London Branch to talk about their 'Climate Action Plan for London' and their '10 Priorities for an Incoming Mayor' and my Climate priorities and programmes for London. This was to help identify opportunities for working more closely with Friends of the Earth especially in our community-focussed climate programmes, such as Future Neighbourhoods 2030.

### **London Edge Fund promotional event**

On 14 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, opened a session at City Hall outlining what my London Edge Fund offers. This was a joint event hosted by the GLA and London Treasury, as well as Sustainable Development Capital LLP (SDCL), the fund manager for Edge. Over 100 attendees learnt more about the fund and partnership.

### **Premier League meeting**

On 14 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited the Premier League head office to learn more about their sustainability initiatives and ways they are supporting clubs to take climate action. Mete learnt about their investment in local communities and their ambition to lead by example.

### **Future Leaders event**

On 15 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, participated in a Future Leaders event to talk about his role and responsibilities as Deputy Mayor, along with the importance of environment and climate issues in the context of the health of our cities and planet and the importance of young people getting actively involved. The Future Leaders programme supports young people to build their confidence to play an active part in our city's future by developing their skills, knowledge and understanding of issues that are important to people and cities, such as racism, discrimination, environment and climate.

### **Decarbonising Cities: Lessons from London and Helsinki**

On 16 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, participated in an online panel event as part of the New London Architect's City Dialogues programme called - Decarbonising Cities: Lessons from London and Helsinki. Mete highlighted the important role that environmental and transport infrastructure has to play in providing the integrated systems that support and enable the city and its citizens and business to tackle the climate emergency by being able to operate, live and work in a sustainable way.

### **Imperial College visit**

On 17 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited the White City Imperial University campus to learn more about what they are doing to support climate innovation start-up businesses and SMEs. Mete also spoke with their Environmental Research Group to learn more about their air quality monitoring projects across London.

### **London Anchor Institutions Network meeting**

On 17 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, joined the Green New Deal working group, part of the London Anchor Institutions Network (LAIN), to restate the Mayor's priorities and acknowledge the important role LAIN members play in London. During the meeting the members discussed their latest work on decarbonising their estates, planning for climate resilience, and identifying place-based opportunities across London, all helping contribute to my targets and priorities such as net-zero by 2030 and increased partnership.

### **Crown Estate's Nature Reception**

On 20 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended a parliamentary reception hosted by The Crown Estate (TCE). TCE presented their new vision and approach to restoring and protecting nature, shared their delivery plans and discussed how they will work with others.

### **London Borough of Sutton visit**

On 21 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited Harris Academy and small local businesses in Sutton. Harris Academy is the UK's first Passivhaus school in the UK and students from the school discussed their hopes for climate action with my Deputy's Mayor's delegation. My Greener Schools programme will support schools with similar ambitions to Harris Academy. The local businesses my Deputy Mayor visited were beneficiaries of the Sutton Green Enterprise Partnership Programme, a tax relief support scheme encouraging businesses to go green.

### **London Surface Water Strategic Group Meeting**

On 22 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended the next London Surface Water Strategic Group Meeting, where they discussed the launch of the strategy later this year.

### **Fabian Society New Year Conference 2025**

On 25 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, joined a panel at the Fabian Society New Year Conference 2025 to discuss delivering action on climate change and lessons London can share to others. He was joined on the panel with Tone Langengen, of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Megan Corton Scott, Labour Climate and Environment Forum, Fiona Harvey, The Guardian and Eloise Sacares, Fabian Society.

### **Environment Agency's roundtable discussion**

On 27 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended the Environment Agency's roundtable discussion on Water to discuss ways of working for the future, to unlock some of the issues for water that Londoners face, that the GLA are leading the country on their work on the London Surface Water Strategy and SuDs for Streetworks programmes.

### **Kew Garden's Roadmap to 2030**

On 28 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended Kew Garden's Roadmap to 2030, speaking on London's determination to tackle the nature and climate emergencies and hearing Kew's own commitment to unlock progress.

### **Community Energy Taskforce meeting**

On 29 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met with representatives of the Community Energy Taskforce. Community energy plays an important role in London's pathway to net zero and delivery of the Solar Action Plan.

