



Emma Best AM

Chairman of the Health Committee

London Directors of Public Health

(Sent by email)

16 March 2026

Dear London Directors of Public Health,

I am writing as Chairman of the London Assembly Health Committee regarding breast cancer screening in London. We held an evidence-gathering session on this topic on 22 January 2026, hearing from the NHS and charities in London.¹

In 2023-24 London's uptake of breast cancer screenings was the lowest of any region in the country, at 63 per cent among women aged 50-70. This is an increase since the previous year, when uptake was 55 per cent, but remains below the England-wide average of 70 per cent and falls short of the NHS's "acceptable level" of 70 per cent or greater.²

The Committee discussed mobile breast cancer screening units with our expert guests, and heard that those operating mobile units face operational challenges. Dr Will Teh, Consultant Radiologist and Director, North London Breast Screening service explained that:

¹ London Assembly Health Committee, [Agenda](#), 22 January 2026

² NHS England, [Breast Screening Programme, England, 2023-24, Main Report](#), 18 February 2025

“Where we found previously we have enough space because they are very large, they take about eight parking spaces, every year we find that the place we used to park has been sold, the land has been sold, we cannot park there. Where they are willing to have us there, there is a time limit, and they have not got the power supply to put them in.”³

We are concerned that this may prevent vital screening services from reaching eligible women in London.

We recognise that there are a number of organisations involved in providing these screening units access to operate, including the NHS and Transport for London. However, as you are aware, Directors of Public Health (DsPH) in local authorities have statutory responsibilities for the health of their populations. When applied to screening programmes, these include:

- acting on behalf of the population to make sure screening programmes are delivered fairly and efficiently and are accessible to everyone in the population we serve
- helping screening commissioners and providers connect with communities who might struggle to access their services.⁴

As such, please could you provide us with the following information:

- 1) How much space is allocated to mobile breast cancer screening units in your borough?
- 2) For each of the spaces where mobile units have permission to park, for what length of time is this permission guaranteed?
- 3) How you are ensuring that mobile breast cancer screening units can access parking spaces, power and other essential requirements to operate?

The Committee would be grateful if you could set out your responses to our questions by Friday 1 May 2026. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Best AM

Chairman of the Health Committee

³ Dr Will Teh, [London Assembly Health Committee meeting](#), Panel 2, 22 January 2026 (p.5)

⁴ UK Government, [What role do local public health teams play in screening?](#), 24 February 2025