

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2768

Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action in relation to holiday periods 2025-26

Executive summary:

The GLA's Civil Society and Sport unit delivers on the Mayor's priorities to work with communities and civil society groups across London, to encourage active participation in community and civic life. It supports Londoners of all ages to volunteer, live active lives, and take action to improve London.

With initial mobilisation approved under Mayoral Decision (MD) 3322, and expanded provision approved under cover of MD3371, Holiday Hope supports young people by increasing their access to youth spaces and positive opportunities during school holidays. It directly contributes to the Mayor's overarching ambition that 250,000 young people will have access to positive opportunities by 2028. This Decision sets out plans for Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action, which will provide additional support and positive opportunities to young people through youth social action and volunteering.

In May 2025, MD3371 delegated authority to the Assistant Director, Civil Society and Sport, to approve, through Assistant Director Decision form(s), detailed expenditure plans for up to £400,000 on volunteering and youth social action activities in relation to holiday periods. This Decision seeks said approval in order to deliver these activities (which help young people access positive opportunities) between July 2025 and April 2026.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Civil Society and Sport approves expenditure of up to £400,000, to deliver adult and youth volunteering and youth social action activities in relation to holiday periods from July 2025 to April 2026. This expenditure consists of:

- grant funding of up to £390,000, awarded to the Mayor's Fund for London
- up to £10,000 as a contribution towards expenses for volunteers, ensuring Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action is accessible and equitable; and that there are no barriers to participation in volunteering opportunities.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Alice Wilcock

Position: Assistant Director, Civil Society and Sport

Signature:



Date:

11/07/2025

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Holiday Hope is a core delivery component of the Supporting and Inspiring Young Londoners programme. Holiday Hope directly contributes towards the Mayor's overarching ambition that 250,000 young people will have access to positive opportunities by 2028. Holiday Hope uses school holiday provision to increase young people's access to youth spaces and positive opportunities, with food available. It recognises that holiday periods can be challenging, with young people often unable to access the provision they receive through education settings. In response, this work connects and strengthens high-quality holiday activity across London.
- 1.2. The GLA's Civil Society and Sport unit (CSS) delivers on the Mayor's priorities to work with communities and civil society groups across London, to encourage active participation in community and civic life. It supports Londoners of all ages to volunteer, live active lives, and take action to improve London. Unit work also includes support for youth civic action – this includes activities such as social action (taking action on issues that matter to individuals) and volunteering, to enable young people to actively engage in their communities and contribute to positive social change. This can involve political, social, environmental or community-based projects. Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action will combine the CSS's expertise with the Holiday Hope project, and provide additional support and positive opportunities to young people, through a structured programme of youth social action and volunteering opportunities. This will create positive opportunities and outcomes for young Londoners.
- 1.3. The holiday periods pose significant challenges for young Londoners – especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and particularly around safety, access to positive opportunities, and food insecurity. Evidence-based research shows that youth social action and volunteering play a significant role in supporting young people's personal and civic growth, and their educational and career aspirations.
- 1.4. Research also shows that it is under-represented groups who would benefit the most from volunteering and social action; but that these opportunities are not always accessible, due to barriers such as financial and time constraints, and caring responsibilities. By removing the structural barriers, under-represented young Londoners can have more access to social action and volunteering activity within and outside the holiday periods. This work will therefore reduce inequalities and social injustice faced by under-represented young Londoners.
- 1.5. Youth civic action work will empower under-represented young Londoners. It allows them to use their voice to become change-makers in their communities, and to tackle key issues facing the city – such as the environment, social injustice, mental health and safe spaces. This work will be done through a combination of skills development; positive action; partnerships and collaboration; and community engagement. Activity will support young Londoners to gain the knowledge, skills and networks needed to create a more inclusive, resilient and equitable city.
- 1.6. In May 2025, MD3371 delegated authority to the Assistant Director, Civil Society and Sport, to approve, through Assistant Director Decision form(s), detailed expenditure plans for up to £400,000 on volunteering and youth social action activities in relation to holiday periods. This Decision seeks said approval, in order to deliver these activities (which help young people access to positive opportunities) from July 2025 to April 2026.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action will provide additional support and positive opportunities to young people through youth social action and volunteering. A budget of up to £400,000 in 2025-26 will be used for the following:

- up to £390,000 will be awarded, as grant-funding, to the Mayor’s Fund for London (MFL) to:
 - work with up to 15 grassroots organisations (who MFL has partnered with for its Kitchen Social Project, and will deliver through a place-based approach)
 - support up to 570 under-represented young people between July 2025 and April 2026, through youth-led youth social action and volunteering
- up to £10,000 will be retained by CSS for volunteers’ expenses; this ensures that Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action is accessible and equitable, and that volunteering opportunities are not cost-prohibitive.