### **Natural England meeting**

On 30 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met with senior officers from Natural England, the government's adviser on the natural environment. During the meeting they discussed our respective priorities for nature, progress on London's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and opportunities for green infrastructure in London.

### **LSDC Chair meeting**

On 30 January, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met with the Chair of the London Sustainable Development Commission (LSDC), Dr Ashok Sinha. During the meeting they discussed opportunities for the LSDC to support my ambition for London to be a net zero city by 2030, as well as the upcoming new cohort of commissioners joining the LSDC.

### **Woolwich Gurdwara visit**

On 31 January my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited the Gurdwara Sahib Woolwich to see how they are reducing their carbon emissions and cutting their energy bills. The Gurdwara received funding through the Mayor's London Community Energy Fund and has installed solar PV on its roof and LED lighting. Mete learnt about how the project has encouraged other Gurdwaras and members of the Sikh community to take action on climate change.

### **London Assembly Environment Committee**

On 5 February my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended the London Assembly Environment Committee to provide responses to their investigation on swimmable rivers.

### **Camden Bike Bus event**

On 6 February my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, attended a Bike Bus in Camden along with my Walking & Cycling Commissioner, Will Norman. The Bike Bus is run by the local community, supporting children to travel to school by bike or scooter, and Will and Mete rode with them to school seeing the health and social benefit that this provides.

### **Walking tour of the Waltham Forest SuDs schemes**

On 6 February, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban was hosted by Councillor Clyde Loakes and visited Waltham Forest to learn more about the sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS) and how they are contributing to local flood risk reduction. Mete visited three SuDS sites across Waltham Forest.

### **Westminster Abbey Learning Department Annual Sixth form Question Time event**

On 11 February my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy attended an Annual Sixth Form Question Time event at Westminster Abbey. The event followed the BBC Question Time format,



where students had the opportunity to ask panellists questions on current affairs and issues of concern to them. The Deputy Mayor answered questions on environment and climate, posed by students from a diverse range of schools across London.

### **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew for "Planting Future Urban Landscapes – for climate, nature and people" event**

On 11 February, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy attended an event at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, which brought together leaders with an interest in urban planting, resilience, and species selection in the face of accelerating climate change. The event shared findings from research highlighting the vulnerability of Kew's trees and other plants to expected changes in climate. The Deputy Mayor discussed plans to apply this research to London's public realm trees as part of the Mayor's work towards a more climate resilient city and welcomed Kew's decision to become a member of the [London Urban Forest Partnership](#).

## **Fire**

### **Deputy Mayor's Fire Board**

On 21 January, my Deputy Mayor for the Fire Service, Jules Pipe, chaired a regular meeting of his Deputy Mayor's Fire Board.

### **Counselling and Trauma team visit**

On 29 January, my Deputy Mayor for the Fire Service, Jules Pipe, visited Euston fire station to meet the leadership and members of LFB's Counselling and Trauma Team and discussed their work and the service they provide to the Brigade.

### **Long Service Award Ceremony**

On 3 February, my Deputy Mayor for the Fire Service, Jules Pipe, attended a service to honour LFB operational staff who have given 20 years of service to the Brigade.

## **Growth and Skills**

### **Association of Colleges London Principals' and CEOs' skills roundtable**

On 8 January, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth Howard Dawber visited South Thames College and met with staff and students, before holding a roundtable with leaders of London's colleges. They discussed opportunities and challenges facing the Further Education (FE) sector including employer partnerships, workforce and the wellbeing of students and staff. The session also covered the role of the FE sector in my plans for growth and opportunity.

### **Waltham Forest College Business Breakfast**

On 9 January, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber, attended the Waltham Forest College business breakfast to launch their new Business and Enterprise Hub. This space will support startups and SMEs by offering office facilities, business surgeries and advice through Grow London Local, my single front door business support services, delivered by London and Partners. The Hub also partners with Barts NHS Trust who will use the space to drive innovation in health, science and digital skills and offer students work experience. Howard

also met local leaders to discuss the London Growth Plan and how collaboration can address skills needs.

