

THE VOICE FOR LONDON



THE LONDON ASSEMBLY ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

October 2014

LONDON ASSEMBLY

LONDON ASSEMBLY

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WELCOME

LONDON ASSEMBLY

Welcome to the latest London Assembly annual report, which sets out the work we have done over the year to April 2014. The Assembly is required by law to produce this report but, more importantly, it is a chance for us to tell Londoners what we have been doing on your behalf. From our regular question and answer sessions with Mayor Boris Johnson and other senior figures in London government, to investigating a raft of important London issues, to dealing with thousands of Londoners' concerns, Assembly Members have been your voice at City Hall. This report gives a brief summary of that work and how you can find out more about a particular subject.

We have grouped our work around eight headings. The first two detail how the Assembly looked at the actions of the Mayor, and examined the finances and performance of the [Greater London Authority \(GLA\) group](#), which includes [Transport for London \(TfL\)](#), the [Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime \(MOPAC\)](#), the [London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority \(LFEPA\)](#), and [the London Legacy Development Corporation \(LLDC\)](#). The remaining sections reflect the priorities for Londoners: safety and policing; housing, planning and regeneration; environment and climate change; transport; health; and London's economy, culture and education.



The London Assembly is based at City Hall, along with the Mayor, overlooking Tower Bridge and opposite the Tower of London.

WHO WE ARE

LONDON ASSEMBLY

The London Assembly is made up of 25 Members, elected at the same time as the Mayor. Eleven represent the whole of the capital, and fourteen are elected by constituencies made up of two or more London boroughs. The Assembly comprises twelve Labour, nine Conservative, two Green, and two Liberal Democrat Members. You can read our biographies [here](#), or by clicking on our image below.



WHAT WE DO

The Mayor has to answer to Londoners at the ballot box every four years.

The job of the London Assembly is to ensure that the Mayor is held accountable every day.

This section sets out the various ways through which the Assembly holds the Mayor to account, as well as the mechanisms through which the Assembly investigates the issues that are important to Londoners.

Holding the Mayor to Account

The Mayor is the most powerful, directly-elected politician in the UK; the London Assembly's primary role is to hold him to account on behalf of Londoners between elections by publicly examining his policies, activities and decisions in key areas. These areas include policing, housing, planning, transport, economic development, regeneration, health, the environment, and the legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Mayor's Question Time

The most visible example of this probing is [Mayor's Question Time](#), when the Mayor answers questions from Assembly Members ten times a year. In addition to the cross-examination during these sessions, Assembly Members submit written questions to the Mayor, often at the suggestion of their constituents. This year, the Mayor was asked over 5,100 questions. Like all Assembly meetings, these sessions are held in public to ensure the maximum level of transparency and accountability.

The Mayor's Budget for 2014/15

The Mayor must consult the Assembly before setting the combined GLA group budget, which includes the GLA portion of your council tax. Long before the formal vote on the Mayor's spending plans, the Assembly's [Budget and Performance Committee](#) began examining how the plans could deliver the promised projects. In its [response](#) to the draft budget, the Committee recommended that the Mayor should ask TfL to investigate different time-based ticketing options to encourage part-time work, reduce peak-time travel, and reduce costs for low-paid workers. The Mayor subsequently announced plans to introduce flexible ticketing options from January 2015.

On 29 January, the Mayor presented to the Assembly his draft £17.3 billion budget for the GLA group for 2014/15, including a 1.3 per cent reduction in the GLA group's portion of your council tax. At the end of an extensive debate, the Assembly proposed a freeze to the GLA portion of council tax, instead of reducing it by eight pence a week. The proposal was to redirect the extra £10.3 million that would have been raised to the Mayor's apprenticeships campaign. On 14 February, the Assembly considered the Mayor's final budget, but was unable to secure the necessary two-thirds majority for the proposed amendment, and the Mayor's spending plans were formally approved unchanged.

The Mayor's strategies

The Mayor is required by law to consult the Assembly ahead of producing his statutory strategies. Although the Mayor produces many strategies, the ones that he is required to produce by law are the Spatial Development (better known as the "London Plan"), Transport, Economic Development, Housing, Environment, Culture, and Health Inequalities strategies.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



Ten times a year, at Mayor's Question Time, the full Assembly publicly questions Mayor Boris Johnson. The questions cover the full spectrum of the Mayor's powers and duties.



During Mayor's Question Time, the Mayor is required to answer questions from all Assembly Members, including those from the same political party. This photograph shows Assembly Members from the GLA Conservative Group probing the Mayor's decisions.

An ethical GLA

The Assembly plays a significant role in ensuring the GLA group operates in an ethical and transparent manner, in accordance with the law and proper standards. The Assembly's Audit Panel receives regular reports from internal and external auditors, and examines the systems in place to ensure proper use of Londoners' money. The Assembly's GLA Oversight Committee monitors staff deployment at City Hall, and reviews the GLA's administrative rules to ensure they are efficient and transparent. The Assembly and the Mayor jointly appoint the GLA's three Statutory Officers who are legally responsible for the proper administration of City Hall: the Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial Officer, and Monitoring Officer. And, in addition to their City Hall duties, eight Assembly Members fulfil a similar role on LFEPA.

