



# London Environment Strategy

**APPENDIX 3:  
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF  
THE MAYOR AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

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# Air Quality

## The Mayor

The Mayor of London has a legal duty to set out policies and proposals in this strategy to implement the national air quality strategy and to achieve legal limits (EU limit values and national air quality standards/objectives) on air pollution, and leads on the implementation of measures in the capital to tackle pollution emissions, reduce exposure, raise awareness and integrate air quality and public health.

The Mayor will take action to improve air quality, where he or bodies within his control have relevant powers or resources, in the most effective manner to achieve compliance with legal limits as soon as possible. However, the Mayor does not have all the powers he needs to improve London's air quality on his own and is allowed to call on other persons or bodies to take necessary action.

## London boroughs

The 33 boroughs (including the City of London) must have regard to the air quality provisions of the Mayor's Strategy when exercising their local air quality management (LAQM) functions. The Environment Act 1995 and related Defra guidance also delegate certain supervisory powers over their LAQM functions (see Appendix 3 for more information on the LAQM system) under that Act from the Secretary of State to the Mayor of London.

London's boroughs have an important role to play in addressing local pollution. The levers under their control include:

- emissions-based parking charges
- reducing pollution from new developments through the planning system (especially those that are not referred to the Mayor)
- improving the urban realm for walking and cycling
- implementing targeted measures at pollution hotspots
- supporting the installation of the infrastructure required to fuel zero-emission vehicles

The statutory powers of the boroughs are also important to continue to regulate smaller industrial activities, prevent antisocial burning and discourage the use of illegal wood-burning stoves. Finally, the boroughs have extensive public health duties and can play an important role in mainstreaming air quality into health-related activity.

### **Central government and associated bodies**

The ultimate responsibility for achieving compliance with the legally required limit values and air quality standards/objectives under both EU and UK law lies with the government, specifically the Secretary of State for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The government is required to have an Air Quality Plan that will achieve this.

The government has unique tools available to it, such as control over fiscal incentives or the ability to legislate, which can accelerate compliance. Without a clear national plan to tackle emissions, especially from vehicles, the air in UK cities will not improve.

The public sector has a wider duty to lead by example to reduce emissions and exposure to pollution, particularly in relation to its vehicle fleets.

#### *Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency has broad functions to protect land, water and air quality across England.

In relation to London's air quality, its role as the regulator for larger industrial sites and for waste sites is important in protecting both local and regional air quality.

As well as the sites they directly regulate, the Environment Agency has an important role in identifying the best available techniques for industrial sites regulated by the boroughs.

# Green Infrastructure

## The Mayor

The Mayor has relatively little direct powers or influence over green infrastructure. The GLA also does not have any significant responsibility for direct land management in London.

Planning is the area where the Mayor has the greatest potential influence. The Mayor's land-use planning powers can influence the design and management of land that is subject to major development. The Mayor is responsible for setting London Plan policy and considers applications of strategic importance. The London Plan includes policies protecting Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) - the core network needed to protect London's ecology and biodiversity - and other policies that aim to create and enhance ecological features.

The Mayor also has influence over green infrastructure and the natural environment through the activities of:

- key departments within the GLA, such as those responsible for housing and land and regeneration
- bodies over which the Mayor has direct influence, such as TfL

The Mayor has a significant leadership role and can act as a powerful advocate to highlight issues that require a pan-London approach in order to stimulate effective and co-ordinated action.

## London boroughs

London boroughs' Local Plans must be in general conformity with the greening policies in the London Plan.

At the local level, regeneration, highways and place-making departments in the boroughs set the objectives for land that is redeveloped. This then determines the extent and quality of greening in the urban environment.

Boroughs also have responsibility for managing and maintaining large areas of green space, such as public parks.

## Central government and associated bodies

The three statutory agencies (Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission) provide general guidance and advice on a range of natural environment issues. This

includes the ways in which green spaces, rivers and natural landscapes can be managed better to improve both their ecological value and green infrastructure benefits for people.

### *Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency has a specific role in relation to water quality, and developments that are likely to be, or increase the risk of, flooding.

### *Natural England*

Natural England has to be consulted if development might have an impact on protected sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest) or protected species (such as bats).

