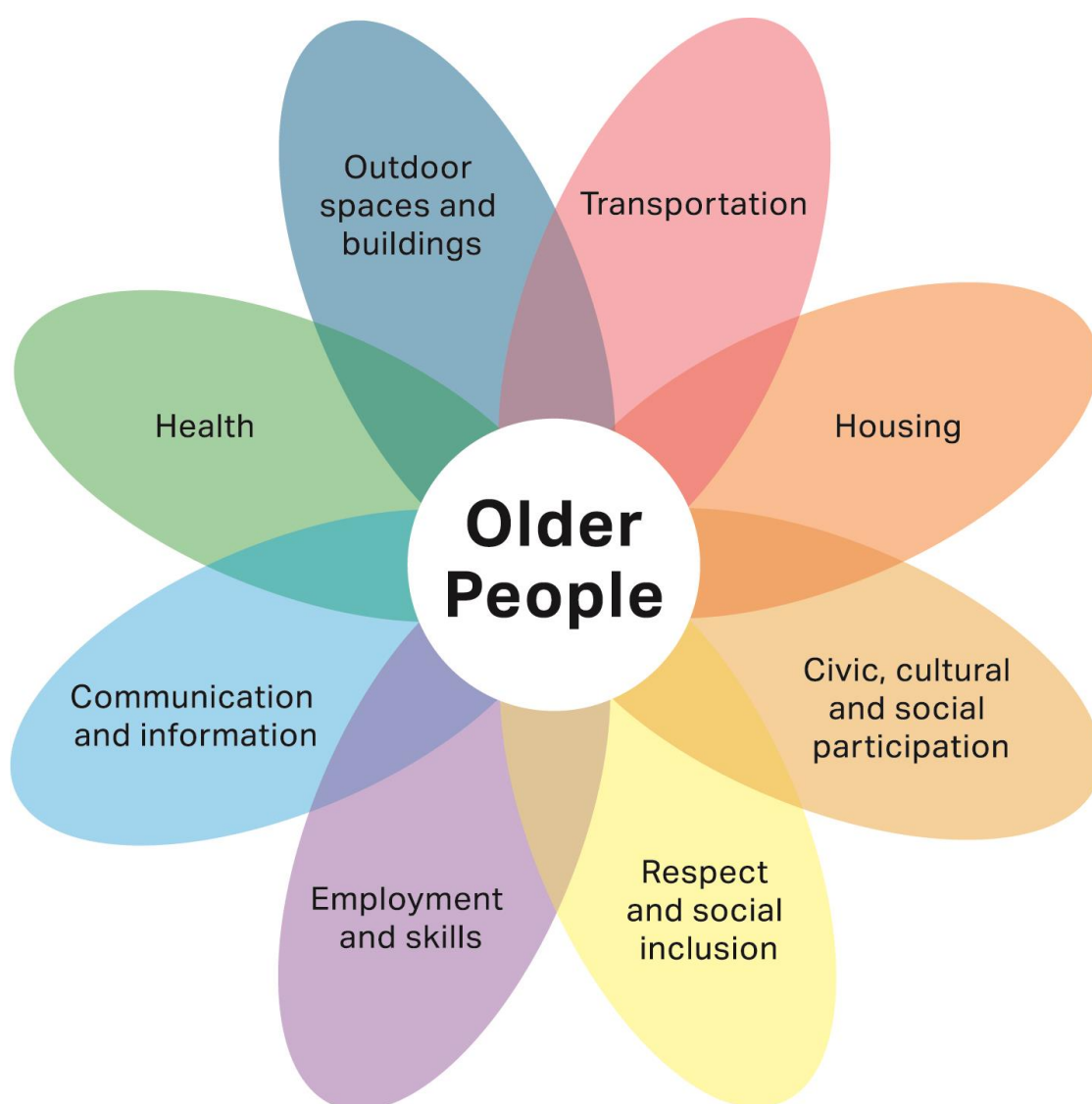


# Towards an Age-friendly London Progress Report 2025



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## Mayor's Foreword

As Mayor, my mission is simple: I want to make London a place where all Londoners can thrive. This includes making it the greatest city in the world to grow old in. If the capital is to be truly inclusive, it must be a place that everyone – no matter their age – is proud to call home.

That is why, in November 2023, I published my Age Friendly Action Plan: a bold strategy developed with older Londoners to ensure that our city works for them. This report, covering the period from November 2023 to March 2025, sets out the impressive progress that City Hall and Transport for London have made to change older Londoners' lives for the better on areas including housing, access to work, transport and much more.

A snapshot of successes includes keeping travel free for older Londoners, provision of more public toilets across our transport network, and making our city's streets safer and more accessible for older pedestrians.

We have also provided more specialist, accessible, and adaptable housing that meets the needs of older Londoners, helping them to keep their homes warm and their bills low with heating and insulation improvements. Thanks to our campaigns, older Londoners on low incomes received £9.5m of unclaimed Pension Credit – a vital source of support for some of the most vulnerable in our society.

For older Londoners who still want to work, we have provided free courses to empower people of all ages to find work or upskill and change career. Many older Londoners have also accessed our free essential digital skills training and our Digital Inclusion Service for Londoners, equipping them with tools they need to get online and be connected.

The tireless work of dedicated older volunteers is also highlighted in this report. Volunteers are the backbone of our Team London and Major Events programme, and I want to express my deep gratitude to them for their extraordinary contributions.

I am very proud of the progress we have made together. I am delighted that more London boroughs have committed to making our capital a better place for older residents by joining a network of age-friendly communities in the UK, and across the world. I hope that more boroughs across London will join them.

There is still much to do. Delivering for older Londoners will require a truly collective effort. By working together – with government, London boroughs, businesses, civil society, and older Londoners themselves - we will ensure London is the greatest city in the world to grow old in.

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## Introduction

In November 2023, the Mayor published his **Age-Friendly Action Plan**, setting out his ambition for making London the greatest city in the world to grow old in. Older Londoners are vital in making London a vibrant and intergenerational city. **29% of London's population is aged 50 and over and 12% is aged 65 and over**. However, more work is needed to make a fairer and safer city for older Londoners. The plan delivers improvements in key areas in older people's lives, such as housing, transport, digital inclusion and income maximisation.