### **Richmond College visit**

On 14 January, my Deputy Mayor Howard Dawber visited Richmond upon Thames College (HRUC) to promote the London Growth Plan, and met Cllr Gareth Roberts, leader of Richmond upon Thames, and Cllr Paul Giesler. HRUC has received £36.6m Skills Capital grant funding for the renewal and rationalisation of their college estate. The Deputy Mayor also met Keith Smith, HRUC CEO, and Gavin Hughes, HRUC Principal, at the new campus where they visited the new education facilities and discussed the positive impact of the campus redevelopment. The college has five of Mayor's Skills Academy Quality Marks and is part of the West London Green Skills Hub.

### **Jobs & Skills Business Partnership**

On 5 February, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber, chaired my Jobs and Skills Business Partnership meeting. The Partnership provided insights on early proposals for my new green skills strategy, heard an update on the growth and skills offer, and discussed proposals for London's Get Britain Working Trailblazers that will help support economically inactive people and young people furthest from the labour market into work. The meeting concluded with a tour of Working Men's College, highlighting the newly renovated Maurice Hall, library and open learning space. These renovations were funded by my Skills for Londoners Capital Fund.

### **CEO of WorldSkills**

On 11 February, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber, met with the CEO of WorldSkills UK, Ben Blackledge, to discuss how City Hall can further work with and support WorldSkills competitions, to drive up skills excellence in the capital, increase participation and awareness, and celebrate Londoners.

## **Housing**

### **Engagement with the Home Builders Federation on building more homes**

On 22 January, my Deputy Mayor for Housing & Residential Development, Tom Copley, spoke at a meeting of chief executives and senior leaders amongst London's private housebuilding sector, organised by the Home Builders Federation. Tom set out how rebuilding rates of housing delivery following the disastrous legacy of the previous government would take time, but that City Hall was determined to do everything in its power to help the industry build more homes. He highlighted the flexibilities outlined in the Planning and Housing Practice Note published in December 2024, which were widely welcomed by the sector.

### **Waltham Forest Inclusive Growth Summit**

On 5 February, my Deputy Mayor for Housing & Residential Development, Tom Copley, attended the Waltham Forest Inclusive Growth Summit. He set out the social and economic imperative to fix the capital's housing crisis which is a top priority for City Hall and the new Government. To do this, he argued that there's no doubt that our planning system needs reform to create more certainty, particularly for small and medium sized homebuilders but that planning reform alone won't move the dial enough to get us up towards the Government's

housing needs assessment of 88,000 homes per year, which will require additional investment, both public and private.

## **The Economy, Business and Enterprise**

### **Grow London Local**

On 5 February, I celebrated one-year anniversary of Grow London Local, a one-stop-shop to support small businesses across the capital with £8.7m of Mayoral funding and delivered by London & Partners. The programme has surpassed targets in its first year, reaching 250,000 entrepreneurs and supporting 16,000 businesses – with 88% of those helped coming from communities that face additional barriers.

### **Business engagement and support**

Throughout this period, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber continued to work with key stakeholders on the development of the London Growth Plan and support business, including:

- On 9 January: met the Leader, Deputy Leader, Councillors and staff from the London Borough of Waltham Forest and visited Waltham Forest Adult Learning Centre and Lea Bridge Library to see skills and employment provision in the Borough and met local businesses.
- On 14 January: attended the launch of High Streets UK – a nationwide partnership of business representatives, set up to address the core challenges facing British high streets and unlock fresh opportunities for growth, in the houses of Parliament.
- On 14 January: met the Leader for the London Borough of Richmond and Assembly Member for South West London, and visited the Patch co-working space, local businesses and Richmond Upon Thames College.
- On 16 January: met the Leader and Councillors from the London Borough of Hounslow, visited the Sky Campus and Brompton Technology.
- On 20 January: met the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, and visited local co-working space Make It Barking, Barking Enterprise Centre, Industria, Eastbrook Studios and UCL PEARL during a tour of key local developments.
- On 21 January: met with the Small Business Commissioner to discuss the new Fair Payment Code.
- On 22 January: gave an update on the Growth Plan at London & Partners Strategic Partner Tourism Forum, which brings together senior operators primarily focused on sales or marketing in the tourism sector.
- On 28 January: met the Co-operative Party to discuss the London Growth Plan.
- On 30 January: discussed the London Growth Plan with the London & Partners Tourism Advisory Group, which provides strategic oversight of London as a visitor destination and is comprised of senior leaders from the tourism sector.
- On 30 January: attended the London Start Up and Trade Up Celebration Event – by the School of Social Entrepreneurs. The event marked the end of the 2023/2025 UK Shared Prosperity-funded learning programme, which saw 80 social entrepreneurs take part in a twelve-month initiative to develop ideas to build businesses for good.
- On 30 January: attended an event to mark new Barclay Eagle Labs to sites across London to support tech entrepreneurs and startups to achieve their full potential for growth.