A transparent GLA

The issue of transparency was a running theme for the Assembly's work in 2013/14. An Assembly [report](#) about transparency across the GLA group made recommendations intended to bring about a cultural shift across the group, so that the initial presumption is that information should be made available to the public, unless there is a compelling reason to not do so. The Assembly's work in this area has encouraged some parts of the GLA group to become more transparent; for example, TfL has agreed to publish all future sponsorship contracts in full. Further, the GLA's three-year business plan includes, for the first time, clear annual targets for many of the Mayor's priorities. The Assembly will be able to use these targets to hold the Mayor to account over the rest of his term of office, and sets a precedent for future Mayors.

The Mayor's advisers

The Mayor can appoint 12 paid staff to act as his advisers and must appoint one Assembly Member to be the Deputy Mayor of London. The Mayor may appoint a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to supervise the operation of MOPAC. The Mayor has also chosen to appoint advisers to a number of unpaid posts. The Assembly publicly questions these direct appointees about their responsibilities and specific policy initiatives.

Confirmation hearings

The Assembly has the power to hold confirmation hearings in advance of mayoral appointments to specific posts at important organisations that are responsible for helping to implement the Mayor's policies. The hearings provide an opportunity to interview appointees in public about their qualifications and fitness for the role. The Assembly can then make an advisory recommendation to the Mayor about confirming the appointment, or a binding recommendation about the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime if the appointee is not an Assembly Member.

Investigating the issues that matter to Londoners

Committee investigations

As champions for London, the Assembly investigates in detail the issues that affect everyday life in the capital. The Assembly conducts its investigations through committees, which meet regularly and publish their findings, often making recommendations to the Mayor and government organisations about ways to improve our city. All meetings are held in public and broadcast on the GLA website so Londoners can see and hear what is being done on their behalf. A committee may ask an individual Assembly Member to carry out a special investigation on its behalf, and Assembly Members also sometimes produce reports in their own capacity. To help conduct investigations, the Assembly has the power to summon documents and certain categories of persons before itself and its committees. Londoners are also asked for their views on subjects, and these are reflected in published Assembly reports.

When an urgent matter arises that is of public interest, the Assembly incorporates topical issues into its committees' programmes. The [investigation](#) into the Mayor's decision to purchase water cannon for potential deployment on our streets was one such topic. The Assembly also has the ability to form new, time-limited committees to investigate urgent matters that do not naturally fit into a single committee's remit. Following the fire aboard an amphibious passenger vessel on the Thames in September 2013, the Assembly established the [Thames Passenger Boats Investigation Committee](#) to identify any lessons to be learned from the response to the incident and the regulation of such vehicles.



Committee investigations play a crucial role in raising awareness about everyday issues. Above, Chair of the Transport Committee, Valerie Shawcross AM (in red) is being interviewed by BBC Radio London about the Committee's investigation into pedestrian safety.

Assembly Member casework

Every year, Assembly Members receive thousands of emails and letters raising concerns or asking for help in dealing with a particular problem. Assembly Members take up the case with the appropriate organisation and press for solutions. Occasionally, these postbag issues will become the focus of formal Assembly investigations, with public meetings to air the complaints and question the organisations involved. Cycling safety in London is one such example. Assembly Members also spend a lot of time outside City Hall meeting constituents face-to-face.

People's Question Time

Twice a year, Assembly Members and the Mayor hold [People's Question Time](#), giving Londoners an opportunity to ask them directly what they are doing to improve life in London. This year's events were held at Imperial College London in South Kensington, and Malden Manor in Kingston-upon-Thames.

Motions and petitions

Assembly Members propose and vote on motions about issues of importance to the capital at Assembly meetings, and can agree to petition the Mayor or organisations within the GLA group on behalf of Londoners. Examples of Assembly [motions](#) this year include universal free school meals, the closure of fire stations, Post Office closures, food poverty, and limiting the development of basements.

Making the case for London

The Assembly makes the case for London in response to consultations from the Government and other organisations whose proposals will have an impact on the capital. This year, the Chair of the Assembly, Darren Johnson, appeared in front of two House of Commons select committee investigations on the subjects of [devolving more financial freedoms](#) to London, and a [review of the Assembly's powers](#).

Promoting London's government

The Assembly has an active programme of engagement with schools, colleges and universities, encouraging students to come to City Hall to learn about their city government and watch it in action at meetings like Mayor's Question Time. Additionally, the Assembly hosts an increasing number of visits from overseas delegations who want to learn more about how London is governed. The Assembly has recently hosted official visits from Argentina, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Montserrat, Peru and South Korea.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



The Chair of the Assembly (Darren Johnson AM in 2013/14, on the right) will often appear alongside the Mayor on important occasions, such as here on Armed Forces Day.



