

MAYOR OF LONDON

Léonie Cooper AM

Chair of the London Assembly Environment Committee
C/o Anita.Zivkow@london.gov.uk

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Date: 11 December 2025

Dear Léonie,

Thank you for the London Assembly Environment Committee's report on 'Parks: Under Pressure', which was published on 26 September 2025.

Parks are a vital part of London's green infrastructure, which provides multiple benefits for both the physical and mental health of Londoners and plays an important role in reducing health inequalities. My ambition is to continue to work to improve access to London's green spaces for all Londoners.

The annex below provides information on the actions I am taking in response to your recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

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

Sir Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

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Annex

Mayor of London's response to the recommendations of the London Assembly Environment Committee's report Parks: Under Pressure

Recommendation 1

The new London Plan should include clear minimum standards for the provision of green space per person. It should also restate and strengthen the commitment to ensuring all Londoners have access to high quality green space within 800m (a ten-minute walk) of their home.

This recommendation will be considered as part of the development of the next London Plan. Note that the current plan contains no policy related to an 800-metre distance between homes and green spaces (current requirements around access to open space are set out in [Policy G4](#)). The Mayor reasserted his commitment earlier this year to boosting biodiversity and increasing public access to genuinely green spaces.

Recommendation 2

The GLA should fund Parks for London to develop resources to address the strategic challenges facing London's parks, including case studies of innovative funding for parks in London, such as habitat banks for 'biodiversity net gain' and ways to create stronger links between parks and NHS health provision.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) funded Parks for London to develop the Centre for Excellence for London's green spaces from 2021 to 2023. This included funding for Parks for London to develop resources for green space managers, including guidance on funding and managing parks, which is available on its website and through peer-learning networks. The Mayor continues to fund Parks for London through a subscription as an 'enhanced supporter' to connect, support and advocate for the parks sector.

This year, the Mayor also launched his over £12 million Green Roots Fund to help improve green and blue infrastructure across London. Available funding ranges from £10,000 to £500,000, and applications are welcome from not-for-profit organisations as well as local authorities.

The Mayor recognises the value of parks and public green spaces in addressing health inequalities and improving health outcomes. The Mayor also supports the work that Parks for London has delivered to improve the health and wellbeing of Londoners.

Recommendation 3

The GLA should fund Parks for London and/or other partners to develop a regular (every two years) London-wide survey of parks users and volunteers to understand more about who is involved in parks across the city, practical barriers to volunteering, and to track progress in increasing diversity of community involvement.

The Mayor recognises and values the huge contribution made by Londoners volunteering in parks and green spaces, community gardens and allotments, and the benefits this can bring. The GLA works with a wide variety of partners that support green volunteering, such as London Wildlife Trust, The Conservation Volunteers and Trees for Cities through the London Urban Forest Partnership, and Thames 21 and National Park City through the Clean and Healthy Waterways Plan work. These organisations do a fantastic job in welcoming and supporting a diverse range of volunteers and are best placed, along with those responsible for park management, such as the

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boroughs and Royal Parks, to understand the barriers to involvement and to track progress in increasing diversity.

The Mayor carried out a survey earlier this year on connecting with nature in London via the [Talk London](#) platform. A representative sample of almost 1,200 Londoners responded, providing useful information on waterways and natural spaces and how people enjoy London's outdoor spaces. The results are being used to inform the Mayor's Clean and Healthy Waterways Plan and other green infrastructure programmes.

The Deputy Mayor of London for Environment and Energy also led a London Climate Action Week Youth Summit at the Zoological Society of London, which brought together over 150 young people to explore how young Londoners can take climate and nature action in the city. This work will continue to inform policy development.

The use of parks and green spaces, plus the wider natural environment, is also tracked annually by Natural England in the comprehensive People and Nature Surveys for England.

Recommendation 4

Parks for London should continue to share guidance around inclusive design of parks and bystander training, and monitor uptake of this through inclusion, as a criteria of its next Good Parks for London assessment in 2026. Parks managers across London should involve a range of stakeholders, including women and girls, in co-designing parks to ensure that they are welcoming for everyone.

The Mayor is committed to ensuring that the benefits of parks and green spaces are available to everyone as part of his mission to build a greener and fairer London. Research shows that global majority communities are more than twice as likely to live in an area deprived of green space. The new Green Roots Fund will contribute to tackling this social injustice, empowering communities with the opportunity to increase their access to green and blue spaces.

Inclusive design and management of parks and green spaces are essential, and the Mayor has published [guidance on safety in public space for women, girls and gender diverse people](#). This sets out gender-inclusive principles to inform planning, development and design processes, offering practical actions to ensure that we create public spaces that feel safer and more inclusive to all.

The Mayor welcomes the role of Parks for London in sharing guidance and training on this issue.

Recommendation 5

The GLA should continue to support climate resilience by funding the creation of new parks, as well as sustainable drainage systems and planting approaches in existing ones. Work should continue with Parks for London to share good practice on adapting parks and green spaces for a changing climate.

Adapting London to a changing climate, including through nature-based solutions such as rain gardens, wetlands and tree planting, is a mayoral priority.

Since taking office in 2016, the Mayor has helped transform London's natural spaces, improving and creating over 900 hectares of green space – equivalent to more than 2,000 football pitches. He has restored 3.7 km of river, creating habitat for wildlife to flourish, and supported planting over 600,000 trees across London (including two new woodlands), totalling 85 hectares.

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As you will know, the Flood Ready London Partnership, the board on which the Deputy Mayor of London for Environment and Energy sits, is leading the implementation of London's first surface water flooding strategy. This strategy, along with its Year One Action Plan, includes a wide range of initiatives focused on accelerating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) delivery. To complement the strategy, the soon-to-be-published SuDS Opportunity Mapping will be a key resource. This includes a dedicated data layer identifying greenspace SuDS opportunities, which can help target interventions and support strategic SuDS planning.

In addition, the Mayor's [SuDS Sector Guidance for Parks and Green Spaces](#) provides practical advice on implementing sustainable drainage in these settings. This sector guidance document explains the importance of SuDS, as well as key considerations involved with their planning and delivery, specifically for park settings.

The Mayor is also encouraging SuDS delivery organisations to upload their completed schemes to the [SuDS Retrofit Map](#), which showcases examples of SuDS delivered in parks and other settings across the city. This is a valuable tool for sharing good practice and inspiring further innovation in adapting green spaces to a changing climate.

The new Green Roots Fund will invest more than £12 million to make neighbourhoods across the capital greener, healthier and more climate resilient. The first round of applications are currently being assessed. Any organisations with projects to deliver new parks or SuDS are welcome and encouraged to apply for future rounds of funding.