

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**John Biggs AM**  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
More London  
London SE1 2AA

**Our ref:** MGLA181214-5051

**Your ref:** 405

**Date:** **15 JAN 2015**

Dear John

Thank you for your letter of 17 December 2014 about the Garden Bridge.

First of all I would like to provide some context to why Transport for London (TfL) is supporting this proposal. This is one of six new river crossings I am actively supporting across London, including four new crossings in east London. With the growth in London's population and the increase in central London employment, we need to create an environment where more short trips in central London are made by foot. This will help relieve congestion on our road and public transport networks and help contribute to a healthier and greener city. In recognition of this, my Transport Strategy and the London Plan are clear that we need to see improvements in the quality of public realm and opportunities for people to walk in central London.

The Garden Bridge will help achieve this by creating a new route for pedestrians and a high-quality public space that will encourage and enable new journey opportunities by foot. For example, this would mean commuters arriving at Waterloo could walk to work in Holborn and the City rather than taking a bus; tourists walking between Covent Garden and the South Bank rather than taking the Tube; and local people living near the South Bank being able to walk to work.

Through the contribution that TfL is making towards the project (alongside the equal contribution from Government), we are securing the necessary assurances that the Bridge will deliver these public benefits. The Bridge will be free to use, it will be open from 06:00 to midnight – accounting for the period of time when the vast majority of people would want to use it – and there will be guaranteed public access. It will also be possible for cyclists to use the Bridge as long as they dismount and push their cycles across, exactly the same situation as with the Millennium Bridge.


The Garden Bridge Trust has been established with the sole purpose of building and operating the Garden Bridge, including being responsible for all future operations and maintenance costs. Westminster City Council (WCC) has granted planning permission for the Bridge on the basis a commitment would be secured with the Trust that future maintenance costs will be met by the Trust. The Trust has clear plans in place to secure funding of £3.5million per year to cover all maintenance and operating costs for the Garden Bridge.

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What WCC has asked for is that in the unlikely event that the Trust is unable to cover maintenance costs in the future, that there be a guarantee in place that would mean these costs are covered. WCC has asked that the Trust secure this guarantee or that it be provided by a third party. The Trust is in discussion with a range of organisations about a suitable way forward that would enable this requirement to be met.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

**Boris Johnson**  
Mayor of London