This plan was developed in response to the Mayor signing London up to the **World Health Organization's (WHO's) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities**. The Network has established a framework for how communities around the globe can go about making their localities more age-friendly, which the Mayor adopted.

This report covers the progress made in the period up to 31 March 2025. It also reports against a set of key performance indicators produced in partnership with the London Age-friendly Forum, following the Plan's publication. Comparisons are made against performance in 2024-25 and 2023-24. Where data for 2024-25 was not yet available, comparisons were made against the most recent annual set of data and the year before it.

The WHO framework outlines an expectation that communities engage their local citizens; carry out an assessment of the age-friendliness of the city; develop a city-wide action plan based on local priorities and needs; deliver the action plan and assess the impact of those actions. It identifies **eight different 'domains'**: housing; outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation; civic, cultural and social participation; employment and skills; health and social care; communication and information and respect, and social inclusion.

The Mayor led a collaboration involving older people-led organisations, and Londoners from across the capital, to identify, prioritise and develop key actions that need to be delivered to make London one of the world's leading age-friendly cities. For ease of access, older Londoners' priorities for making London more age-friendly were grouped into thematic actions aligned with the relevant WHO domains.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are included under most actions in this progress report. GLA annual reporting is usually conducted according to financial year (April to March). However, as the Age-Friendly Action Plan was published in November 2023, progress against the KPIs is reported from November 2023 to March 2024, then April 2024 to March 2025. The next report will provide a progress update from April 2025.

## Housing

Housing plays a crucial role in determining quality of life. For older Londoners, this can mean challenges such as inaccessible housing that contributes to social loneliness, or poor-quality housing that aggravates health conditions. Older Londoners have told us that action on housing should include being able to live well, safely and affordably in their homes as they age. In addition, with the private rented sector being London's fastest-growing form of tenure, there was clear concern about support needed for older renters. Older Londoners also want their voices to be heard when it comes to decision making on housing.

**Mayor's action: increase older Londoners' access to housing that is affordable and meets their needs.**

### Key performance indicators

- Starts and completions of housing under the Affordable Homes Programme.<sup>1</sup>

*Specific targets were not set for this period, but actual figures have been provided. Data is provided for each financial year as this is how it is recorded.*

- April 2023 – March 2024 **started** actual: 2, 358.
- April 2023 – March 2024 **completed** actual: 10,949.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **started** actual: 3,991.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **completed** actual: 11,636.

- Starts and completions of supported and specialist housing.<sup>2</sup>

*Specific targets were not set for this period, but actual figures have been provided. Data is provided for each financial year in accordance with how it is recorded.*

- April 2023 – March 2024 **started** actual: 80.

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<sup>1</sup> Affordable Housing statistics | London City Hall

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

- April 2023 – March 2024 **completed** actual: 576.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **started** actual: 212.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **completed** actual: 410.
- New-build homes that meet accessibility and adaptability standards.<sup>3</sup>
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: data not yet available, will be shared in future progress report.
  - November 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: data not yet available, will be shared in future progress report.
- Number of older Londoners helped to move out of London through the **Seaside and Country Homes scheme**.

*Specific targets were not set for this period, actual data is provided by financial year, in accordance with how data is collected.*

- April 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 153.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 151.

The Mayor provided more housing that met older Londoners' changing needs. This included delivering additional accessible and adaptable housing, so that older Londoners who want to downsize and move out of London can do so. He also provided more affordable homes and affordable rent and long-term rent homes, which provide benefits for older private renters.

The Mayor supplied more well-designed, accessible housing that can offer appropriate levels of care, as needed, to older people, through his **Mayor's Care and Support Specialised Housing Programme (CASSH)**. In 2024-25, the Fund completed 346 homes for older and disabled Londoners, up from 275 in 2023-24. CASSH has supported 1,661 starts on site of homes for these groups of Londoners since 2016. Overall, the percentage of homes headed by someone aged 55 to 64 which are **fully accessible** is 17% in London, higher than for any region in England.

The Mayor encouraged developers to deliver his London Plan policies for 10% of new homes to be 'wheelchair user dwellings' and the rest to be 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. The 2025 **London Plan Annual Monitoring Report**, which covers 2022-23,

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<sup>3</sup> Referred to as M4(2) housing (accessible and adaptable) in the London Plan.



demonstrates that 5% 'wheelchair user dwellings' were completed on average across London planning authorities and 38% were 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. The 2024 report, covering 2021-22 (the first year of this Plan's implementation), demonstrates that 2,189 (9.1%) 'wheelchair user dwellings' were completed. 50.5% (12,135 of the rest) were 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'.<sup>4</sup>

The Mayor helped older Londoners who are council and housing association tenants, and want to downsize and move out of London, to do so through his **Seaside and Country Homes** scheme. The scheme enabled 151 households to move to a range of counties in 2024-25, and 153 in 2023-24.

The Mayor enabled older LGBTQ+ Londoners to meet their specific housing needs. He provided Tonic Housing with a £5.7 million loan from his **Community Housing Fund**, in 2021. This enabled them to purchase 19 apartments to establish an LGBTQ+ affirmative retirement community. In 2024, Tonic Housing became a registered provider of social housing and the first London housing association that specifically works to meet the needs of older LGBTQ+ people.

A total of 11,636 **affordable homes** were completed and 3,991 were started during 2024-25. Moreover, 6,681 of those completed - over half - were at social rent or London Affordable Rent levels. This is up from 4,653 in 2023-24 and is the highest number since 2011-12. In 2024, the Mayor secured approval from the Government to fund intermediate homes for long-term rent.

### Looking ahead

In March 2025, the Government announced that £2 billion would be immediately available for schemes across the country, which can start in 2026-27 and be completed by March 2029. Ministers agreed to commit at least 20% (£400 million) of this funding for London. The Government also confirmed that London will receive a settlement of £11.7 billion in the next London 2026-36 Social and Affordable Homes Programme, up to 30% of the £39 billion national programme.

