

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Sakina Sheikh AM**

Chair of the London Assembly Planning and  
Regeneration Committee  
C/o [Memuna.Hussain@london.gov.uk](mailto:Memuna.Hussain@london.gov.uk)

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Dear Sakina,

Thank you for your letter regarding the Planning for London Programme and a future London Plan review. I am pleased to note that the London Assembly Planning and Regeneration Committee support the programme's approach of embedding my Good Growth objective to build strong and inclusive communities by encouraging early and inclusive engagement in the planning process.

The Committee has set out three main recommendations, which I respond to in turn below:

1. *The GLA should explain how its stakeholder engagement for the Planning for London Programme will be truly representative of Londoners, including groups which are historically not well engaged by the planning system. The Committee heard that the GLA and local authorities need to invest in different communities to enable a diverse range of Londoners to be able to play an active role in planning. We understand that the Planning for London Programme has recently run a series of invitation-only events bringing together 'representative groups of Londoners', and the Committee would welcome an update from the GLA planning team on the findings from these meetings.*

The findings from these events are currently being collated and will be published on the Greater London Authority (GLA) website as soon as they are available. Officers will notify the Committee accordingly.

2. *The GLA should establish a co-production group of a range of Disabled Londoners and Disabled people's organisations ahead of the review of the London Plan, when it takes place in the next Mayoral term.*

Officers are currently working with the London Housing Panel to co-design engagement activities with people who are precariously housed to better understand their views through the Disability Stakeholder Forum.

In addition, several organisations that support disabled Londoners have signed up for the Planning for London Programme stakeholder events, and officers are continuing to identify and directly contact other organisations and inviting them to participate in the programme.

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3. *The Planning for London Programme should carry out the groundwork for the following to be included in the next London Plan:*

*a. A Mayoral Statement of Community Involvement, which will set out standards for local authorities and developers to follow.*

In my 2021 manifesto, I committed to finding ways to improve how communities can be involved in the planning process.

A statement of community involvement sets out how a local planning authority will engage with communities in fulfilling its statutory duties. My role and the role of the GLA do not fall within this framework. However, I am committed to helping improve how communities engage with the wider planning system, ranging from specific development proposals to policy and plan-making stages where the statutory frameworks that are used to decide individual planning applications are developed.

Officers are preparing a framework to set out the principles that will inform the work of GLA Planning in this area and the resources to help communities navigate and understand what is undoubtedly a complicated system, and will be looking to engage with community groups in this work. The GLA is also continuing to develop enhanced tools and data to support Londoners' involvement in the planning system.

*b. A requirement that planning applications incorporate co-production with communities at an early stage.*

I am committed to helping communities engage more effectively in the planning process, but I have limited influence and powers in this area. To deliver on this objective requires a wider influencing of lawmakers.

That being said, wherever I have influence, through the levers of planning policy and guidance, I will continue to advocate that Londoners are engaged fully in the process of shaping their local community and the environment they live in.

*c. Embedding accessible and inclusive design throughout the London Plan.*

Policies throughout my London Plan (such as SD6, SD7, SD9, D3, D4, D7, D8, S3, S6, HC6 and T2) assist boroughs and applicants to ensure that new developments meet the needs of a wide range of disabled Londoners. Policies such as SD1, SD10 and D5 emphasise the importance of collaboration with local communities, including a broad spectrum of groups. Policy SD10 protects and promotes the places and spaces that are particularly valued by local communities, including community facilities and social infrastructure.

Officers are also starting work on London Plan Guidance to further support the implementation of accessibility, inclusion and equality, as required by the London Plan.

The future review of the London Plan provides an opportunity to refine and improve this approach. I am committed to ensuring that this is informed by Londoners with a lived experience of disability, organisations that represent the disabled, and access and inclusion experts.

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*d. Setting out best practice for local authorities to address barriers to participation in the planning system. These barriers include digital divides, technical planning language, information imbalances, language barriers, and engagement fatigue.*

I share the commitment of the Committee to see a step change in engagement on planning matters, especially broader representation reflecting London's diversity, one of our city's greatest assets. The GLA has commissioned consultants to explore the barriers to participation in the planning system with an aim of developing solutions to address this.

My officers will ensure the Committee remains updated as the Planning for London Programme progresses.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London