Assembly Members undertake a range of duties and appointments, in addition to those at City Hall. Murad Qureshi AM, Chair of the Environment Committee, addresses attendees at a Thames River Watch Event. He was appointed Chair of the London Waterways Commission by the Mayor.

LONDON'S PRIORITIES

As champions for London, the Assembly investigates in detail the issues that affect everyday life in the capital.

This section sets out the Assembly's work in those areas that Londoners have told us are your priorities:

- safety and policing
 - housing, planning and regeneration
 - environment and climate change
 - transport
 - health, and
 - London's economy, culture and education
-

Safety and policing



The London Assembly's [Police and Crime Committee](#) is established by law to review and recommend improvements to the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan, which sets out the policing priorities for the capital. The Committee also examines the operation and decisions of MOPAC, and investigates other matters of importance to policing and crime reduction in the capital.

As well as conducting investigations into specific issues, the Committee publicly questions the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. Assembly Members use these meetings to pursue issues of concern to constituents and challenge MOPAC about its performance and supervision of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Subjects raised at these meetings have included the MPS's response to the murder of Lee Rigby, as well as the resourcing of Operation Yewtree (the Metropolitan Police's investigation into allegations of child sexual abuse in the wake of the Jimmy Savile scandal).

Supporting victims

Victims of crime often feel like they are being punished twice: first by the crime itself, and then by the unsatisfactory levels of support they receive from statutory agencies. A Police and Crime Committee [investigation](#) concluded that the MPS needs to do much better at how it supports victims of crime, and made recommendations for action to reverse the MPS's declining performance in this area. As a result, the MPS is rolling out a new training package of victim care to all neighbourhood officers, as well as new processes that mean that the MPS is now able to turnaround virtually all requests from Victim Support in less than one working day.

Women and girls experiencing violence are among the most vulnerable and isolated members of our communities. Unless it is properly managed, funding cuts to services that work with victims of violence will only compound this problem. In its [response](#) to the Mayor's consultation on his revised strategy to tackle violence against women and girls, the Committee set out a five-point plan to ensure that the Mayor fulfils his manifesto promise to make London a safer place for women. One recommendation was that MOPAC should complete its review of how effectively demand for domestic violence services is being met and develop a plan to fill any gaps in light of funding cuts. The spirit of this recommendation is reflected in the Mayor's final strategy.

Protecting vulnerable detainees

Many alleged offenders are themselves vulnerable, with serious healthcare needs. When the police take a person into custody, they become responsible for that person's wellbeing; any failure in that duty of care can have catastrophic consequences for detainees and can seriously damage the Met's reputation. Following an [investigation](#) into the healthcare of people detained in police custody, the Committee set out the issues that the Met must address to improve its delivery of healthcare in custody suites, including nurse recruitment and retention, supporting forensic medical examiners and the Independent Custody Visitor scheme. This resulted in an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive. The report has been praised by London's forensic medical examiners, who believe the Met has made some positive changes in response.

Improving stop and search

The Met's practice of stop and search has been an ongoing source of contention for decades. The Committee's [examination](#) of the StopIt programme, the Met's new approach to stop and search, found that there needs to be a sustained effort to improve the quality, as well as to reduce the quantity, of the Met's use of stop and search if community relations are to be bolstered and police effectiveness increased. The Committee's findings were referenced by the Children's Rights Alliance for England in its review of the different experiences of children across London. The Committee's recommendations, made to the Met and MOPAC, seek to ensure an accurate account of stop and search, develop a culture of accountability, and to involve young people in change.

Arming police officers

Police officers frequently put their lives at risk to keep London safe, so it is entirely right that they should have the necessary equipment to do their jobs effectively and safely. At the same time, our nation has a long and proud tradition of policing by consent, by a largely unarmed force. Focusing on the expansion of Taser, the Committee [examined](#) how the decision to arm officers is taken. Londoners can reasonably expect that the MPS and MOPAC should set out a clear case before they make significant changes to how officers are armed. The Committee's report set out a series of processes that should be followed by the MPS and MOPAC before changes are made to the availability, or range, of less-lethal weapons on the capital's streets. In response, the MPS accepted that the process for introducing or expanding the availability of less-lethal weapons should include a sound business case, supported by accurate data.

Questioning the purchase of water cannon

Unfortunately, the Met failed to adhere to the principle of presenting a sound business case when it made its decision to purchase three water cannon for potential deployment in London. Following an [investigation](#) in March, which included an unprecedented three public meetings in the space of six days, the Committee concluded that the Met had not set out a convincing case for why water cannon were needed in London by summer 2014. It found that the examples that were given as to when water cannon could have been used over the past ten years were unconvincing, sometimes contradictory and inappropriate, and there was uncertainty about the Mayor's role about how he would be consulted on their deployment. The Committee has put its case to the Mayor and Home Secretary, who will now make the final decision about whether to license water cannon for use in the UK mainland.