### *Forestry Commission*

The Forestry Commission has an important regulatory and advisory role, particularly with regard to the protection of the urban forest from pests and diseases.

## **Other organisations**

The responsibility for managing and maintaining London's ecology and natural environment falls to a wide range of organisations and individuals, including:

- London boroughs
- charitable or not-for-profit bodies, such as the London Wildlife Trust and National Trust
- locally-based land management trusts that manage and maintain individual spaces
- public bodies, such as the Royal Parks Agency, City of London, Network Rail and Transport for London
- private organisations, such as Thames Water, sporting bodies (including golf courses) and farmers own and manage large areas of green space across the city

### *Private developers*

Although new developments are framed by policy and regulation, the development sector (including architects, civil engineers and landscape architects) has significant influence over the quality and extent of urban greening delivered and maintained in new buildings and their environs.

### *Civil society organisations*

National charities, such as the RSPB, Woodland Trust and National Trust, have an important role to play in influencing national and local policy, as well as providing educational resources for the public. Civil society organisations, such as Thames 21, Living Streets and Trees for Cities can help to inform and galvanise local communities to demand greener, more liveable neighbourhoods. At a smaller scale, community groups can have a significant influence over local green spaces.

# Climate Change Mitigation and Energy

## **The Mayor**

The Mayor has a legal duty to set out policies and proposals in this strategy for mitigating climate change and energy, as well as a duty to take action on adapting to climate change.

Although the Mayor has no direct powers to encourage building retrofit for greater energy efficiency, except for major refurbishments requiring planning consent, the London Plan sets the standard that new developments should achieve as a planning requirement.

The Mayor also has no direct regulatory role or legal powers in the energy market. A fully functioning smart energy system is likely to require an overhaul of commercial and regulatory relationships between distribution, supply, generation and transmission companies.

## **London boroughs**

Borough planning authorities are responsible for enforcing the low carbon and energy efficient building design and operation standards of development set out in the London Plan.

## **Central government and associated bodies**

The government is responsible for setting a clear vision and direction through regulation and by creating a stable policy environment that fosters certainty, investment and innovation. This includes decarbonising the national grid, leading the rollout of smart meters, and tackling fuel poverty.

### *Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy*

BEIS is responsible for:

- ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean
- ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation
- tackling climate change

*Ofgem*

Ofgem is the economic regulator of the energy supply sector and:

- promotes value for money
- promotes security of supply and sustainability, for present and future generations of consumers, domestic and industrial users
- supervises and develops markets and competition
- regulates and delivers government schemes

# Waste

## **The Mayor**

The GLA is not a waste authority. However, the Mayor does have some regulatory powers to ensure that statutory waste authorities' plans, services and contracts are in general conformity with Mayoral policies and proposals concerning municipal waste, as set out in this Strategy. They must also provide information to the Mayor about how their proposed waste contracts conform with the Strategy. The Mayor has the power to direct a waste authority where their waste activities are considered detrimental to the implementation of its municipal waste provisions.

The Mayor also has a role to play in facilitating and supporting good practice.

## **London boroughs**

Boroughs are responsible for delivering waste and recycling services either in-house or through private waste companies. Twelve boroughs both collect and dispose of waste.

There are four statutory, sub-regional partnerships that are responsible for jointly disposing of the waste collected by their members. These are:

- East London Waste Authority
- North London Waste Authority
- Western Riverside Waste Authority
- West London Waste Authority

Four boroughs have formed a voluntary waste partnership; the South London Waste Partnership.

Waste authorities need to demonstrate how they are acting in general conformity with the Mayor's municipal waste provisions of the London Environment Strategy. Generally, conformity only applies to local authority collected waste (LACW) waste activities and cannot bring excessive additional costs to waste authorities.

## **Central government and associated bodies**

The Secretary of State can provide guidance on achieving general conformity. However, none has ever been produced.

*Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs*

Defra sets the overall waste policy framework in England.

### *Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency is responsible for issuing permits for the use, treatment, storage and disposal of waste. It is also responsible for tackling serious waste crime, such as illegal waste sites, the illegal export of waste, and large scale illegal dumping.