A draft **new London Plan** will be published for consultation, in 2026. The London Plan is part of the statutory development plan for London, meaning the policies in the Plan should inform decisions on planning applications across the capital. The GLA is working with London planning authorities to ensure that the latest data Planning London Data is

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<sup>4</sup> Source: London Planning Data Hub (PLD) 2025. A number of issues have been identified in relation to reporting of accessible housing to the GLA by local planning authorities. As such, figures are likely to be under reported. *data on accessible home completions and approvals in the London Planning Datahub, meaning that figures are considered to be under reported. Officers are working towards an action plan, including working with boroughs to improve the accuracy and monitoring of accessible housing completions data moving forward.*

accurate for accessible and adaptable housing, the latest data will be reflected in the GLA dashboard on [Residential approvals of M4\(2\) Accessible and adaptable and M4\(3\) Wheelchair user dwellings](#) and published in the London Plan [Annual Monitoring Report](#).

### **Mayor's action: tackle fuel poverty and reduce the number of older Londoners living in poor conditions.**

Londoners aged 50 and over were most likely to be using less water, energy or fuel and to help manage living costs. [This remained the case over the year December 2023 to December 2024](#). To address this, the Mayor provided older Londoners with energy saving measures and advice on making savings on their energy bills.

In 2023-24 the Mayor's [Warmer Homes Advice Service](#) supported more than 11,000 households with advice on energy bill savings and simple, low-cost actions to reduce energy consumption. Around 30% of service users were aged 60 and over. The Mayor also supported fuel-poor households, including older Londoners, through his [Warmer Homes programme](#), providing heating and insulation improvements to 349 fuel-poor homes between April 2023-25, which amounts to 260 in 2023-24 and 89 in 2024-25.

#### Looking ahead

Around 11,500 properties will benefit from two grant programmes totalling £231m. This includes the Warm Homes Local Grant for low-income private and rented housing, aiming to complete around 3,500 homes

The Warm Homes Social Housing Fund – for social housing, aiming to complete around 8,000 homes in the years ahead.

### **Mayor's action: ensure older Londoners' views are heard in decision-making around housing.**

The Mayor enabled older Londoners to have a say in decision making to do with housing through the London Housing Panel whose recommendations will support the development of the London Plan.

The [London Housing Panel](#) was established jointly by the Mayor and Trust for London in 2019 to provide London's voluntary and community sector organisations with a forum to support the development of the Mayor's housing policies and programmes. Its members include [Tonic Housing](#), a community housing organisation for LGBTQ+ older people. In 2023, the Panel supported ten community conversations, including conversations facilitated by Tonic Housing with older LGBTQ+ Londoners, to capture different

communities' experiences of housing in London. Themes included safety, accessible housing and homes over the course of people's lives.

In June 2024, the **recommendations** from all the conversations were published. This included a recommendation on the importance of involving communities early in the process of formulating housing policy and involving user-led organisations in co-production processes. The reports and findings have been submitted as evidence to support the development of the Mayor's draft London Plan, which will be published in 2026.

### Looking ahead

The London Housing Panel will continue to meet every quarter around its key priorities related to delivering more social rent homes, reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation, and ensuring Londoners' voices are heard in decisions on housing and planning, including older people.

Consultation on the London Plan will begin in mid-2026 and this will be an opportunity for all Londoners to give their views on the policies in the new Plan.

## Outdoor spaces and buildings

The condition of public spaces directly affects older Londoners' mobility and independence, as well as their sense of belonging and inclusion. Older Londoners have **stated that their public realm priorities** are seating and places to rest; better and uncluttered pavements, considerate sharing of public space between cyclists; and pedestrians, improved pedestrian crossings and the provision of more public toilets.

**Mayor's action: create public spaces that are inclusive of older Londoners.**

The Mayor has made London's streets and public spaces more welcoming, accessible and navigable for older people, including by providing boroughs with funding and guidance to do this. He also addressed the concerns of older people disembarking at bus stops where there are cycle bypasses through remedial work at bus stops with identifiable problems.

Application of the London Plan's **public realm** and **town centres and high streets** policies increased the provision of appropriate seating and street furniture; the removal of street clutter; the siting of convenient, accessible pedestrian crossings at regular intervals; and town centre environments being designed that are barrier-free and inclusive, with features such as tactile paving, level surfaces, dropped kerbs and well designed, accessible, safe and inclusive new pathways.

Some of this was funded by TfL **Local Implementation Plan** (LIP) funding, included £69 million in 2022 and a further £80.4 million in 2024. The Mayor's Healthy Streets approach underpinned the funding guidance and how streets should be designed. The **funding led to** the installation of more than 400 new pedestrian crossings, the widening of 12km of footways to make them easier to navigate and the construction of 51km of cycle routes, providing a safe space for cyclists away from pedestrians, in 2024-25.

Thousands of items of street clutter were removed from high streets on TfL's road network subsequent to TfL conducting quarterly **Customer Experience High Street Walks**, making them easier for older pedestrians to navigate.

In 2024, TfL published its [review of bus stop bypass safety](#) to consider and address the concerns of older and Deaf and disabled Londoners around the accessibility and safety of bus stop bypasses. While it found the risk of pedestrians being injured is very low, the report noted several recommendations to address the concerns raised. By the end of March 2025, there had been remedial work at the 10 bus stops that were not compliant.

### Looking ahead

TfL will reduce speed limits on 15km of its roads in early 2026 to improve safety and work towards [Vision Zero](#) for London, to eliminate deaths and serious injuries from London's transport network.

TfL is also developing a new Walking and Wheeling Action Plan, due to be published in 2026, which will focus on the benefits of walking and wheeling to health and wellbeing.

### **Mayor's action: Support the provision of accessible public toilets.**

#### Key performance indicator

- The number of new public toilets delivered through the Mayor's Good Growth Programme.
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **target**: 30.
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 42.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 22.

*(no new target for this period)*

The Mayor has provided more public toilets and is investing in more to be installed across the transport network. He is investing £3 million per year to improve and increase public toilets on the transport network. New accessible toilet facilities have recently opened at Clapton, Seven Sisters and White Hart Lane Overground stations as part of the programme.

In 2023-24, his regeneration programme supported the delivery of 42 WCs via his **Good Growth Fund**, bringing the total delivered through the fund to 331 WCs from its inception in 2017 to the end of March 2025. At least ten of those delivered in 2023, and 17 in 2024, were Changing Places or disabled people accessible toilets. At least one of the latter was installed at each location.

### Looking ahead

Feasibility works are underway for New Cross Gate and Acton Central stations. TfL is also exploring delivery changes at Highbury and Islington and Blackhorse Road stations in partnership with Network Rail.