2.2. MD3371 approved the award of up to £900,000 grant per annum, for three years, to MFL. This is a contribution to the costs of delivering positive opportunities through MFL’s Kitchen Social project. The MD also set out the unique position that MFL is in to deliver the Holiday Hope outcomes – including its significant network of over 600 youth and community organisations and partners, alongside proven delivery experience, at significant scale, across London. For the same reasons, MFL is also in a unique position to deliver the Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action outcomes. Importantly, with MFL already delivering Holiday Hope (and therefore with timelines and set-up costs already accounted for), providing this grant to MFL will provide value for money – and can reach more young Londoners, and create more outcomes, than if those costs needed to be incurred again.

2.3. The MFL grant of £390,000 will contribute towards the following:

- Up to £262,000 will fund up to 15 grassroots youth/community organisations to deliver structured youth social action and volunteering projects, targeting those aged 14 and over, during school holiday periods.
- £120,000 will contribute towards programme delivery support costs, including management, mentoring and supporting delivery organisations. It will also support the coordination of volunteers, as set out in paragraph 2.6.
- £8,000 will be used to deliver:
 - pitch events, where young people will pitch their project ideas to receive a small grant (funding for which will be directed via the grassroots youth/community organisation grants)
 - a showcase event that will celebrate the young people’s successes, share learnings and impacts.

2.4. An anticipated 570 under-represented young people will participate in these activities, which will contribute up to 5480 opportunities towards the 250,000 positive opportunities target. It is acknowledged that some participants may have higher support requirements than others; therefore, the number of beneficiaries may be reduced in order to facilitate this. Young people will be recruited directly through Kitchen Social Hubs’ existing community outreach networks. These typically include schools; housing estates; youth clubs; pupil referral units (PRU); special education needs and disabilities (SEND)/alternative provision (AP) networks, and community faith groups. Hubs will be supported by MFL to apply a consistent equity-led recruitment framework, to ensure that under-represented and under-served young people are supported. These are the young people least likely to have access to holiday activities, due to barriers such as financial and time constraints, and caring responsibilities.

2.5. Outcomes for young people include, but are not limited to:

- increased access to positive opportunities for under-represented young Londoners whose voices are unheard, providing the opportunity to take part in youth civic action
- hands-on experience that connects to future training, education and employment

- increased employability, confidence and life skills for young Londoners – including communication, teamwork, event planning, project management, public speaking, goal setting and community leadership
 - knowledge and resources that create an understanding of how to act on issues that matter to them
 - increased community connections, including improved individual wellbeing, increased civic engagement, and enhanced community resilience.
- 2.6. Team London Ambassadors (volunteers from the Mayor of London’s volunteering programme, Team London Volunteering, who are regularly deployed at resilience and major events) will provide additional support, increasing the capacity of delivery organisations. This will be done in the following ways:
- In the pilot year, around 100 volunteers will be deployed to support the delivery of Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action.
 - Around 70 per cent will be deployed across Kitchen Social Events in clusters of five, and coordinated by CSS staff. Team London’s existing deployment processes will be used in partnership with delivery organisations. These events will take place during school holidays, with volunteers supporting the delivery of these events, welcoming young people and supporting them to engage with the activities. With Mayor of London-branded uniforms, the presence of these volunteers provides a clear message of the Mayor’s support for this flagship programme; and offers organisations practical, hands-on, on-the-ground support.
 - 30 per cent of Team London volunteers will be deployed during term-time activations, as part of the MFL Access Aspiration programme that connects young people with skills and training towards building their confidence in careers. Team London Ambassadors will be supporting this programme as mock interviewers, trained to support a young person to navigate and get the best out of an interview scenario. They will also deliver talks on the value of volunteering to inspire the next generation of London’s volunteers.
- 2.7. Through their participation volunteers themselves will also benefit from Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action, including:
- training on interview skills, and engaging with young people, to facilitate supportive mock interviews
 - an opportunity to share the value of volunteering through their life experience and skills
 - building cross-cultural and community connections between older, experienced volunteers and young people
 - a signed Certificate from the Mayor for supporting his flagship programme.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority the Mayor must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. Activity within the Holiday Hope projects will provide support to under-represented young people. This includes young people with protected characteristics, and those who are more vulnerable. Examples of disadvantaged groups that the Holiday Hope programme will particularly focus on include young people with SEND; young refugees and asylum seekers; young people with a social worker;