### **Other organisations**

#### *London Waste and Recycling Board*

LWARB brings together the Mayor, London boroughs, and other stakeholders involved in managing London's waste. LWARB's objectives are to promote and encourage, in relation to Greater London:

- the production of less waste
- an increase in the proportion of waste that is reused or recycled
- use of methods of collection, treatment and disposal of waste that is more beneficial to the environment

In pursuing its objectives LWARB is required to act in accordance with the provisions of the London Environment Strategy dealing with municipal waste management, and in general conformity with the London Plan.

#### *Waste and Resources Action Programme*

WRAP works with the GLA and London's businesses and communities to deliver practical solutions to improve resource efficiency, including by:

- reinventing how products are designed, produced and sold
- rethinking products are used and consumed
- redefining what is possible through re-use and recycling

# Adapting to Climate Change

## **The Mayor**

The Mayor has a legal duty to set out policies and proposals in this strategy for adapting to climate change and a duty to take action on climate change mitigation and energy.

Flooding is one of the most significant risks to London from climate change. The GLA is not a flood risk management authority. However, the Mayor produces a Regional Flood Risk Appraisal that sets out the general nature of flood risk across London and how it affects existing and proposed development. The Mayor also includes climate change adaptation policies in the London Plan.

The Mayor has no direct regulatory role or legal powers in relation to water resources and their associated supply and distribution infrastructure. However, the Mayor can influence water use and supply, to some extent, through the London Plan. It is also essential that the GLA maintains an oversight of strategic water resource planning and demand management measures to ensure a resilient and affordable supply for Londoners.

There is no single authority responsible for managing heat risk in London.

## **London boroughs**

The 33 boroughs are the Lead Local Flood Authorities with respect to surface water and groundwater flooding.

The boroughs have no statutory responsibilities in relation to water resources and their associated supply and distribution infrastructure.

Borough public health directors are responsible for implementing Public Health England's national heatwave plan in order to manage population health and well-being.

## **Central government and associated bodies**

### *Defra*

Defra sets the overall water and sewerage policy framework in England. This includes:

- standard setting
- drafting of legislation
- creating special permits

### *Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency is the environmental regulator of the water and sewerage sector in England. They are the principal adviser to the government on the environment, and the leading public body protecting and improving the environment of England. They work in partnership with a range of other organisations to:

- reduce flood risk, particularly fluvial (main river) flooding and tidal flooding
- promote sustainable development
- secure environmental and social benefits

### *Ofwat*

Ofwat is the economic regulator of the water and sewerage sectors. Part of its role is ensuring the long-term resilience of water companies' water supply systems, and promoting sustainable development. Its role is to:

- protect the interests of consumers, wherever appropriate, by promoting competition
- make sure that the water companies properly carry out their functions
- ensure that the water companies can finance their functions

### *Public Health England*

Public Health England is responsible for:

- protecting the nation from public health hazards
- preparing for, and responding to, public health emergencies
- improving the health of the whole population by sharing information and expertise, and identifying and preparing for future public health challenges
- researching, collecting and analysing data to improve understanding of public health challenges, and come up with answers to public health problems

As part of this, Public Health England produces the national heatwave plan and funds the Heat Health Watch service, which forecasts heatwaves. Public Health England also conducts research and provides guidance on the health impacts of flooding.

## Other organisations

### *London Resilience*

London Resilience coordinates institutions and communities to prevent, handle, recover from, and learn from disruption, and adapt to change. They work on behalf of the Mayor of London, the Greater London Authority, Local Authorities, and London Fire Brigade to support the work of the London Resilience Partnership.

The Partnership brings together more than 170 organisations (fire, police, local authorities, utilities, transport, etc.) that have specific responsibilities for preparing for, and responding to, emergencies. This is achieved by assessing risks, working to reduce the likelihood or impact of those risks, and, where risk can't be eliminated, preparing arrangements to respond, recover, and learn from emergencies.

### *Private water companies*

London's water is provided by four private water companies. In order of London customers supplied, these are:

- Thames Water
- Affinity Water
- Essex and Suffolk Water
- SES Water

All of these water companies are responsible for supplying water to both London and counties outside of London. Water companies not only supply water to London, but also provide wastewater supplies. They are therefore responsible for sewer flooding. They are also playing an important role in improving reducing surface water flood risk and water quality through sustainable drainage installation.