## Transportation

An accessible and affordable public transport system is essential for all older Londoners. Thousands of older workers, volunteers, carers and many others rely on it to make their invaluable contribution to the capital. Being able to get around the city increases access to services; facilitates social, cultural and civic participation, reduces isolation, and enhances mobility, wellbeing and a sense of belonging. Older Londoners told us that priority action for transport should include making it more accessible, inclusive, step-free and affordable. They also wanted improved customer information and to be able to travel in comfort and toilet safety.

### **Mayor's action: improve the accessibility and inclusivity of London's transport infrastructure for older Londoners.**

The Mayor made more Underground and overground stations accessible. He also published a plan to break down unfair barriers to travelling in the city.

In 2023, 92 Tube stations (more than a third of them), over 60 London Overground stations and all 41 Elizabeth line stations had step-free access. In September 2024, TfL opened a new ticket hall at Paddington station, giving direct step-free access to the Bakerloo line for the first time. By March 2024, there were mini ramps at 58 step-free London Underground stations. This increased to 137 mini ramps installed at 65 London Underground stations by March 2025. In 2024-25, **64 bus stops received accessibility upgrades**.

The Mayor published **Equity in Motion**, in February 2024. Actions include a continuing commitment to the older person's Freedom Pass and the 60+ London Oyster, conducting a pan-TfL review of the effectiveness of the travel assistance provided to older Londoners,

and a campaign aimed at encouraging older people to cycle and be active travellers. The campaign took place over 2024-25 and impacts will be reported by 2026. The review also commenced, its findings and recommendations are expected to be published in early 2026.

### Looking ahead

TfL is investing £3m in toilet provision, as part of £15m committed over five years, to improve public toilet provision across the network. TfL has set out how it will prioritise facilities in the [Improving our toilet provision](#) strategy, published in October 2024.

Work is underway for toilet facilities at Morden and Amersham stations. TfL is exploring options for construction work at Stratford and Woodford stations. Furthermore, construction options will be considered for Green Park and Stockwell stations, as well as at New Cross Gate and Acton Central on London Overground.

There are now 93 step-free stations in London and TfL continues to work towards the Mayor's ambitious target of making 50 per cent of the Underground network Step-free by 2030. To support this target, TfL has announced 17 stations to proceed to feasibility work in 2025/26.<sup>5</sup>

## **Mayor's action: support older Londoners to move around London in safety and comfort, and with the information they need.**

The Mayor made streets safer for older pedestrians by, for example, lowering speed limits, removing abandoned hired e-bikes and scooters from pavements and making changes to pedestrian crossings, which gives older people more confidence when crossing roads. He also made travelling more comfortable for older passengers who find it difficult to stand and improved the information available to older travellers.

Tragically, older pedestrians are disproportionately likely to be seriously injured or even killed on London's roads. In 2024-25 there were slightly more (32) [road casualties](#) among people aged 60 and over than in 2023-24 (2,326 in 2024-25 compared with 2,294 in 2023-24). There were three fatalities in this age group in both years. Phase 2 of the [Lowering Speed Limits](#) programme, which ended in March 2025, resulted in 267 km of the TfL Road Network (around 52% of London's roads) being subject to a 20mph speed limit. Early data from Phase 1 of the Lowering Speed Limits programme, which introduced the 20mph speed limit on all TfL roads within the central London Congestion Charging Zone, saw collisions resulting in death or serious injury fall 24% (from 94 to 71).

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<sup>5</sup> These stations are: Becontree, Blackhorse Road, Canons Park, Dagenham East, East Putney, Edgware Road (Hammersmith & City Line), Hatton Cross, Hornchurch, Kentish Town, Plaistow, Putney Bridge, Ruislip, Snarbrook, South Harrow, Upton Park, Willesden Green, Wood Green.

TfL introduced an enforcement policy against hire operators who allow their bikes to be parked in locations on TfL land, or its road network, other than in designated places, in November 2024. Between January 2025 and March 2025, 190 warning letters were sent to dockless bike operators, and 333 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued.

By March 2025 there were 21 **pedestrian crossings** using Green Person Authority. This innovative TfL traffic signal technology gives priority to pedestrians by showing a continuous green pedestrian signal until a vehicle approaches the crossing. 14 more are in train.

‘Please offer this seat’ wording was introduced into the fabric of **priority seats** on seven hundred new TfL Routemaster buses. This new wording and moquette makes them easier to identify and acts as a helpful reminder to other passengers.

Screens were installed, both on the inside and outside of buses, providing information through visual and audio means. More public toilet locations were added to TfL’s **Toilet map**.

### Looking ahead

In order to address injuries caused by slips, trips and falls, TfL will expand trials of automated warning systems on escalators, and test whether lower speeds can help improve safety.

## **Mayor’s action: offer older Londoners value for money; and fare structures and concessions that are fair, clear and well communicated.**

The Mayor has kept the cost of travel low for older Londoners and provided door-to-door travel to those with serious mobility or visual impairments through Taxicard. He also reviewed the latter to identify and address the inequities of the service.

He provided free travel to Londoners 60 and over by continuing to protect the **Older Persons’ Freedom Pass** and **60+ London Oyster photocard** travel concessions.

He froze fares, which benefited older Londoners aged under 60, investing £123 million to freeze TfL fares in 2023-24. In December 2024, he announced his TfL fares package for 2025 and his decision to freeze bus and tram fares for the sixth time since 2016. This means Londoners continue to pay the same fares since March 2023, with his Hopper fare of £1.75 remaining in place, keeping them one of the lowest in the UK.

The Mayor funded **Taxicard**, via TfL, jointly with the 32 boroughs. This helped to pay for more than 680,000 door-to-door trips in licensed taxis and private hire vehicles in 2024-25. More than 700,000 trips were paid for in 2023-24. In 2024 work with TfL, London Councils



and London boroughs began to review the equity of the service. This looked at the inconsistencies in the offering and eligibility for Taxicard between London boroughs. Modelling of potential options to address the findings will be developed and stakeholders will be engaged on any proposed options.

### Looking ahead

TfL will explore loyalty and rewards schemes to offer even better value for money to customers. TfL is introducing posters across the network to better explain its fares and highlight savings customers can make, such as avoiding travel in zone 1 and free trips once the daily cap has been reached.