young care leavers; and those who are at risk of exclusion, or who have been excluded, from school or college. Careful consideration will be given to ensuring appropriate accessibility for the widest range of young people and this will include targeted engagement where considered supportive. Young people’s voice and co-production will be utilised in planning, development and delivery to maximise effectiveness.

- 3.3. London is home to more than 2m children and young people aged 0-19. It has the highest rate of child poverty in England (after housing costs are taken into account), with rates expected to increase in coming years. Poorer children are more likely to underachieve at school, be unemployed and have lower incomes. Poverty is significantly worse in Black-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani families; and more than 50 per cent of families with a disabled child live at the margins of poverty. This has all been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.4. Young Londoners have lost tens of millions of pounds in funding for youth services since 2011. Informal, non-statutory services have an important preventative role to play. Getting good support to young people in their teenage years is vital, especially to support the most disadvantaged young people. Youth services are vital to young people who have been left behind or marginalised. These services enable them to reach their potential, and play a valuable role in helping them avoid being drawn into crime. MOPAC’s data on knife crime demonstrates that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people are over-represented as both victims and perpetrators; and are overwhelmingly male, with many and complex vulnerabilities.
- 3.5. CSS previously commissioned research to look at the barriers and challenges involved in enabling Londoners to participate in volunteering. This was to ensure that volunteering and social action projects are structured in a way that is as appealing and accessible as possible. Holiday Hope Youth Civic Action will use these learnings to create an inclusive model that ensures the opportunities are open and accessible, and create outcomes for the young Londoners who need them most.
- 3.6. CSS-commissioned research (completed by London Metropolitan University) produced an evidence-based systems map. This demonstrated that under-represented young Londoners, and specifically those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, were least likely to access youth social action and youth volunteering – but would benefit the most. The research has highlighted seven conditions that need to be in place for successful youth civic action; these will be embedded in the delivery.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

4.1. The key risks are identified in the table below:

Risk	Mitigating action	Risk rating: Red, amber, green
Participants are not from the groups most in need – meaning that young people who need opportunities and support the most are missing out on them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment strategy plans include targeting, via tried and tested methods. They are designed using learnings from young people. • The programme specification sets out the framework required to ensure the programme is accessible to those young people that need it most. • MFL is experienced in this area. On a project level, it is well connected to grassroots organisations (through its Kitchen Social Hubs) with a place-based model of delivery that will access those most in need. 	Green

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the monitoring and reporting structure, MFL will provide data for ongoing monitoring that can be used to adjust approaches. 	
Potential duplication/confusion of comms messaging around the Holiday Hope work, and this additional Holiday Hope youth civic action work. This may dilute publicity and impact, and confuse internal and external stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings with the Holiday Hope boards and working groups, as well as mandate governance structures, will ensure all staff working across Holiday Hope are connected and working efficiently. • A communications strategy is being developed for Holiday Hope and the Mayor’s work with young people. This will be communicated and disseminated via the Supporting and Inspiring Young Londoners governance structures to ensure that coordination is effective. 	Green
Support needs of participants require significant resource which is not available/reduces support for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFL is expert in delivering high-quality engagement for young people. Planning ensures this work is accessible, and that appropriate support and safeguards are in place. • Grassroots organisations have knowledge and experience to support young people to deliver the programme; and bring on board the under-represented Londoners who will most benefit. • Volunteers will receive tailored training to ensure that those deployed are in the best position to take part and support young people to engage. 	Amber

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2. Holiday Hope youth civic action directly supports delivery of GLA commitments around supporting young people. The GLA has defined several London-level, long-term outcomes that reflect Londoners’ aspirations for the city – and to which the GLA, in partnership with others, is working towards. These include:

- children and young Londoners achieve the health and learning outcomes they need to thrive at every stage of development
- children and young Londoners have the positive opportunities needed to be successful
- Londoners have the skills they need to improve their lives.