- On 30 January: joined a boat tour of the Greenwich waterfront organised in partnership with Visit Greenwich and Uber Boat by Thames Clippers to hear about development projects on the riverfront; and spoke about the London Growth Plan in the context of these plans for Greenwich.
- On 4 February: visited the London Borough of Hillingdon with Jason Perry, Mayor of Croydon, to meet Councillors, the CEO of the Local Chambers of Commerce and local businesses, including Nest Climbing, and IGM Studio, and visited key sites including the Old Vinyl Factory and Stockley Business Park.
- On 6 February: attended TheCityUK's Annual Dinner to engage with key stakeholders in the financial services sector
- On 7 February: attended a one-year anniversary celebration event for Grow London Local programme delivered by London & Partners with small business owners and entrepreneurs.
- On 11 February: attended the East London Growth Group's breakfast roundtable, hosted by Sir Stephen Timms MP.

### **International promotion**

Throughout this period, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber, continued to promote London as the best city in which to invest and do business, and to support London companies to expand internationally, at the following events:

- On 15 January: spoke at a ceremony marking the commencement of the redevelopment of 75 London Wall, a joint investment between Malaysian infrastructure giant, Gamuda and UK-based development partner Castleforge.
- On 10 February: attended the launch event for London & Partners' 6th cohort of scale up businesses joining their Grow London Global programme. The event welcomed high growth London based companies onto the Grow London Global programme which will provide them with support to expand into new markets over the next 12 months.

## **Communities and Social Policy**

### **Muslim Council of Britain's Annual Muslim Leadership Dinner**

On 20 January, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Debbie Weekes-Bernard attended the Muslim Council of Britain's Annual Muslim Leadership Dinner 2025 as keynote speaker.

The event brought together 300 guests, a cross-section of leaders from across the country to reflect on their shared achievements and the progress made in strengthening communities nationwide. It was a great opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work of the Muslim Council of Britain to advocate for Muslims in London and across the UK.

### **Lunar New Year**

On 29 January, Dr Debbie Weekes Bernard, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, welcomed the Year of the Snake with a photo call alongside representatives from several East and Southeast Asian community groups and organisations outside the new visuals displayed at Tottenham Court Road station.

On 2 February, Debbie addressed the crowd on Trafalgar Square, to celebrate Lunar New Year and to thank East and Southeast Asian communities for their contributions to our city. I am

proud that London hosts some of the largest celebrations of Lunar New Year outside of Asia. Thousands of Londoners and visitors came together to enjoy the breath-taking lion dance and traditional eye-dotting ceremony.

### **Community stakeholders breakfast reception**

On 4 February, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, hosted a breakfast reception at City Hall for our community stakeholders, including leadership and representatives from civil society, community groups and faith groups right across London.

This event brought together over 100 guests to celebrate the work we've achieved together over the last year and reaffirm our commitment of working collaboratively to make London greener, safer and fairer. It included a poetry reading from Kareem Parkins-Brown, a speech from Shabna Begum, CEO of Runnymede Trust, and remarks from Deputy Mayor Weekes-Bernard. Guests had an opportunity preview my upcoming Loved and Wanted campaign and learn more about relevant programmes that may benefit and create impact for their communities.