## Civic, cultural and social participation

Older Londoners told us that priority areas for action on civic, cultural and social participation included listening to older Londoners' views and providing more civic participation opportunities. This included exploring ways to attract greater numbers and more diverse groups of older people to volunteering, as well as supporting volunteering and other community projects with more sustainable, longer-term funding. Other priorities included ensuring older people can access cultural opportunities and promoting best practice for including older Londoners in civic, cultural and social activities.

### **Mayor's action: Engage with older Londoners and support their civic participation.**

Talk London is City Hall's online community, a space where all Londoners aged 16+ can sign up to help shape plans and policies. The Mayor afforded older Londoners the opportunity to have their say on issues and help shape his plans and policies and helped them to understand and act on changes that affected their civic participation.

#### **Key performance indicators November 2023 – March 2025:**

- Participation of 55-64s ranged from 11 to 24% per campaign (13% of London's population aged 16+ are 55-64).
- Participation of 65+ ranged from 19 to 38% per campaign (15% of London's population aged 16+ are 65+).

Between November 2023 and the end of March 2025 older people had their say, through **Talk London** on topics including consultation on the GLA's Budgets for 2024-25 and 2025-26, energy-efficient homes, defibrillators in London, the offering off-peak fares all day on Fridays trial, engaging with culture, the London Growth Plan, and the Police and Crime Plan (2025-2029). Older Londoners are well represented in these campaigns. For the Police and Crime Plan consultation, for instance, the participation from Londoners aged 55-64 was 15% (vs 13% London average), and from those aged 65 and over+ it was 20% (vs 15% London average).

The number of older people participating in engagement campaigns on Talk London varies per campaign. This depends on the topic, the length of the campaign as well as the level of promotion and sharing by stakeholders. For instance, our campaigns on defibrillators in London, engaging with culture and the GLA Budget saw more Older Londoners take part than average. Whereas our survey and discussion on the off-peak Friday trial saw slightly fewer Older Londoners than average join in.

## The impartial GLA Civic and Democratic Participation programme

During **London Voter Registration Week** (September 2024) and the first **London Democracy Week** (March 2025), the GLA coordinated with the Electoral Commission, all London boroughs and a broad civil society coalition to deliver impartial co-designed information in community languages and awareness raising activity, reaching under-registered and underrepresented groups, including older Londoners.

Through the **GLA Democratic Participation Grants Programme**, Age UK East London engaged 3,131 older Londoners and 32 civil society organisations, with grant projects collectively reaching 7,553 older Londoners.

### Looking ahead

The **GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme** will continue collaborating with partners to remove barriers and ensure communities receive trusted information and education on civic and democratic rights, including in relation to changes to the voting system that could disproportionately impact on already under-served communities, including older Londoners. The team will also continue strengthening coordination across statutory bodies, London councils and civil society to support inclusive democratic participation.

## Mayor's action: support older Londoners to benefit from cultural and social activities.

### Key performance indicator

- The number of London venues accredited as dementia-friendly.
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **target**: 50.
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 56.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **target**: 40.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 38.

The Mayor wants every Londoner with dementia and their carers to have a **dementia-friendly cultural venue** on their doorstep. He has developed a charter and accompanying toolkit for venues to use to make them dementia-friendly.

The Mayor facilitated an increase in the number of dementia-friendly cultural venues in the capital and funded opportunities for older people to be social included. Since the launch of

the Dementia Friendly Venues Charter in May 2021, 170 venues have accredited as dementia friendly.

In 2024-25, proportions of older Londoners participating in arts and culture were largely unchanged from those seen in 2023-24. Older people were more likely to engage with [heritage](#), both digitally and physically, and digitally with the arts, than younger age groups. The former were less likely to engage with libraries, or to visit museums and galleries.

The Mayor enabled older Londoners to participate in social activities through community-led projects funded by **Building Strong Communities** (BSC) grants. Among them were the intergenerational projects, [Brighter Together](#) and the Intergenerational Wellness Garden. The former partnered care homes and day centres with nurseries and improved the social and emotional wellbeing of both the older adults and early years children. The latter brought older and younger people together through gardening, leading to them learning from each other, sharing experiences, and forming friendships. The BSC programme closed in June 2024.

### Looking ahead

The Mayor will refresh and maintain the Dementia Friendly Venues digital accreditation portal to enhance accessibility and user experience for venue self-accreditation, as well as supporting venues and their teams to undertake the accreditation process, sharing best practice through webinars, network meetings and one to one support. Further work will be undertaken to explore options to expand the charter's remit beyond cultural venues and London. The target for 2025-2026 is for a further 40 venues to become accredited.

## **Mayor's action: support volunteering projects, and support older Londoners to volunteer.**

### Key performance indicator

- The number of older people volunteering for [Team London and Major Events](#).
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 656.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 716.

In 2023-24, 899 individual volunteers across 19 events/opportunities completed a total of 2,462 shifts; 73% of the volunteers were aged 50 and over. In 2024-25, 716 volunteers completed a total of 2,293 shifts. 77% of the volunteers were aged 50 and over, 43% were 65 and over.

The Mayor offered a high-profile programme of accessible volunteering opportunities across London. Older Londoners took these up keenly. Older people who took up training through the Mayor's Adult Education Budget were also keen volunteers.

In 2023-24, around 54% of Londoners aged 50 and over had participated in formal or informal **volunteering**. This was a slight decrease over 2022-23. More than 70% of older Londoners volunteered in Lambeth and Camden, while fewer than 35 percent volunteered in Hounslow and Barking and Dagenham.

Older learners too were enthusiastic about volunteering. The [London Learner Survey](#) for 2023-24 found that Adult Education Budget learners aged 50 or above were 19 percentage points more likely to volunteer after training than learners aged 19 to 23 (56% vs 37%).

### Looking ahead

Team London Volunteering works with volunteers to ensure opportunities are accessible to all, which includes additional seated breaks, accessible shift options and the opportunity to discuss adjustments to roles. This ensures these roles are open to all Londoners and has facilitated many volunteers to take part in the programme, despite changes in health or age-related challenges.

In 2025–26, Team London Volunteering will offer a wide variety of opportunities across the capital. Volunteers can take part in major cultural celebrations in Trafalgar Square, including St Patrick's Day, Diwali, Vaisakhi, and Black on the Square.

