

This call for projects is to give the Mayor's commitment to deliver 100 **pocket parks** a further push and unearth some gems along the way. The Mayor wants these pocket parks to be **small areas of inviting public space** providing relief from the hustle and bustle of the city. These spaces should have **trees and greenery**; they should be open to all; they should provide **places to sit and relax**, for people to come together; and they should contribute to **making the city friendlier**, greener and more resilient.

Mayor's foreword



A great outdoors for London is what I boldly set my sights on when I promised a big boost for our city's network of public spaces during my first term, knowing that this would improve the lives of everyone who lives in and enjoys our city.

Since then I have invested in many places. Iconic spaces like Exhibition Road and more everyday places such as Woolwich's General Gordon Square have become more welcoming areas of public realm, contributing both to a sense of place and the dynamism of the local economy. Better play spaces and restored rivers, delivered through my Help a London Park programme, have reinforced London's green image and improved the quality of the local environment. And, of course, we have had the roaring success of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, where our teams and the fabulous Olympic Park were triumphant.

My second term priority is to strengthen London's economy and secure the growth and investment needed to provide the jobs, housing and new infrastructure our city needs to maintain its status as a world city. Improving the quality of everyday life for ordinary Londoners is a necessary and important part of our endeavours. Through modest funding provided by the schemes outlined below, plus lots of local enthusiasm, pride and ingenuity, and support from a range of partners, amazing places can be made.

I look forward to seeing your ideas about how to create and shape brilliant pocket parks across London.

This call for projects continues the process of delivering my manifesto commitment to create 100 'pocket parks' — small public spaces that provide relief from the hustle and bustle of the city. They might provide a place to sit and watch the crowds go by or to enjoy an oasis of greenery or a place to stop and chat. They might be created from existing, underused or forgotten areas; they may be squeezed into streets or developments. They will turn spaces into places.

Pocket Parks sit alongside new funds dedicated to planting a further 10,000 street trees and improving London's big green spaces. These are part of a new £6 million investment in parks and trees projects, a contribution that compliments a wide range of public realm improvement programmes across London funded by my Outer London Fund and Regeneration Fund and Transport for London's public realm improvement programmes.

I look forward to seeing your ideas about how to create and shape brilliant pocket parks across London.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Boris Johnson'.

London's Great Outdoors

The Pocket Park Initiative sits within the context of the Mayor's vision for London's Great Outdoors and the associated programme of improvements to city's outdoor spaces — making London a place where people want to live, work and invest.

In November 2009 the Mayor launched London's Great Outdoors, an initiative that promotes and supports improvements to streets, squares, parks, and canal and riverside spaces across London. Investment in public space makes the city a more usable and pleasant place for residents and visitors and an environment in which businesses can thrive. It contributes to maintaining and improving London's image as the world's most green and liveable big city and highlights London's offer as a city that can sustain economic growth.

The Mayor is continuing to invest in London's outdoor spaces, and recognises and celebrates the collaborative effort that is being made by many organisations, including the critical role played by local authorities, to make London a better place.

Over the course of the Mayor's first term, £400 million was invested in London's outdoor spaces. The Mayor will continue this investment through Transport for London's public realm project support and through the regeneration and environment programmes of the Greater London Authority.

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In addition to the Pocket Park Initiative, which is the subject of this prospectus, the Mayor has also established a Street Tree fund to plant a further 10,000 street trees and a fund to support the delivery of strategic green space projects that help deliver the London Green Grid. Bids to these funds will be through separate processes.

Investment in London's great outdoors is an investment in London's future.

100 Pocket Parks

The Mayor's Pocket Parks Initiative will take us another few steps towards being the world's most convivial and greenest big city, by giving a helping hand to a series of small public space projects. It will provide people with better quality spaces across London; increasing opportunities for coming together, relaxing and playing; for healthy living, food growing and a little more contact with nature.

Pocket parks are small areas (less than 0.4 hectares) of inviting public space for all people to enjoy, providing relief from the hustle and bustle of the city. They should be discrete spaces and should be predominately green spaces or made significantly greener as a result of the project. They should be open and accessible to all; they should have places to sit and relax and for people to come together; and they should contribute to making the city friendlier, greener and more resilient. They should be a big improvement on, and should add significant value to what is, or is not, there already.

There are many ways by which they can be created or brought to life: enhancement of an unattractive amenity space within a housing estate or on a high street; community ownership of and improvements to an underused space within an existing park; or, a new green space created through regeneration or development.

Pocket parks are small areas of inviting public space for all people to enjoy.