## **Culture**

### **London Nightlife Task Force Announced**

On 4 February, I announced the members of the new London Nightlife Task Force at fabric nightclub. The Taskforce, made up of independent industry experts and chaired by fabric Co-Founder and Director Cameron Leslie, has been convened to examine the issues facing the capital's nightlife. The residual impact of the pandemic, rising cost of living and increased operational costs, shifts in consumer behaviour, staffing shortages and licensing issues have all impacted businesses. The Taskforce will work with UCL and research agency VibeLab to conduct research and engagement; they will then present their findings and recommendations, on how to ensure the capital's night-time economy works for everyone, in six months.

### **Tapestry Commission by Eva Rothschild at Sadler's Wells East**

On 13 January, my Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE, spoke at the unveiling of tapestries, *'The In Breath'* and *'The Out Breath'*, by artist Eva Rothschild, at Sadler's Wells East. The pieces celebrate the rich history of collaboration between dance and the visual arts in the newest dance space for London at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

## **Civil Society and Sport**

### **Equitable Volunteering Forum**

On 7 January, I convened 30 organisations from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector at Voluntary Action Islington to discuss equity in volunteering. The event examined how to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in volunteering in London and remove barriers for diverse volunteers. The session featured two keynote speakers, who shared their insights on the experiences of a learning-disabled volunteer at English Heritage and a consultation with attendees on a long-term Vision for Volunteering in London. Attendees reported the event was inspiring, and a valuable opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from across the sector including those from charities and volunteer centres.

# Children and Young Londoners

## **Newham Nursery Schools Annual Conference**

Joanne McCartney, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, had the pleasure of opening Newham Nursery Schools' annual conference on 6 January.

Since 2018, when I funded one of my three Early Years Hubs in Newham, Joanne has been a regular and welcomed presence at this conference. The conference's theme this year was 'equity in the early years' - giving early years practitioners from the borough, and across London, a chance to explore and celebrate inclusive practice. As well as fantastic keynote speeches, attendees could choose from several workshop topics, including deafness awareness and neurodiversity in early years.

In her opening remarks, Joanne acknowledged that the sector had experienced a great deal of change over the last year - from the expansion of early years entitlements for working parents, to the new government, which is putting early years at the centre of its' Plan for Change. She also took the opportunity to praise the hard work and dedication of early years practitioners across London.

Both Joanne and I understand the vital importance of access to high-quality early education - especially for the poorest children and families. I will continue to invest in the early years workforce through my Adult Skills Fund and Skills Bootcamps for Londoners programme. My Healthy Early Years London award also continues to support early years settings to improve child health outcomes.

## **Parliamentary Event Social and Emotional Learning**

On 7 January, Joanne McCartney, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, attended a fascinating parliamentary event on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

It was hosted by Dr. Sam Rushworth MP, and was a collaborative effort from five leading organisations, who have come together to address the challenge of enhancing social and emotional skills in education - Salzburg Global Seminar, The Thrive Approach, Skills Builder Partnership, Think Equal, and Cambridge University.

Discussion focused on the transformative impact of SEL on school attendance, behaviour, attainment, and wellbeing.

After the event, Joanne also met directly with Leslee Udwin, CEO of Think Equal, to hear more about her curriculum-based programme, designed to support social and emotional development in the early years.

## **4in10 Make Childcare Make Sense**

On 21 January, Joanne McCartney, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, attended an important half-day conference aiming to 'Make Childcare Make Sense' for low-income families in London. It was hosted at City Hall by Marina Ahmad AM, and organised by 4in10, London's Child Poverty Network, following their 2024 report, also titled 'Make Childcare Make Sense'.

As well as exploring this report, the conference heard from two expert panels. The first focused on parents' perspectives on what the need from the early education system, while the second

discussed how we can move towards a childcare system that helps alleviate rather than exacerbate child poverty in London.

Joanne gave closing remarks on the day and was able to set out our hopes for a more hopeful future, including welcoming the government's commitment to developing a child poverty strategy that addresses the root causes of poverty.