Several new partnership events will also be available. Team London Ambassadors will support community organisations during the Mayor's Community Weekend in September, and volunteers can get involved in [Holiday Hope](#) activities, which provide food and engaging programmes for young people during school holidays—creating meaningful intergenerational connections.

Sports enthusiasts can join the action at two major international table tennis events: the World Table Tennis Championships at the Copper Box Arena in October, and the International Table Tennis Federation Championships in April. These events offer volunteers the chance to help showcase London as a world-class host city.

## Employment and skills

Older Londoners told us that priority areas for action on employment and skills included customising support for older jobseekers, as well as supporting older workers to progress in the labour market and stay in work as long as they want. Other priorities included championing the benefits of an age-diverse workforce and encouraging employers to adopt age-friendly work policies and practices to combat ageism.

### **Mayor's action: provide training and employment support to older workers and jobseekers.**

#### Key performance indicators (by academic year)

- Proportion of learners aged 50 and participating in ASF funded learning.
  - Academic Year 2023-24 **actual**: 29%
  - Academic Year 2024-25 **actual**: available next year.

*(Outcomes will be tracked through the implementation of the new Inclusive Talent Strategy, including economic outcomes of learners by demographic group).*

- Proportion of older learners reporting a positive economic outcome from their course.
  - August 2023 – July 2024 **actual**: 37%
  - Academic Year 2024-25 **actual**: available next year.
- Proportion of older learners reporting a positive social impact from their course.
  - Academic Year 2023-24 **actual**: 94%
  - Academic Year 2024-25 **actual**: available next year.

These indicators will continue to be monitored through the Mayor's Inclusive Talent Strategy, which will track learner demographics and outcomes across the skills system.

Recent [labour market data](#) continue to point to weakening conditions in London and across the UK, with older workers also feeling the impact.

In 2024, employment among Londoners aged 50 to 64 rose slightly to around 72.5%, suggesting some resilience in this age group despite broader challenges. However, the employment rate gap remains significant. At 19.1 percentage points, the difference between those aged 50 to 64 and their counterparts aged 35 to 49 is notably larger in London than in most other regions of England. This highlights a persistent disparity in labour market outcomes for older workers (especially amongst female and Black and racially minoritised), even in areas where overall employment levels have improved.

Addressing the challenge, the Mayor funded training and employment support to older Londoners, with his Adult Education Budget and other training programmes.

In the academic year 2023-24, 29% (64,580) of all [AEB funded learners](#) were aged 50 and over; this was 130 more than in 2022-23 (28%, 64,450). The most popular subject areas for this age group continued to be Preparation for Life and Work, which is made up of basic skills in maths and English; English for speakers of other languages; and employability-focused skills such as CV writing. This subject area saw 19,270 learners aged 50 and over, across 41,960 courses. Notably, around 37 per cent of older learners reported positive economic outcomes after completing their training, including participants who moved into employment or progressed to further learning at a higher NVQ level.

Furthermore, the Mayor provided free courses to help adult Londoners to enter employment, upskill or change career, through his [Skills Bootcamps for Londoners](#) programme. He secured £18.9m grant funding for this from the Department for Education to deliver in 2023-24 and a further £21.6m in 2024-25. In 2023-24, there was a slight increase in the number (450) and proportion (11%) of learners aged 50 and over, compared with 2022-23 (in which there were 310 learners, which accounted for 10% of total learners). Based on the latest full year data available (2023-24), around 39 per cent of learners achieved Milestone 3 (higher than the rate observed amongst for those aged 19-49), which includes an offer of a new job / apprenticeship (for fully funded / independent learners), new role or additional responsibilities at existing employer for employer co-funded or obtaining new contracts for self-employed learners.

Any Londoner with digital skills assessed at below 'level one'<sup>6</sup> had access to a free **essential digital skills training** course. This was delivered by the GLA through the [Adult Education Budget](#). In the academic year 2023-24, more people aged 50 and over (1,480 - 33%) accessed learning through the digital skills entitlement than in 2022-23 (1,360 - 30%). This figure for older learners in 2023/24 is three times greater than the number of learners aged 19 to 23.

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<sup>6</sup> Adults with no or little prior experience of using digital devices or the internet judged against [the government's set of standards](#) for the digital skills needed for work and life are deemed to be below level one.

### Looking ahead

The Inclusive Talent Strategy commits the GLA to improving access to learning and skills for all adults, and older Londoners will continue to be a key focus. Furthermore, the Mayor will continue to use the Adult Skills Fund, Skills Bootcamps and the new London Talent Pathways fund to support adults over 50 to retrain, refresh skills or move into sectors with opportunities.

For those who want to return to work or progress in their current roles, the GLA will continue to strengthen pathways into growing sectors and ensure training is co-designed with employers. The Mayor will continue to invest in provision that supports these broader outcomes, alongside targeted support for those seeking employment.

The GLA will work with providers, boroughs, sub-regional partnerships and employer bodies to widen participation and ensure older adults have access to flexible, high-quality training that supports wellbeing, confidence, social participation and, where relevant, progression into work.

### **Mayor's action: Encourage more age-friendly practices in the workplace.**

The Mayor delivered a range of age-friendly policies and practices to GLA staff and encouraged employers of all sectors and sizes to also adopt such practices.

The GLA's **policies and practices**, included offering flexible working and annual health screening assessments for all staff aged 50 or over and having a menopause policy in place. It also regularly publishes data on its **workforce** by age. At the end of [March 2025](#), 15% of GLA employees were aged 50-59 and over a decrease of 5 percentage points from the end of [March 2024](#). Employees aged 60 and over remained at 5%.

In April, the GLA published a new EDI Strategy and EDI Action Plan, which takes an intersectional approach to EDI that includes age. The Age Friendly Pledge has been included in the GLA's EDI Action Plan to align with the pledge's best practices and benchmarks. Actions include having transparent data reporting and increasing understanding of EDI through learning and development.

The Mayor encourages employers of all sectors and sizes to prevent discrimination, analyse their workforce data by diversity and inclusion, and benchmark themselves against others, by adopting his [Good Work Standard](#) (GWS). The GWS team regularly organise community support offers for employers. A webinar with Wise Age was delivered for employers in February 2025 on age diversity in the workplace. The webinar also encouraged employers to join the GLA in signing up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge. By the end of March 2025, 26 London employers had signed the [Age Friendly Employer Pledge](#), up from 15 at the end of March 2024.



