

Call for Evidence: Planning and tall buildings

The London Assembly investigates issues of importance to Londoners and holds the Mayor to account. The London Assembly Planning and Regeneration Committee has launched an investigation into tall buildings in London. As part of the investigation, the Committee will examine:

- current demographics of residents of tall buildings (who is being served by this building typology).
- the attitudes and experiences of residents in tall buildings.
- how tall building policy should be considered in the future London Plan.

Below is information about the investigation and Call for Evidence, as well as key questions that the Committee is interested in.

Who can submit evidence?

This Call for Evidence is open to all who would like to respond. We would particularly welcome responses from housing developers, planning authorities, asset managers, housing investment firms, planning consultants, construction firms and others involved in the planning and development of housing in London, including those involved with supplying affordable homes.

Why is the Committee exploring this topic?

The GLA's 2017 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) found that between 2016 and 2041 London will need 66,000 new homes a year, of which around 65 per cent should be affordable to fully meet its housing needs.¹

The current London Plan, adopted in March 2021, sets a target of 52,000 homes a year for the next ten years.² Under the Government's latest version of the Standard Method for calculating housing need, the figure for London is over 85,000 homes per year.

When discussing the potential role of tall buildings in providing new homes, The London Plan (2021) states:

*"[they can] form part of a plan-led approach to facilitating regeneration opportunities and managing future growth, contributing new homes and economic growth, particularly in order to make optimal use of the capacity of sites which are well-connected by public transport and have good access to services and amenities."*³

The London Plan defines tall buildings as being no less than six stories or 18 metres from ground to the floor level of the uppermost storey. Between 2014 and 2024, 270 tall buildings were completed in London, with the most being built in

¹ [GLA, The 2017 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Part of the London Plan evidence base \(2017\)](#)

² Mayor of London, [The London Plan](#) (2021). **NB**, this target balances the SHMA together with land availability and other factors.

³ Mayor of London, [The London Plan](#) (2021)

Call for Evidence: Planning and tall buildings

Tower Hamlets (71).⁴ 84 per cent of the tall buildings applications in 2023 were for mixed use with residential units.

A lot of work looking at the experiences of residents in tall buildings originates in the 1960s and 1970s and focused on social housing. In recent decades there has been a shift in the types of homes being delivered by tall buildings towards private luxury accommodation⁵.

This investigation will aim to understand how tall buildings have changed, and how this is impacting residents and communities. As the London Plan is reviewed, the Committee wants to ensure that the voices of Londoners can be heard in the development of the city's skyline and that the right homes are being built for them.

Will responses be published?

For transparency, we will publish most written submissions and the name of the individual or organisation that submitted it. Exceptions to this are applied where there is a legal reason for non-publication or if there is a safeguarding or welfare issue. If you would like your evidence not to be published with your name or to not be published, please let us know and the Committee will consider it. However, this cannot be guaranteed, and the Assembly may be required to release non-personally identifiable information if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Read the [GLA's privacy notice](#).

⁴ NLA, [London's Growing Up: A Decade of Building Tall](#) (2024)

What will the evidence I provide be used for?

The responses to this Call for Evidence may be used to inform recommendations to the Mayor, which will likely be published in a report or a letter.

If information and/or quotations from your submission to this Call for Evidence are used in this publication, we will cite you. We will inform those who have submitted evidence about the outcome of the investigation.

How do I submit evidence?

Please send evidence by email to: scrutiny@london.gov.uk

The deadline for submission is **4 March 2025**.

The Committee welcomes any evidence relevant to the following principal questions:

1. Who lives in tall buildings in London and what are their experience of doing so? In particular:
 - a. How do those experiences differ amongst different groups, including students, families, older people, and disabled people?
 - b. What are the key benefits and challenges experienced by residents living in tall buildings?
 - c. Do tall buildings impact residents' mental and physical well-being compared to other types of housing types?
2. How do tall buildings contribute to or detract from the creation of inclusive

⁵ Ellie Benton, Roby Russell, Kath Scanlon, [Wellbeing in high rise housing-views from built environment professionals](#) (2024)

Call for Evidence: Planning and tall buildings

and thriving communities in London? In particular:

- a. How do local communities perceive tall buildings in their areas?
 - b. Are there examples of good tall buildings in London? What features make them successful?
 - c. Are tall buildings helping to meet London's housing need?
 - d. Are there any particular tenures where tall buildings have been most or least successful?
 - e. What are the environmental and energy impacts of tall buildings compared to other typologies?
3. What improvements or changes should be made to the way tall buildings are planned and approved in London? In particular:
- a. How are the wider impacts of tall buildings considered by Boroughs when granting planning permission?
 - b. How are the wider impacts of tall buildings considered by the Mayor of London when granting planning permission?
 - c. How should the new London Plan (and local development plans) accommodate tall buildings as part of a mix of housing typologies?

Please select those most relevant to your organisation – you do not need to answer all questions.

Please feel free to share any other information on this topic you feel would be useful to the Committee.

About the Committee

The Planning and Regeneration Committee holds main responsibility for examining the London Plan, the **London Legacy Development**

Corporation (LLDC) and the **Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation** (OPDC). Read more about our [previous work](#).

Committee Members

- **Andrew Boff (Chairman) (Conservative)**
- **James Small-Edwards (Deputy Chair) (Labour)**
- Sem Moema (Labour)
- Elly Baker (Labour)
- Zoë Garbett (Green)
- Shaun Bailey (Conservative)

Contact

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