4.3. Holiday Hope youth civic action directly supports the delivery of GLA commitments around celebrating London. It does so by providing opportunities to volunteer and take part in events, and encouraging young people to engage in their communities.

Consultations and impact assessments

4.4. The London Child Poverty Report 2023 shows that London has one of the highest rates of child poverty in England (after housing costs are taken into account), with rates expected to increase in coming years. Poorer children are more likely to underachieve at school; be unemployed; and have lower incomes. Trust for London recently reported that poverty is significantly worse in Black-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani families; and that more than 50 per cent of families with a disabled child live at the margins of poverty. This has all been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis.

Therefore, the holiday periods pose significant challenges to families, children and young Londoners – particularly around safety, access to positive opportunities and food insecurity.

- 4.5. CSS-commissioned research (completed by London Metropolitan University) produced an evidence-based systems map. This demonstrated that youth social action and youth volunteering are not readily accessible to under-represented groups. There is evidence that social action and volunteering have benefits to personal and civic qualities (such as feelings of justice, responsibility, empathy, respect, being community-focused, and wanting to take action and create positive change) across all backgrounds, with the most dramatic increase amongst lower socio-economic groups of young people.
- 4.6. This research created an evidence base showing the following:
- youth-led opportunities to design and deliver projects in their area of interest were key
 - development of personal qualities: a valuable outcome from taking part in social action is the benefit towards a young person's personal qualities
 - progression to employment or education: impact evaluation data showed that young people who completed a social action project were more likely to enter employment or education than those who left the programme early
 - challenges such as access to networks, are particularly faced by under-represented groups to volunteer and be social changemakers
 - socio-economically disadvantaged youth, and those from under-represented communities, remain under-represented in volunteering.

Subsidy control

- 4.7. The funding within this programme has been considered in line with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. GLA officers have considered whether this project will involve the provision of grant funding to an enterprise likely to receive funding from other public sector organisations, such that this activity has been considered further in light of the subsidy control principles. The relevant activity here is the award of up to £390,000 to the Mayor's MFL for volunteering and youth social action activities that help young people access to positive opportunities in relation to holiday periods.
- 4.8. As with the subsidy control considerations set out in MD3371, the following should be noted:
- The objective of the proposed funding is a response to the increased and unequal needs faced by young people during the holiday period. This supports the GLA's wider policy objectives of promoting economic and social development and reducing inequalities.
 - The proposed funding is considered a proportionate response, as it will enable MFL to provide food, skills training and positive opportunities through youth and community groups across London.
 - There is no alternative route within this period for the GLA to support the Holiday Hope objectives at such significant scale. As discussed above, MFL can be considered unique in its ability to deliver this project at pan-London scale during holiday periods. It holds a unique position in London through its significant network of over 600 youth and community organisations and partners, that can be rapidly scaled.

Conflict of interest

- 4.9. Due consideration has been given to potential conflicts of interest within this project; however, none have been found, including from those drafting, reviewing or clearing this decision form. During the delivery of work contained within this decision, declarations of interest will be made where relevant (such as during procurement exercises) and any conflicts of interest will be managed appropriately.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. This decision seeks approval for expenditure of up to £400,000 to deliver adult and youth volunteering and youth social action activities in relation to holiday periods from July 2025 to April 2026, consisting of:
- up to £390,000 awarded, as grant funding, to the MFL
 - up to £10,000 as a contribution towards expenses for volunteers.
- 5.2. The expenditure of up to £400,000 will be funded from the CSS 2025-26 budget. This consists of up to £200,000 from each of the CSS Supporting & Inspiring Young London Activity, and Youth and Schools budget lines.
- 5.3. There is sufficient budget to cover this expenditure.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. The project will be delivered according to the following timetable:

Activity	Timeline
Funding Agreement with MFL signed	July 2025
Team London Ambassador Recruitment	July 2025
Announcement	July 2025
Summer holiday youth civic action delivery period	July – August 2025
First Team London Volunteers deployed for term time activations	September 2025
October half term youth civic action delivery in progress	Mid-October 2025
Christmas holiday youth civic action delivery period	Dec 2025
February half term youth civic action delivery period	Feb 2026
Easter holiday youth civic action delivery period	April 2026
Delivery end date	April 2026
Project closure	May 2026

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Satbinder Kooner has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 7 July 2025.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:



Date:

07/07/2025