## **Looking ahead**

### **Good Work Standard**

There are currently 190 accredited Mayor's Good Work Standard employers, employing over 330,000 people. The GLA's 'Supporting Londoners to Benefit from Growth' Programme Delivery Plan commits to expanding the reach of the Good Work Standard, including 104 GLA Group suppliers by 2028. Accreditation criteria, employer guidance, issue-specific workshops and community activity are updated on a rolling basis to ensure employers can adopt the latest best practice.

### **GLA HR policies and practices**

The GLA will implement its new EDI Strategy and EDI Action Plan, progress will be shared in the next progress report.

## Health and social care

Older Londoners told us that priority areas for action on ageing well included involving older Londoners in more projects that promote mental wellbeing; promoting healthy lifestyles; supporting active ageing; and tackling air pollution. Other priorities included promoting wellbeing by championing social prescribing; and supporting Londoners living with dementia.

### **Mayor's action: support good health and wellbeing for older Londoners.**

Supporting older Londoners to live healthier, more fulfilling lives remained an important priority for the Mayor. That's why he continued to champion a 'health in all policies' approach to improve health and wellbeing, prevent ill health, tackle health inequalities and promote active travel (such as walking and cycling). These areas all play a role in shaping the daily experiences and long-term outcomes of older Londoners.

To set the picture, [Life expectancy at birth](#) has increased in London. It is higher for women (84.1 years in 2021 to 2023) than men (79.8 years). Meanwhile, [healthy life expectancy](#) is unchanged and is similar for both men (63.9 years) and women (64.0 years). There are substantial differences from borough to borough, which underscore the importance of sustained action to address inequalities.

The GLA Group Public Health Unit (PHU) have been working to advance the Mayor's commitment to a 'health in all policies' approach. For example, in 2024, the PHU provided support to the Mayor's independent London Climate Resilience Review for London, which led to the development of a Heat Health Action Plan for London. This plan recognises the significant impact of heat on older people and the need to protect those most at risk. In addition, the PHU provided guidance and advice to keep older Londoners safe from health shocks and stressors, such as extreme weather and infectious disease outbreaks, and supported campaigns for vaccination to protect against flu and Covid-19.

The PHU also published a [London Health Inequalities Snapshot](#) in July 2024, highlighting – among other factors - that older people faced barriers to active travel and were less likely to cycle. This evidence has helped reinforce the importance of continued action to tackle health inequalities, including those that impact older Londoners. In his

previous term, the Mayor worked with health and care partners and the London Health Board to deliver many positive outcomes for older Londoners, as part of the Health Inequalities Strategy Implementation Plan 2021-24.

One example is the Dementia Friendly London initiative and the Dementia Friendly Venues Charter, which have helped to make spaces in London more accessible to people living with dementia and their carers. In addition, through the Strategy, we have ensured that health settings are embedding benefits and entitlements advice to boost uptake of key benefits like Pensioner Credit and Attendance Allowance, and the Warmer Homes campaign. A new implementation plan for the health inequalities strategy for 2025-2028 was scoped, developed and published in June 2025, setting out the Mayor's priorities for this term. Once more it reiterates the Mayor's commitment to working with partners in the health and care sector, national and local government, businesses, the third sector, and within communities to shape a healthier and fairer city for all who live, work and visit London.

Encouraging active ageing continues to be a focus. The Mayor is aiming for all London residents to undertake at least 20 minutes of **active travel** per day by 2041, defined as either walking or cycling. Younger residents were more likely to meet the target, with 40% of those aged 20-39 doing so in 2023-24, compared to 32% of those aged 60 to 79 (the same as in 2022-23) and 21% of those aged 80 and over, up from 18% in 2022-23. While the figures for all ages groups are lower than pre-pandemic levels, the Mayor and his partners remain committed to creating environments that support and encourage active ageing.

Cycling participation among older Londoners remains comparatively low. In 2022-23 to 2023-24, just 8% of residents aged 65 and over cycled, compared with 24% of all residents aged 5 and over. There was a slight increase in older Londoners **cycling** compared to prior to the pandemic (6% in 2017-18 to 2019-20). Going forward, the Mayor and his partners will continue exploring ways to increase engagement, particularly amongst older adults from underrepresented groups.

Data from 2023-24 shows that Londoners continue to walk as they age, with those over 65 doing just as many walking trips as those aged 45-65, and more than the 17-24 age group.

Finally, TfL has been running the **Walking and Cycling Grants London** programme to make walking, wheeling and cycling more accessible for London's diverse communities. New grants in 2024 included the Furzedown Strollers, a walking group that supports older adults and Silver Cycling, offering cycling sessions to adults over 60. Although overall figures were largely unchanged from those seen in 2023-24, these initiatives complement broader efforts still being explored to promote active travel.

### Looking ahead

TfL will be publishing its updated Vision Zero Action Plan and a Walking and Wheeling Action Plan in 2026, to support more accessible and active travel. TfL records data on active travel and cycling undertaken by different demographic groups, as part of its [Travel in London](#) reports, which are updated each year.

## Communication and information

Older Londoners told us that priority areas for action on communication and information action included continuing to provide offline communication and information; supporting digital literacy skills and tackling digital exclusion; and making online services user-friendly. This would include improving the accessibility of communications and communicating positively. Another priority included running English-language classes suitable for older migrants.

### Mayor's action: address digital exclusion amongst older Londoners.

#### Key performance indicators

Number and percentage of older learners enrolled in essential digital skills programmes, and the percentage who successfully achieve Essential Digital Skills qualifications.

- November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 1,480 (33%)
- April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: to be confirmed.

Londoners directly supported through Get Online London.

- April 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 31,674.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 68, 485.

Percentage of all Digital Inclusion Hubs that are VCSE organisations specifically serving older Londoners.

- April 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 60%.
- April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 55%.

The Mayor has helped more older Londoners to become digitally literate and get on-line. He also sought to address fraud and scams, to remove one of the barriers preventing older people using digital devices:

In 2024, adults aged 75 and over in the UK (32%) were the most likely age group not to have access to the internet at home, a slight increase in the proportion of adults aged 75 and over (29%) who did not have access in 2023.