The year ahead

The Police and Crime Committee will publish its report on safeguarding children, and will continue its mix of thematic and question and answer sessions with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and senior Metropolitan Police officers. The thematic sessions will include work on diversity in the Met, cyber-crime, youth rehabilitation, and a review of the impact of changes to the probation service. The Committee will continue to examine police performance and the reliability of crime statistics. Throughout its work, the Committee will retain its focus on victims' experiences.

Housing, planning and regeneration



Building affordable homes for rent

With house prices and private rents rising much more quickly than average salaries in the capital, the provision of affordable homes continues to play a crucial role in meeting housing need for many Londoners. In June, the Assembly's [Housing Committee highlighted](#) a number of risks that housing associations face as they adapt to a new business model and changes to the welfare system. A subsequent [investigation](#) by the Committee found that local authorities are emerging as increasingly important players in building affordable homes for rent. Although the Government has implemented some reforms that offer boroughs a modest opportunity for additional borrowing, caps imposed by HM Treasury are limiting the ambition of many councils to undertake house building programmes. The Assembly and the Mayor continue to call on the Government to remove these restrictions.

Improving the private rented sector

The private rented sector is the fastest growing tenure in London, and is home to an increasing number of families with children. It is, therefore, imperative to improve the condition of private rented homes, as well as the terms of tenancies. In June, the Housing Committee [published](#) a report calling for a package of tough reforms to help banish rogue landlords from the capital's rental market. Measures included higher penalties for breaching regulations and the use of longer tenancies. There were also measures to benefit landlords, including the ability to access low-cost loans to improve rental properties.

Influencing the Mayor's housing policies

Since 2012, the Mayor has been in charge of a massive pot of money with which to build new affordable homes and to refurbish existing ones. The Assembly plays a crucial role in scrutinising how the Mayor spends this money to deliver the targets he has agreed with the Government. In November, the Mayor published his draft housing strategy for consultation. The Housing Committee's [response](#) supported the Mayor's focus on increasing house building, but highlighted concerns over other pressing issues such as homelessness and overcrowding. A revised version of the Mayor's strategy contained a greater focus on these areas.

Protecting places of employment

While increasing the number of homes is essential to accommodate London's growing population, the whole city must not become one gargantuan dormitory. If London is to maintain its competitive edge, and small businesses are to flourish, there must be a balance between adequate housing provision and sufficient workspace for businesses. The [Planning Committee](#) has responded to the Government's consultation on converting commercial space into residential accommodation without the need for planning permission. The Committee's [comments](#) reinforced a motion passed unanimously by the Assembly that called on the Mayor to lobby Government to reverse its proposals to allow the conversion of shops into flats without planning permission.

Revitalising town centres

London's town centres are at the heart of our communities. In June 2013, the Planning Committee published a [report](#) on the future of London's town centres. It argued that, in an age of out-of-town and online shopping, town centres must make the shift from being primarily retail destinations to dynamic and mixed centres for communities offering a range of shopping, leisure, public services and housing. In January 2014, the [Regeneration Committee wrote](#) to the Mayor in support of the continuation of the Outer London Fund (OLF), along with a series of recommendations to enhance the impact of the fund. The OLF has been used by London's boroughs to invest in creative ways to bring the community into town centres and onto high streets. The Committee received a positive response to its findings: the Mayor has committed £9 million to support the High Streets and Places of Work programme in 2014, and he welcomed the Committee's suggestions to inform the development of the OLF.

Securing the Olympic legacy

London's Olympic Games surpassed all expectations as the greatest sporting show on Earth. The LLDC and the Mayor must now make sure that the almost £10 billion spent on the Games bring long-term economic and social benefits to one of the most deprived areas in the capital. An [investigation](#) by the Regeneration Committee examined the LLDC's progress on securing the future of the venues, its budget, jobs and economic development, plans for a cultural quarter, and housing and regeneration in the area. The Committee's principal recommendation was that the Mayor should provide the LLDC with additional funding of £8 million to cover its regeneration activities in 2015/16, without which the LLDC would have faced a shortfall. The Mayor subsequently agreed to do this.

Legacy is not just about physical regeneration, it is also about what lessons we can learn for planning major events in the future, and improving the city's infrastructure to cope with the additional pressure. The issue of ticket sales for the Games was examined by the Assembly's [Economy Committee](#). It [highlighted](#) the ways in which the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games had worked to make the Games accessible, but also noted the extremely high prices and lack of public availability for many popular sessions. By publishing some of the raw data in a more accessible format, the Committee has allowed the public to conduct its own analysis of ticket sales for the first time. Other cities, such as Glasgow, have used the information to plan better for major events. In addition, the way that transport was organised during the Games was the subject of a [report](#) by the [Transport Committee](#). The Committee was particularly concerned that key improvements implemented for the Games should be sustained. It received assurance that several key features, such as the establishment of a strategic co-ordination unit for all major events in the capital, would continue.