I am committed to working collaboratively with the government to support a strategy that works here in London. I am also confident that the government has a firm grasp of the challenges the early years sector is facing, and was delighted to see it take centre stage in the Plan for Change - with the ambition for a record 75% of children to reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.

## Health

### Great Mental Health Day

On 31 January, London came together for the fourth annual Great Mental Health Day, celebrating the vital work being done across the city to support mental health and wellbeing. Facilitated by Thrive LDN and supported by local authorities, this year's theme, *Small Actions for Others*, highlighted how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

As Mayor, I was proud to support this day by amplifying the message through my channels. I encouraged Londoners to check in on friends, family, and colleagues and highlighted the importance of children and young people's mental health. My Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney, also shared messages to further support young Londoners, signposting resources for young people and those who care for them.

Across London, a variety of events took place to mark the day, showcasing the incredible work being done by local authorities, community organisations, and grassroots groups to connect and support Londoners. Through City Hall's networks, we helped raise awareness of free training opportunities - such as Zero Suicide Alliance training - and other tools to empower Londoners to support their own and others' mental health.

Great Mental Health Day is a reminder that improving mental health is an ongoing effort. I am committed to ensuring every Londoner can access the support they need to stay mentally well, as we build a healthier London for everyone.

### Tests for Major Health Service Changes: Acute Adult Mental Health Services in North West London

As part of my commitment to champion our NHS and support improvements to London's health and care system, I have developed a framework of tests for major proposed changes to NHS services in London.

On 17 January I wrote to the NHS to set out my position on proposed changes to acute adult mental health care in north west London. This was informed by an independent review of the proposals by the Strategy Unit that I commissioned. My letter called for the NHS to set out clear plans and targets for tackling racial health inequalities and to continue working with people with lived experience to co-produce and improve services. I will publish the letter on the GLA website in due course.

## **Brixton Blood Donor Centre Opening**

On 22 January my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr. Debbie Weekes-Bernard attended the opening of a new and permanent blood donor centre in Brixton, in support of NHS Blood and Transplant.

Her presence at this event was a key moment to encourage Londoners to become regular blood donors and help save lives, particularly those from Black and Asian heritage as 12,000 donors of Black heritage are needed to meet the rising demand for better-matched blood. At the event, Deputy Mayor Dr. Debbie Weekes-Bernard gave opening remarks on the importance of communities coming stepping forward to donate, and talked about her own connection to this work which began when we donated blood together at City Hall in February 2023.

Brixton has one of the most densely populated Black heritage populations in England and Wales, so this new blood donor centre has the potential to be a beacon of hope. This is a particularly important time, as the NHS continues to face challenges, with England remaining in Amber Alert for low blood stock.

The event was attended by a number of notable guests from government, the health service and the third sector including, Professor Dame Elizabeth Anionwu, the UK's first sickle-cell and thalassemia nurse specialist, Baroness Gillian Joanna Merron and MP Bell Ribeiro-Addy, and the founders of the Sickle Cell Society and African Caribbean Leukemia Trust Charity (ACLT).

I personally supported the day by posting on my social media channels encouraging Londoners from diverse communities to consider becoming blood donors, so that no opportunities to save lives are lost.

## **Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC)**

### **Small Grants Programme**

On 15 January, OPDC opened applications for the next round of its Small Grants Programme.

The Small Grants Programme offers an opportunity for residents, businesses, conservationists, and voluntary groups who are active in their communities and passionate about local causes to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhoods over a 12-month period.

The programme will provide funding of up to £7,000 per project, with a particular focus this year on intergenerational projects which bring young people and older generations together, projects that support young people to help them manage stress and anxiety and promote self-care, projects that support underrepresented groups and encourage active community involvement, and projects that improve open spaces within the OPDC area.

Applications close on 18 February and OPDC will announce the successful initiatives shortly after this. More information can be found [here](#).

### **NLA Roundtable**

On 22 January, OPDC's Chief Executive David Lunts spoke at the NLA Cities Forum: North American Cities – Investment Models and Partnerships roundtable event.



Chaired by Professor Greg Clark CBE and attended by over 50 people, the event brought together representatives from London and Northern American cities built environment communities to explore new investment models that could be applied outside of traditional Central Activities Zones.