The Mayor funded a legal entitlement to free **essential digital skills training** through the **Adult Skills Fund**. In the academic year 2023-24 more people aged 50 and over (1,480, 33%) accessed learning through the digital skills entitlement than in 2022-23 (1,360, 30%). The Adult Education Budget provided Information and Communication Technology (ICT) courses. For the academic year 2023-24, 25% (4,060) of **(ICT) learners** were aged 50 and over.<sup>38</sup> This was a slight increase compared to the academic year 2022-23, when there were 3,800 (24.7%) such learners.

The Mayor helped older Londoners get on-line through **Get Online London**. In partnership with the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) and the Good Things Foundation, he established a **Digital Inclusion Service for Londoners**, offering access to refurbished devices, free mobile connectivity and digital skills that people may need to get online. The programme supported 1,230 community-based Digital Inclusion Hubs across London in 2024-25. Fifty-five per cent of the hubs were voluntary or community sector organisations which support older Londoners aged 65 and over and there was a Databank (a provider of free mobile data) in every London borough.

**Older Londoners fear of scams and fraud** is a frequently cited reason for being reluctant to use digital devices. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's (MOPAC) helped address this by tackling fraud through a local multi-agency approach, focussed on preventing victimisation and strengthening victim support. MOPAC commissions Victim Support, which received approximately 8,000 referrals for victims of fraud each quarter, to whom Victim Support provided practical and emotional support.

### Looking ahead

The Mayor is extending Get Online London until December 2026, to support an estimated 108,000 more Londoners, including older Londoners. The extension will support 400 community-based Digital Inclusion Hubs provide digital devices, data and skills.

The Mayor's recently launched **Inclusive Talent Strategy** (ITS) will set the framework for the delivery of the Adult Skills Fund going forward. The Inclusive Talent Strategy will support older Londoners by strengthening the city's adult skills system so they can retrain, upskill and remain connected to good work.

The strategy also promotes wraparound support and more integrated employment and skills pathways, making it easier for older adults to navigate opportunities, build confidence and progress into paid or volunteering roles across London.

**Mayor's action: promote the use of accessible, positive and user-friendly communication.**

The GLA Group provided communications that were accessible and portrayed older people in a positive light.

The GLA promoted use of its guidance for staff on making communication inclusive and accessible through its 'Make it Accessible' toolkit, which was developed in 2023. The GLA's image library provided staff with positive images of older people to use in communications and also directed staff seeking images to the Centre for Ageing's Age-positive image library. All the Mayor's and the wider GLA Group publications were made available in various languages and accessible formats, including large print, on request. All its on-line content was compliant with web-content accessibility guidance.

**Looking ahead**

The GLA will continue to embed the 'Make it Accessible' toolkit and will scope additional actions to make its internal resources more accessible as part of the Mayor's Disability Action Plan, which is due to be published in 2026.

## Respect and social inclusion

Older Londoners said priority areas for action for affording them respect and social inclusion included championing the contribution of older Londoners, and ensuring their views are included in policymaking; creating inclusive buildings and spaces that are welcoming for everyone; tackling ageism; encouraging people from different generations to socially connect; and helping communities to support older people.

### Mayor's action: ensure older Londoners are supported and valued.

#### Key performance indicators

- Page visits on [london.gov.uk](https://london.gov.uk) cost-of-living and employment rights hubs.
  - November 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 178,000 page views by 112,000 users.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 232,000 page views by 160,000 users.
  
- Increase in Pension Credit income due to Mayor of London's campaign.
  - April 2023 – March 2024 **target**: 7,500 households contacted, £9m in annual financial gains.
  - April 2023 – March 2024 **actual**: 12,500 households contacted, £9.5m in annual financial gains.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **target**: 12,500 households contacted, £10m in annual financial gains.
  - April 2024 – March 2025 **actual**: 17,150 households contacted, £21.8m in annual financial gains.

The Mayor supported low-income older Londoners to increase their incomes and celebrated the valuable roles older Londoners play in strengthening their communities. When people cannot afford the goods and services considered to indicate a minimum acceptable norm in society, this is described as **material deprivation**. [One in five \(20%\) pensioners](#) living in inner London could not afford essentials in 2020/21-2022/23, compared with 8% of all UK pensioners. Nineteen per cent of London's pensioners were



living in relative **poverty** after taking housing costs into account, down from 23% in 2019/20-2021/22.

The Mayor worked with key strategic partners, such as **Policy In Practice** and London boroughs, to build on his successful initiatives to raise awareness and take-up of **Pension Credit**. In the year to October 2024, the Mayor's Pension Credit campaign led to 2,174 more older Londoners on lower incomes claiming their Pension Credit entitlements. This totalled £9.5m of previously unclaimed Pension Credit, with an average of £4,394 per claim. In addition to this, claimants were able to claim Winter Fuel Payment, totalling £200 per household. Over the winter period of 2024-25, a total of 202,333 Londoners aged 60 and over received a **Winter Fuel Payment** from the Government, to help with support with heating bills.

Older Londoners are more likely to feel like they **belong to their neighbourhood**, than younger age groups. Those aged 65 and over felt like this the most and the proportion of those who did so increased, from 66% in 2021-22 to 70% in 2023-24. Whilst Londoners aged 50 to 64 were also more likely to feel like they belong, than younger groups, the proportion decreased from 63.5% in 2021-22 to 62% in 2023-24

The GLA celebrates older people by marking **International Day of Older People**, which takes place every year on 1 October. In 2024, Deputy Mayor Debbie Weekes-Bernard visited St Lukes Community Centre in Islington, where the borough announced that it had become the ninth of London's 32 boroughs to be recognised as a member of the global network of age-friendly communities. She also spoke with older residents and heard how they are **playing an integral role in strengthening communities** and neighbourhoods, as workers, carers, volunteers and activists.

London's AEB programme can play an important role in social integration due to the diversity of Londoners it brings together in one place. In fact, a significant proportion of learners aged 50+, around 75%, report meeting different people due to their course.

### Looking ahead

The Deputy Mayor will continue to engage with older Londoners and the organisations that represent them, including through more consistent engagement with partners such as the London Age-Friendly Forum in 2026. This includes increasing Pension Credit income due to fourth phase of Mayor of London's campaign. The target for April 2025 to March 2026 is 15,000 households contacted, £12m in annual financial gains.

## **Other formats and languages**

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