The Mayor is already delivering pocket parks through existing schemes such as Transport for London's programme of public realm improvements, the Outer London Fund, and the Mayor's Regeneration Fund.

This prospectus heralds a further boost by announcing a fund of up to £650,000 to support the delivery of the second round of the Mayor's Pocket Parks Programme by March 2015, helping us on the way to the Mayor's target of 100. This builds on around £850,000 allocated in round one of the Programme to deliver 27 pocket parks across 17 London boroughs.

The Mayor's Pocket Parks Initiative aims to enhance London's great outdoors through collaborative partnerships and community activation, while providing valuable training and mentoring opportunities. In all of the Mayor's investments in our outdoor spaces, joint working with local authorities, key agencies, local groups and business associations, land-owners, architects and developers is paramount.

The Mayor wants the Pocket Park Initiative to:

- Get more people using outdoor spaces
- Improve London's quality of life, its recreational offer and its public life
- Support volunteering and public participation and to equip people with skills that they can transfer to the workplace
- Help create jobs and sustain growth by increasing local pride, determination and entrepreneurialism
- Help promote collaboration between the public bodies and local organisations that work hard to make London's public places better
- Make use of the extraordinary design and delivery skills in London

What is a Pocket Park?

Pocket parks can be created or brought to life in many ways. Well-designed and well-sited pocket parks can help to enliven and bring more people to high street places. For example, the Mayor of London and the London Borough of Barnet teamed up last year to fund a package of improvements to the [St John the Baptist churchyard](#) in Chipping Barnet. A redesigned path helps to join Barnet and Southgate Colleges with High Street (the A 1000). By removing plant screening along the path, opening up its entrances and creating new seating and lighting, a much safer and more inviting space is created, that people enjoy both moving through and spending time in.

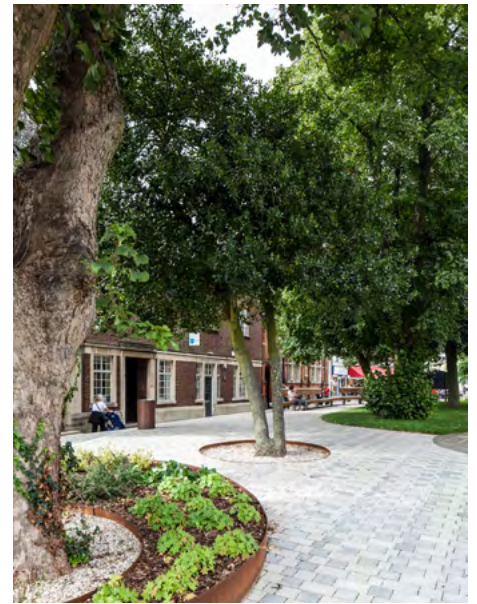
Well-designed and well-sited pocket parks can help enliven and bring more people to high street places.

The centrepiece of the recently delivered Barking Town Square development is its [Arboretum](#). It features forty mature trees and a combination of both unusual and interesting seating, such as the Barking Bench, which is both traditional and flexible in its design. The Arboretum, which combines soft and hard landscaping, is used as a space for daily relaxation as well as special community and civic events.

Many housing estates in London have within them significant open space, but all too often, their poor-design and a lack of care let them down. They can become sites of dereliction and blight rather than community pride and enjoyment. Food growing programmes can help to engage community members, provide healthy produce, teach children about nutrition and the origins of food, and make more active and pleasant green spaces. Edible Estates worked the [Brookwood House Council Estate](#) in Southwark to create a vibrant and productive community garden.

Engaging locals to physically participate in the creation and maintenance of pocket parks can help ensure their long term relevance and care. Located just off the busy Dalston Lane on the site of a railway line that closed in 1944, the popular [Dalston Eastern Curve community garden](#) thrives. The space, which includes The Barn and Eco Garden, plays host to many community events and workshops, and provides a sanctuary for locals and visitors alike.

Pocket parks are also often places of organised and informal play, where children can spend time with family and friends, exercise and feel connection to their local area. The recently completed [Hatcham Gardens](#) in New Cross provides a basketball pitch, play equipment, table tennis, picnic tables and performance platforms, and a dog run.



St John the Baptist Churchyard
Chipping Barnet

Brookwood House Communal Garden
Southwark





Arboretum
Barking Town Square



Eastern Curve Garden
Dalston



Hatcham Gardens
New Cross



So, pocket parks encourage greater use of our outdoors by doing all or some these things: being attractive and accessible spaces; creating opportunities for relaxation, social engagement and informal play; making a contribution to, amongst other things, conserving wildlife, growing food, nurturing trees and vegetation, cooling the city and capturing storm water.