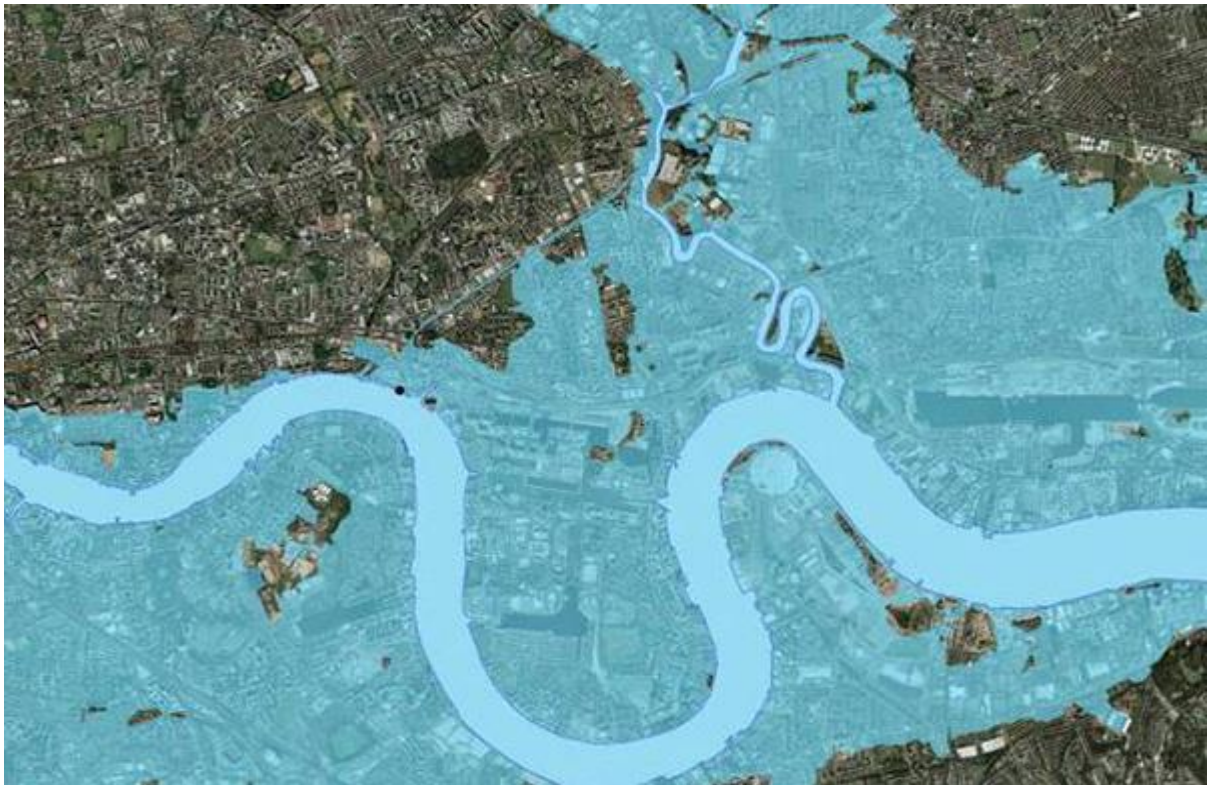
The year ahead

The Housing Committee will carry out a review of the process for demolishing or refurbishing council estates, look at how boroughs identify and approve sites for the Gypsy and Traveller communities, and will evaluate the measures to improve the affordability of home ownership. The Planning Committee will contribute to the statutory examination of the Mayor's changes to the London Plan, assess the Mayor's plans for Old Oak Common, review his powers in relation to large-scale planning applications, and will seek to monitor the effect of a range of factors on establishing and maintaining London's mixed and balanced communities. The Regeneration Committee will assess the value of stadium-led regeneration and urban renewal, look into the effectiveness of the Royal Docks enterprise zone, and will revisit its work on the LLDC.



The Olympic Games provided the backdrop to the biggest regeneration project in the country for a generation. Gareth Bacon AM, Chair of the Regeneration Committee, and Jennette Arnold AM (left and right) saw first-hand the LLDC's plans to develop the former Olympics site, including the provision of housing.

Environment and climate change



This graphic shows the area that might be affected by a 1-in-1000 year tidal surge event, exacerbated by climate change, if none of the Thames defences were in place. Image courtesy of the Environment Agency.

Protecting London's biodiversity

There are pockets of land all over London, including private gardens, wasteland, protected nature sites and parks, all of which contribute to the biodiversity of the capital by providing habitats for animals, birds and plants. An [investigation](#) by the [Environment Committee](#) found that these spaces may be under pressure from development, and that the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy has not been updated for more than a decade. In [response](#) to the Committee's work, the Mayor agreed to prepare and publish a supplement to his Biodiversity Strategy, in partnership with the organisations that participated in the Committee's investigation.