David and LLDC Chief Executive, Shazia Hussain represented London, whilst Tom Wright, President of the Regional Plan Association of New York and New Jersey, and Mary Rowe, President and CEO of the Canadian Urban Institute gave perspectives from across the Atlantic.

In the session David provided an overview of OPDC's plans for Old Oak, highlighting the scale of the opportunity as well as early investment in the project and delivery to date.

### **Midland Terrace Playground**

On 3 February, work started on improvements to Midland Terrace Playground.

Working directly with the local community and together with Ealing Council, OPDC has designed improvements that include introducing new and repairing existing play equipment for children, creating new paths seating and planting to brighten up the playground and bring new habitats for nature. These improvements will make the park more welcoming and accessible for everyone to enjoy.

Work is expected to last around eight weeks with the park due to re-open in time for Spring. More information can be found [here](#).

### **Early Market Engagement**

On 12 February, OPDC finished Early Market Engagement for the emerging Old Oak scheme. These meetings are helping OPDC to shape the proposition that will be taken to the market during procurement for a development partner, increasing awareness of OPDC/Old Oak priorities and updating the built environment industry on our plans.

During this engagement, OPDC has met with a range of developers, investors, and registered providers and will use findings from these meetings to further shape an illustrative masterplan for Old Oak, with a view to starting procurement for a development partner.

## **London Legacy Development Corporation**

### **Major League Baseball (MLB) London Series**

An impact study undertaken by Two Circles on behalf of LLDC and published on 13 January showed that the MLB London Series 2024 contributed £56.5million of economic benefits to London's economy.

The study also showed that the 2024 Series contributed £8.7 million of economic benefits to the wider UK economy, resulting in a total impact of £65.1million to the UK economy – up from £60million in 2023.

Last year's back-to-back matches between the New York Mets and Philadelphia Phillies was the second of a three-year deal that I signed to bring Major League Baseball to the capital. 2026 will see the third instalment of that deal.

## East Bank

### V&A East Storehouse

On 18 January, an open day was held at Here East ahead of the opening of V&A East Storehouse in spring. The open day was designed to provide prospective applicants with more information about employment opportunities at the Storehouse.

### London Assembly Economy, Culture and Skills Committee

LLDC Executive Director of Park Operations and Venues, Mark Camley, appeared before the London Assembly Economy, Culture and Skills Committee at City Hall on 10 February to discuss the impact of major sports events in London.

### Copper Box Arena

The 2025 Vitality Netball Nations Cup came to the Copper Box Arena on 8 and 9 February. In the Finals weekend of the event, Malawi played South Africa while England took on Uganda on 8 February. The third-place play-off and final happened the following day. All matches were shown live on Sky Sports.

## Planning and Regeneration

### Planning Decisions (Stage 2 referrals)

The Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration & the Fire Service, under powers delegated to him, sent a letter in response to the following Statutory Stage 2 referrals. The Deputy Mayor informed the relevant Local Planning Authority that he was content for them to determine the case themselves.

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision
2021/0950	3 Gallions Close	Barking and Dagenham	13/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2023/0346	13-15a Thames Road	Barking and Dagenham	27/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2024/0316	Exchange Plaza	Ealing	28/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2020/6615	50-56 Fore Street	Enfield	13/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2024/0114	Former Sipson Garden Centre	Hillingdon	27/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve

2023/0467	Land At Ferndale Street	Newham	20/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2023/0630	257 - 283 Ilderton Road (Corner of Sharratt Street)	Southwark	27/01/2025	Allow LPA to refuse
2024/0138	Gwynne Road	Wandsworth	13/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2023/0111	38-70 Baker Street	Westminster	13/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve

### Planning Decisions (Stage 1 referrals)

I have asked officers to send letters giving comments about the following Stage 1 referrals:

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision	Application Type
2024/0651	Devonport House - University of Greenwich	Greenwich	28/01/2025	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 1
2024/0676	Macbean Street	Greenwich	20/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2024/0652	Chessington World Of Adventures Resort	Kingston upon Thames	20/01/2025	No Stage 2 required	Stage 1
2024/0672	Signal Park Phase Two	Kingston upon Thames	13/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2024/0673	54 Kennington Road	Lambeth	13/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2024/0729	Thornton Park	Lambeth	20/01/2025	No Stage 2 required	Stage 1
2025/0007	10 Pascal Street	Lambeth	22/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2024/0599	Thomas Lane Yard	Lewisham	20/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1

2024/0600	Lewisham Shopping Centre	Lewisham	20/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2024/0615	Land at Knights Road	Newham	20/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2024/0662	Primrose Wharf	Newham	16/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2024/0727	Thames Road Industrial Estate	Newham	27/01/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2024/0629	1 Lakeside Drive	Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation	27/01/2025	No Stage 2 required	Stage 1
2024/0761	193-207, High Road, Ilford	Redbridge	24/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2025/0056	Chambers Wharf	Southwark	30/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2024/0751	PA/24/01932	Tower Hamlets	27/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues
2024/0765	Lea Bridge Station	Waltham Forest	10/01/2025	No Strategic Issues	No Strategic Issues

## Local Plans

On 22 January, at the request of the examination Inspector, GLA officers set out my opinion of general conformity in relation to the London Borough of Enfield Local Plan. At the Inspector's request, the statement given on my behalf by officers during the hearing was also submitted to the examination on 23 January and was subsequently published alongside LB Enfield's examination documents.

On 4 February, GLA officers responded on my behalf to the Draft Lea Bridge Gateway Stage 1 Masterplan (part of the two-stage masterplan process in Policy E7 of the London Plan - Industrial intensification, co-location and substitution), requesting clarity on points in the draft stage 1 masterplan before a final version is submitted as part of London Borough of Waltham Forest's Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations evidence base and enable the borough to begin draft stage 2 preparations.

## Key engagements

Among my additional engagements since my last report were the following:

- I attended the Assembly Budget and Performance Committee on 8 January
- I held my regular meeting with the Met Police Commissioner on 9 January
- I attended the London Government Dinner on 9 January
- I attended a speech given by the Prime Minister at UCL East on 13 January
- I held my regular planning meeting on 13 January
- I visited Chance UK, a mentoring organisation funded by City Hall, on 14 January
- I met with the Minister for Investment on 14 January
- I attended Mayor's Question Time on 16 January
- I received an Honorary Doctorate from UCL East on 16 January
- I visited Hafiz Mustafa's new store opening on 17 January
- I spoke at the City Hall service for Holocaust Memorial Day on 20 January
- I met with HMIC Andy Cooke on 21 January
- I met with the Met Police Commissioner on 21 January
- I attended HMICFRS: Policing Performance Oversight Group on 22 January
- I attended the Assembly Draft Plenary session on 23 January
- I joined the Met Police at Holborn Police Station on 23 January
- I spoke with the Chancellor on 24 January
- I joined a regular meeting with Downing Street and regional Mayors on 24 January
- I attended the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration service since the liberation of Auschwitz, on 26/27 January
- I held my regular meeting with Transport for London on 28 January
- I met with the Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister on 28 January
- I visited a "No Second Night Out" homelessness service on 29 January
- I chaired a meeting of the VRU Reference Group on 29 January
- I attended a memorial service for Nicky Gavron on 29 January
- I launched the Bakerloop consultation on 31 January
- I met with the Home Secretary and Met Commissioner on 31 January
- I held my regular planning meeting on 3 February
- I officially launch the Nightlife Taskforce on 4 February
- I attended a Downing Street reception to celebrate the UK's AI industry on 4 February
- I chaired a meeting of the Transport for London Board on 5 February
- I spoke at the Project Leaders Transport meeting on 5 February
- I joined a Home Office Roundtable on Mobile Phone Theft on 6 February
- I joined the official opening of Sadlers Wells East on 6 February
- I met with the Foreign Secretary on 10 February
- I met with the Minister for Africa on 10 February
- I joined Crime and Policing Minister, Diana Johnson, to see the work of the GLA VRU on 11 February
- I held my regular meeting with Transport for London on 11 February