**The possibilities are endless.
We're looking to you to
impress us with practical,
innovative and exciting ideas
for pocket parks in your
local area.**

We've just shared a few examples and thoughts, and now open it up to you to build upon these, redefine what we understand as pocket parks and bring completely new ideas into the mix. The possibilities are endless. We're looking to you to impress us with practical, innovative and exciting ideas for pocket parks in your local area.

Photo credits

St John the Baptist
Churchyard, Chipping Barnet:
Simon Kennedy,
Metropolitan Workshop

Brookwood House
Council Estate, Southwark:
Heidi Prigg

Arboretum, Barking
Town Square:
Design for London

Dalston Eastern Curve:
J&L Gibbons and muf
architecture, London Borough of
Hackney, Wayne Parker

Hatcham Gardens,
New Cross:
East, Wayne Parker

What's the prize?

There is a total of up to £650,000 available to support the delivery of this second round of Pocket Parks. Capital funding, in grants of up to a maximum of £50,000 are available but we are looking for the best value projects and the average grant allocated in the first round of the programme was around £30,000.

The application form can be found at the end of this prospectus.

Specialist support will also be made available to help successful bidders with their projects. The GLA can offer advice on project scoping, design and procurement. The GLA Culture Team can also advise on ways to activate and enliven your pocket parks.

In addition, a separate funding stream is being made available for grants of up to £20,000 to support community groups working independently to improve or establish pocket parks. For further information see the Pocket Parks page on the GLA's website.

Selection criteria

Applications can be made by a range of organisations including community, creative, cultural or business groups, as well as local authorities. In most cases we would expect the local authority to act as the accountable body, however it is not mandatory. A minimum of 100% match funding is required (i.e. every pound of GLA funding must be matched by at least one pound of external funding) and there should be evidence of a collaborative partnership between stakeholder organisations.

The following criteria apply in the assessment of funding bids:

Pocket park

Explain how the space is or can become a pocket park with reference to the definition and examples in this document.

Right for the place

The proposed pocket park should fit well within its place and should be coordinated with other change taking place there. Provide evidence demonstrating that the site is appropriate, given the physical and economic context, how its surrounding area is used, the movement of people around the space and any regeneration aims, planning policy or future development in the area. Please also describe how there is an appetite for the pocket park amongst different local groups.

Place-shaping

Describe how you will enhance assets, create opportunities for high quality design and overcome site-specific challenges. The proposed pocket park should improve the quality of the place in a way that can boost its cultural and economic vibrancy through increased possibilities for informal gathering, play and/or events. Actions should also aim to increase biodiversity or the environmental performance of a place through greening.

Deliverability

Proposed actions must be deliverable within the time frame of this initiative (i.e. the project must be delivered and the funding claimed from the GLA by March 2015). Please supply a well-planned timetable for achieving short-term and medium-term deliverables, a risk register including mitigation measures and a cost breakdown for the project. Please indicate that there is sufficient delivery capability in place and that landowner permission (and planning consent, if required) has been granted or is likely to be secured.

Outcomes

Demonstrate how the proposed actions will encourage a greater use of the space; this may be achieved by making it safer, more enticing, more accessible and more comfortable. Please demonstrate how these actions contribute to the Mayor's overarching goal of promoting local vibrancy, investment, and economic growth. There should be an evidenced change in the perception of the locality, promoting it as a focus for communities, with a vibrant economy, public life and culture. Demonstrate that the new or improved space will be maintained.

Collaboration and support

There should be a good level of political and community momentum behind enhancing the place and the proposed actions should aim to cater for and provide benefits to various segments of the community. Any formal or informal partnership arrangements for delivery should be evident and it should be clear how these are adding value. You should be willing to collaborate both locally and with Mayoral organisations, as well as others.

Match-funding, synergy and innovation

Proposed projects will require a minimum of 100% match-funding. Innovative projects, approaches, partnerships, and funding packages, particularly those capable of replication in different parts of London, will be encouraged.

NB: The Mayor's Office and the GLA may look to source a corporate sponsor to shoulder some of the costs of this project and in return offer said sponsor some sponsorship benefits. You should be aware of this possibility when making your application. We will keep applicants updated about sponsorship secured for the programme as a whole.

Key dates

Round Two

Late May	2013	Application details available
2nd August	2013	Deadline for applications
Late September	2013	Announcement of successful places and projects
31 March	2015	Programme closes