Making the most of London's waterways

Overcrowding is not confined only to traditional bricks and mortar housing. London's waterways are becoming increasingly popular as a place for people to live, at times because of the relative affordability compared with buying or renting a more traditional home. An Environment Committee [report](#) estimated 10,000 people could be living on London's 100 miles of canals and 42 miles of the River Thames. However, the number of moorings and facilities, such as water supply and waste disposal, has not kept pace with the increase in the number of houseboats, leading to overcrowding and local environmental and nuisance concerns at hotspots. The Committee made a number of recommendations, including ways to increase the length of waterway that is suitable for mooring. The proposed changes to the Mayor's London Plan contain elements taking this forward, and the Canal and River Trust has also responded with its plans to tackle these matters.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



The work of the Assembly can influence the Mayor in numerous ways. In this picture, the Environment Committee is on a site visit to the Welsh Harp Reservoir in north-west London, as part of its investigation into London's biodiversity. The Mayor agreed to update his Biodiversity Strategy as a result of this investigation.



The Assembly will sometimes ask an individual Assembly Member to undertake a special investigation, known as a rapporteurship. Jenny Jones AM (right) was asked to investigate London's waterways. Here she is on a visit to Islington to hear from local residents, boaters and industry officials about the issues affecting waterways.

Managing flood risk

While London's waterways are the hidden gems of the capital, not all water is equally inviting. Earlier this year, we experienced the wettest winter on record, with persistent flooding in several parts of London. An [investigation](#) by the Environment Committee found that 24,000 homes in London are at significant risk of flooding, and the effects of climate change are increasing the risk to many more homes. The Committee concluded that London needs to protect itself from inevitable flooding in the future, with adequate investment in flood defences, including river restoration and sustainable drainage in built-up areas. The more natural banks are restored to London's rivers, the less likely heavy rain will cause the degree of flooding that we saw in the early part of this year. The Mayor has recently announced the continuation of the Drain London project to map and reduce surface water flood risk.

Reducing the cost of utilities

We all take it for granted that when we turn on the tap, or flush the loo, water will flow; but treating and supplying water to millions of Londoners - each of whom uses an average of 167 litres every day - is a major challenge, with huge financial and environmental costs. In October, the Environment Committee met with Thames Water to discuss water management in London, including leakage reduction, water efficiency, drainage and sewage, and its proposal to increase Londoners' water bills by nine per cent (in addition to the planned above-inflation increase) in 2014/15. The Committee [wrote](#) to Ofwat, the regulator for the water and sewerage sectors in England and Wales, arguing on behalf of cash-strapped Londoners against the bill increase. Subsequently, Ofwat determined that no increase would be allowed.

The year ahead

The Environment Committee will examine the risks of severe weather events over the coming years and the work of relevant agencies to prepare for, and mitigate, the effects in the capital. It will also look at food waste reduction and management, as well as the effects of diesel emissions on London's air quality.

Transport



Making best use of London's airports

The debate about the pros and cons of expanding London's aviation capacity – whether a third runway at Heathrow, or a new hub airport in the Thames Estuary – will run for years. And yet, existing airport capacity in London is heavily underused: Stansted and Luton are currently operating at about half of their potential capacity. In April, an [investigation](#) by the Assembly's [Transport Committee](#) concluded that improved rail connections and promoting public transport from central London to Gatwick, Luton and Stansted could result in more effective use of these airports, and reduce the reliance on Heathrow. The independent Airports Commission has since confirmed that it will explore the Committee's suggestion that Oyster ticketing facilities should be extended to Gatwick and Stansted. The Commission's interim report also recommended the creation of an Independent Aviation Noise Authority, to provide expert and impartial advice about the noise impacts of aviation. This proposal was championed by the Assembly.

Improving bus journeys

Most of us will jump on a bus considerably many more times than we will catch a flight. London's buses are the unsung heroes of our public transport system, accounting for six and a half million journeys every day – more than twice as many as on the Tube. In October, the Transport Committee [published](#) its analysis of TfL's plans for the bus network. The Committee estimated that an additional 167 million more bus journeys will be undertaken in 2022 than in 2013, but TfL has not yet set out how bus routes will cope with the extra passengers. The increasing overcrowding is likely to have a disproportionate effect on the many low-income households who rely heavily on buses, as does the removal of cash payments. The Committee called on TfL to introduce an option for bus passengers to make one more bus journey using an Oyster card with insufficient credit; this approach was subsequently adopted.



While Londoners can make their views heard outside of formal Committee sessions, they are often not able to ask questions directly during the meetings. So it is important for the Assembly to hold events that do facilitate such interaction. During a Transport Committee seminar on buses, members of the public and campaigners were able to put questions directly to Assembly Members and TfL bosses.