### *Regional Flood and Coastal Committees*

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committees bring together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities and independent members with relevant experience to:

- ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
- encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities
- provide a link between the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area.

*Catchment Partnerships*

Catchment Partnerships use a catchment-based and collaborative approach to help meet Water Framework Directive objectives (see Appendix 4 for more information about this Directive). The London Catchment Partnership includes a range of organisations from civil society organisations such as Thames 21, to public bodies such as the Environment Agency.

# Ambient Noise

## **The Mayor**

The Mayor has a legal duty to set out policies and proposals in this strategy to tackle ambient noise, the main, long-term, predictable sources of noise across London. This includes noise related to transport, fixed industrial sources and other sources that the Mayor may consider appropriate.

The Mayor's powers to monitor and control noise are limited. While the Mayor can seek to mitigate some ambient noise impacts through the actions of TfL and the wider GLA group, the Mayor has no direct role over policing noise emitted from construction works, loudspeakers in the street, noise under the control of an employer, noise emitted from premises, noise emitted from or caused by a vehicle in the street, noise emitted from or caused by machinery or equipment in a street, and noise from drones or other model aircraft. Responsibility for the policing and management of these sources of noise falls to local authorities and independent organisations.

## **London boroughs**

The 33 boroughs are responsible for noise from neighbours / other people nearby, and noise from building, construction, demolition, renovation and roadworks.

Boroughs are responsible for looking into complaints about noise from premises, and vehicle, machinery or equipment in the street. This includes the provision to serve notice to people carrying out construction or demolition works. Councils have separate powers to deal with anti-social noise.

Boroughs also consider potential noise nuisance when making planning decisions, issuing entertainment licences, making decisions about building controls and building new roads for which they are the highway authority.

## **Central government and associated bodies**

### *Defra*

Defra is the UK government department with overall responsibility for the Environmental Noise Directive in the UK. It provides strategic noise maps and action plans for England. This examines noise from major road, major rail and agglomerations. Defra has also run large-scale surveys across the UK to provide an estimate of attitudes to noise, and to show changes in attitudes over time.

### *Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency controls some potential noise nuisances with environmental permits, as part of pollution control.

### *Civil Aviation Authority*

The Civil Aviation Authority has three roles relating to aviation noise:

- decisions relating to airspace
- monitoring noise around UK airports
- collaborating on and reviewing research related to noise and providing advice to government

### *Highways England*

As the highway authority, Highways England is responsible for assessing the noise implications for local properties from new road infrastructure that it builds.

### *Network Rail*

Network Rail owns and manages the rail network, and so is responsible for noise impacts from rail infrastructure, such as track and signalling and also maintenance works.

## **Other organisations**

### *Airports*

Airport operators are responsible for producing their own noise action plans that align to the guidance provided through Defra.

### *Train operating companies*

The noise from trains themselves is the responsibility of the train operating companies who procure the trains and run services.

# The London Plan

The Mayor is required to publish a Spatial Development Strategy for London. This strategy is more commonly known as “the London Plan”. It is intended to provide a strategic framework for London boroughs’ local development frameworks (also known as “local plans”), neighbourhood plans and for the taking of planning decisions. Boroughs are the local planning authorities for their areas and are responsible for preparing local plans, which must be in general conformity with the London Plan.

The London Plan also provides an overarching, spatial framework and context for the Mayor’s other strategies (such as those on transport, economic development, and housing), bringing them together in a single, comprehensive framework, showing how together they will contribute to the sustainable development of London over the next twenty years, and giving effect to those of the Mayor’s policies that require the planning system for implementation.

The Mayor has two types of planning decision that are referred for review:

- drafts of borough local plans (which includes Local Development Documents, such as Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, and of neighbourhood plans, to ensure they are in general conformity with the London Plan)
- planning applications of potential strategic importance as defined in the Mayor of London Order 2008. These are types of development of a scale or nature that are considered likely to raise issues of strategic importance to Greater London

In certain prescribed circumstances, the Mayor has powers to comment on them, direct their refusal, or take them over for his own determination, planning applications of potential strategic importance.

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