Making roads safer for cyclists and pedestrians

Cycling in London has made great strides over the last decade, but the rise in the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on our roads risks reversing that progress. Cyclist casualty rates have risen every year since 2006. In February, the Transport Committee re-visited its [previous](#) investigation into safer cycling, and [explored](#) the progress made by the Mayor and TfL. The Committee drew on findings from its online survey, which attracted over 6,300 responses – one of the highest ever response rates to an Assembly survey. The Committee recommended that the Mayor and TfL should take urgent action to improve safety, including delivering improvements earlier than planned to the Cycle Superhighways and traffic junctions.

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable of all road users; more pedestrians are killed or seriously injured on London's streets than any other road user group – an average of three people per day. The Assembly has been instrumental in focusing attention on reducing pedestrian casualties. A Transport Committee [investigation](#) into pedestrian safety found that, following a decade of progress in reducing the number of pedestrians killed or injured on the capital's roads, casualty numbers have begun to creep up again since 2011. The Committee made recommendations to the Mayor and TfL on how to improve safety, including a zero-tolerance approach to road death and injury.

The year ahead

The Transport Committee's work will have a strong passenger focus in the year ahead, including an analysis of London Underground, the taxi and private hire industries, and future ticketing options.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



To launch the Transport Committee's report on pedestrian safety, Assembly Members Richard Tracey, Valerie Shawcross, Darren Johnson and Tom Copley (left to right) walk across the most famous of all London's pedestrian crossings.



The safety of cyclists on London's roads remains an on-going concern for the Assembly. An officer from the Driver and Vehicles Standards Agency demonstrated to Caroline Pidgeon AM and Valerie Shawcross AM (left and right) the dangers posed to cyclists by lorries and large vehicles.

Health



Tackling the diabetes time-bomb

There has been an estimated 75 per cent increase in type 2 diabetes in London over the last decade, and the number of cases in the capital is growing faster than anywhere else in the country. Diabetes can have extremely serious health implications; it is now the biggest single cause of amputation, stroke, blindness and end-stage kidney failure in the country. The [Health Committee published](#) its report on diabetes care in April 2014, which makes recommendations to the Mayor, London boroughs and NHS England on ways to tackle the impending diabetes time-bomb. The Committee found that healthcare providers and government have a role to play in reversing this growing crisis, as does the food and drink industry. It also saw that when boroughs prioritise diabetes care, it is possible to have a positive impact on the health of the people living in those areas, as was demonstrated in Tower Hamlets and Newham.

Improving A&E waiting times

Across the capital, Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments are struggling to cope with demand, and more than half are failing to hit national targets of seeing patients within four hours at least half of the time. The Health Committee [highlighted](#) how visits to London's A&E departments have risen by over a third over the last ten years, to 3.6 million each year. It warned that current service provision is unsustainable over the longer-term, especially during the winter months. The Committee argued that radical change is needed to cope with increasing demand, with a clear London-wide plan to address the inevitable tension between those wanting to rationalise services and local people's concerns about access to care.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



The Assembly is fortunate to have highly qualified Londoners as its Members. The Chair of the Health Committee, Dr Onkar Sahota, is also a General Practitioner. As part of the Committee's investigation into the A&E crisis, Andrew Boff AM and Dr Onkar Sahota AM (left and middle) went to hear first-hand from staff and patients at University College London Hospital.



To launch the Health Committee's report on diabetes, Assembly Members Andrew Boff, Fiona Twycross and Dr Onkar Sahota (left to right) took diabetes tests at a mobile testing unit in Trafalgar Square. Happily, they all tested negative.

Reducing health inequalities

The health of Londoners varies widely according to the condition of their homes and workplaces, local environment, employment status, education and wealth. In September 2013, the Committee hosted a [London Leaders Forum](#) in which delegates from across the health sector met to discuss what more could be done to reduce health inequalities in the capital. Representatives from key health organisations attended the event, and had an opportunity to share their ideas during two plenary sessions, guided by a panel of experts. The [discussion](#) celebrated the positive work and progress that has been made in reducing health inequalities in London, and also highlighted the continuing challenges.

The year ahead

The Health Committee will continue its on-going work on access to health services. There will be a detailed examination of D/deaf people's experiences of the health sector, as well as how young people and those from a minority ethnic background access mental health services.

Helping low-paid Londoners

The cost of living in London can be punishingly high. At £6.31 per hour, the National Minimum Wage is simply not enough to make ends meet, and continues to fall in real terms. The Assembly has been seeking to make the London Living Wage the norm across the capital; this would raise the hourly rate to at least £8.80. There are an estimated 750,000 Londoners earning less than the London Living Wage. The Assembly's [report](#) sets out the benefits of tackling low pay not only for individuals, but also for London's employers and the wider economy. It makes recommendations to the Mayor, London boroughs and the Living Wage Foundation to boost the voluntary uptake of the London Living Wage, particularly in the capital's lowest paying sectors, and calls for legislation if a voluntary approach fails to reduce the numbers on very low wages by 2020.

Improving skills for adults

In addition to a living wage, improving the skills and qualifications of low earners could lead to better paid employment over the longer-term. In June, the Economy Committee completed its [investigation](#) into adult careers services in London, with a particular focus on the role of the London Enterprise Panel (LEP). The LEP accepted the Committee's recommendations that it should champion effective careers services in London, and to engage actively in shaping the design and delivery of the proposed new careers agency for the capital.

Supporting working parents

Simply acquiring skills is not enough, it is essential to retain those skilled individuals in the workforce. An [investigation](#) by the Economy Committee found that the capital is missing out on vital skills because parents, particularly women, are poorly served by the capital's labour market. The main barriers for parents wanting to work include the costs of childcare, a shortage of flexible childcare, a shortage of good quality part-time jobs, and generally poor employment support for parents. The Committee made a number of recommendations to the LEP to feed into its strategy to increase the level of parental employment in London, as well as to the Government to include additional childcare support to all working families on Universal Credit.

Improving skills for young people

Poorly supported parents are not the only wasted talent, and we need to make sure that London's young people are being trained in the skills that our economy needs. Apprenticeships can bring real value to employees and employers, yet there are fewer on offer in the capital than elsewhere in the UK. An Economy Committee [investigation](#) looked at the reasons for this, and questioned whether the schemes on offer are effective, what more could be done by the Mayor to improve take-up, and the potential impact of proposed Government changes. The findings from the Committee's investigation will be published later in 2014.

Along with apprenticeships, internships are becoming an increasingly common part of the transition from education to the workplace. The Economy Committee found that two out of five people in the UK offered an internship have had to turn it down for financial reasons, allowing peers who can afford to work without pay to gain experience in highly competitive industries. The results of the Committee's survey and examination of this issue will be published shortly.

LONDON ASSEMBLY



The Economy Committee asked Tom Copley AM to investigate the issues facing small theatres. Here, he practises his theatrical ability to smile while standing, outside Jacksons Lane, a creative space in north London.



Chair of the Economy Committee, Stephen Knight AM, went to work alongside catering apprentices to launch the investigation into apprenticeships in the capital, and to learn first-hand what they can offer London's workforce.

Assessing the Mayor's actions in education

Of course, almost all of us will have experienced a classroom situation long before we would have cause to consider an apprenticeship or internship. The Assembly's [Education Panel](#) was established to provide oversight of the Mayor's education programme. The Panel's inaugural meeting reviewed the crisis in school places, and assessed the Mayor's role in supporting more effective planning for school places through better modelling of demand and supply. The second meeting looked at the role of the Gold Club and the Mayor's Schools Excellence Fund in supporting schools and their teachers to raise attainment and achievement levels. The final meeting of the year considered the Mayor's support for academies and free schools, and in particular his commitment to identify ten GLA-owned sites on which to deliver free schools.

The year ahead

The Economy Committee will review the threats to the London economy from climate change, assessing the risks and London government's response. There is also interest in holding a seminar on the opportunities and risks to the economy from banking and financial services reform, as well as a review of personal debt. The Education Panel will continue to provide oversight of the Mayor's intervention in the education sector; in particular, reviewing actions taken to implement the recommendations of his 2012 Education Inquiry, an assessment of the school places crisis, and the role of the Mayor in providing support to schools working with some of London's most vulnerable and troubled young people.

HOW THE ASSEMBLY USES YOUR MONEY

LONDON ASSEMBLY



The Greater London Authority is paid through a levy on London council tax bills (commonly known as “the GLA precept”), grants from central government and other bodies, and income from interest, sales, fees and charges. The total annual cost of the London Assembly to each Band D council taxpayer is £1 a year.

The London Assembly’s net budget for 2013/14 was £7.4 million, down from £7.7 million the previous year. Just over half of this, £3.9 million, funded the work of the twenty-five Assembly Members and their assistants and researchers. Another third, £2.4 million, funded the team of officers who support the work of the Assembly by arranging and supporting its public meetings, researching and drafting Assembly reports, publicising its work and organising events. The remaining £1.1 million funded London TravelWatch, which deals with specific complaints from public transport users in London.

	2013/14	2014/15
	£m	£m
Assembly Members pay	1.7	1.8
Assembly Member support	2.2	2.1
Scrutiny and Investigations	1.2	1.2
Committee Services	0.6	0.5
External Relations	0.3	0.3
Director/Business Support	0.3	0.3
London TravelWatch	1.1	1.0
Total	7.4	7.2

Other formats and languages

If you, or someone you know, needs a copy of this report in large print or braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on: 020 7983 4100 or email: assembly.translations@london.gov.uk.

Chinese

如果需要您母語版本的此文件，
請致電以下號碼或與下列地址聯絡

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có bản bản tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa chỉ dưới đây.

Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde hazırlanmış bir nüshasını edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki telefon numarasını arayınız veya adrese başvurunuz.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये पते पर संपर्क करें

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি (কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان أدناه

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

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LONDON ASSEMBLY

