

Our Plan for a **Fairer Economy**





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FOREWORD

Westminster plays a crucial role in the nation's economy. Westminster's share of London's Central Activity Zone accounts for almost 5% of the UK's national income on its own. We host some of the world's largest companies and most prestigious institutions but are also home to 53,000 small and micro businesses, employing nearly a quarter of a million people.

However, significant poverty and deprivation also occurs within our city, made worse by the cost-of-living crisis faced across the nation. At Westminster City Council, we know that we have a responsibility, working with partners, to deliver economic benefits that are shared across the city.

Which is why Westminster City Council developed the Fairer Economy plan.

We want to keep the West End, Paddington and Victoria humming as the engine of national economic growth, support small businesses, upgrade our high streets, and help our residents secure the rewarding, well-paid jobs on their doorstep.

The pandemic highlighted the interdependence of all sectors of our economy: offices, shops, restaurants, tourism, theatres and hotels. Diminish one and the ecosystem begins to decay. That's why we are working closely with the private sector to maintain balance and drive sustainable growth.

In the West End, we have cracked down on American Candy Stores and we are introducing new entrepreneurial brands through our "**Meanwhile On**" programme. A series of high-profile events like West End Live and the Inside Out Festival have boosted footfall. And we have partnered with 18 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to enhance street cleaning, security, and greening.

We are delighted that 75 businesses have now signed **Westminster's Sustainable City Charter** and committed to becoming net zero. The first signatories are already reporting 35% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

We have also launched **Westminster After Dark**, a conversation between authorities, businesses, residents, and visitors to improve the evening and nighttime environment for all.

The Fairer Economy plan extends beyond the West End, with a £10m highstreets investment fund focused on **Paddington and Bayswater**.

Building on work already underway in **Harrow Road**, we will improve public spaces, offer shopfront improvement grants, public art and visual merchandise training for the traders.

The high streets programme forms part of a coherent set of business support programmes from entrepreneurship classes in primary schools to help scaling a successful small business. But the most important part of the Fairer Economy plan is its impact on our residents.

Westminster is very much a tale of two cities. Employers telling us they struggle to find talent when we have tens of thousands of people living within walking distance of the West End working in dead-end, minimum-wage jobs or increasingly not working at all.

This is not just a waste of talent: it's a public health crisis.

To address this, we have launched Westminster's first **Education, Employment and Skills Board**, a forum for employers, training providers and funders. The Board works alongside the **Westminster Anchor Alliance**, involving major employers to train and recruit in Westminster.

These initiatives will ensure that our residents have the formal and informal training they need to develop their careers. Projects like **Digital Dash** and the **Green Skills Programme** offer career development opportunities, from tech mentoring to training retrofit assessors with £30K starting salaries.

There's lots more to the Fairer Economy plan, as you will read in this report. I'd like to thank Westminster's officers and our close partners including the

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). I look forward to working together to create a city where economic success is shared, high streets flourish, and the West End continues to thrive.



Cllr Geoff Barraclough

Cabinet Member for Planning
and Economic Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Westminster is a city which plays a significant role in the economic performance of the UK, bringing with it great opportunities for economic success for those that live and work here.

However, significant poverty and deprivation also occurs within our city, made worse by the cost-of-living crisis faced across the nation. At Westminster City Council, we know that we have a responsibility, working with partners, to deliver economic benefits that are shared across the city.

The Fairer Economy Plan set out our intentions help businesses start or grow within our city; that the West End continues to be a visitor hub and that low-quality occupiers are replaced with those that provide more diversity and benefits to the area. Additionally, we wanted to improve opportunities for our residents by putting in place targeted initiatives that remove barriers to employment and enhance education-to-employment pathways.

Some of the challenges we face include:



1 in 4 children currently live in poverty in Westminster.



There is an **18-year life expectancy gap** for men between most affluent and least affluent parts of borough



1 in 8 residents in Westminster have no formal qualifications (13%), but areas in the north of the borough have over 25% of residents with no formal skills.



The **median income** in Church Street is less than half that of Knightsbridge and Belgravia.



An area within Westbourne has an **unemployment rate of 10%**, more than twice the Westminster average of 5% and three times higher than the England average of 2.9%.



40% of Westminster residents with skills at or below Level 3



Two thirds of the 767,000 jobs in Westminster are located in just two of its electoral wards, St James and the West End



Over the last year, through our Fairer Economy plan we have:

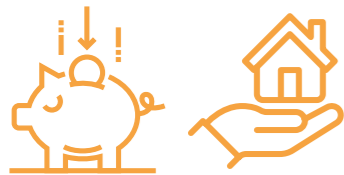
Launched the Sustainable City Charter, with 75 businesses committing to becoming net zero.

Worked with residents, visitors and workers in the city to develop the Westminster After Dark strategy to improve the evening and nighttime environment.

Set up the Education, Employment and Skills Board to bring together employers, training providers and public bodies for the first time

Convened the Westminster Anchor Alliance, a group of our largest employers working together to help our residents find good jobs with great employers.

Launched specialist programmes in targeted sectors such as Digital Dash and the Green Live Learning Lab.



Injected

£27m

into the local economy through working with council suppliers and developers



Facilitated nearly

1000

job-starts for Westminster residents through our social value work and through the Westminster Employment Service.



Allocated nearly

£14m

of funding and begun work on our "North Paddington" and "Paddington and Bayswater" place-based programmes.

Utilised vacant units by launching the "Meanwhile On" programme to install new entrepreneurial brands in and around Oxford Street.

Made our high streets more attractive by launching our new waste reporting system, which thanks to the use of artificial intelligence, allows users to report street-based issues in under 60 seconds.

Produced and delivered the largest ever West End LIVE in Trafalgar Square which featured performances from over 40 West End shows and attracted an audience of 70,000 over the course of the weekend.

Looking ahead, we will build on these initiatives by:

Helping micro and SMEs ensure their businesses and premises hit our 2040 Net Zero City goal.

Launch our three new enterprise spaces, bringing over 20,000 sq. ft of affordable workspace to Westminster.

Introducing a new match-making online platform to connect local businesses with charities, so they can support community organisations.

Increasing our spending with local organisations, small businesses, and voluntary and community groups to boost the local economy and strengthen community resilience.

Lobbying Government to reinstate VAT-free shopping.

Offering customised support to voluntary and community sector groups, addressing the specific digital skills needs of typically excluded individuals.

Delivering a campaign to promote the London Living Wage, apprenticeship levy transfer and the Mayor's Good Work charter.





GREEN ECONOMY



Westminster has a city-wide target to be net zero by

2040

London's Green Innovation Economy achieved sales of

£50bn

in for 2022-23, measured by "Low Carbon Environment Goods and Sales" (LCEGS).*



Westminster has some of the highest emissions in central London, with over

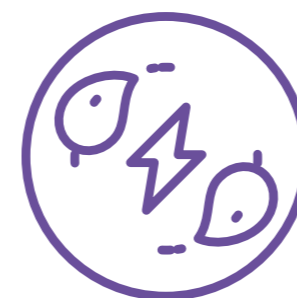
70%

of total emissions coming from commercial buildings.



The LCEGS sector in London is growing at a rate of

8.2%



The top sector in the LCEGS market is

carbon finance

followed by wind and geothermal and building technologies.



*Research commissioned by CLF and GLA

Green Economy In Action

Green Skills - Green Live Learning Lab:

The Green Live Learning Lab connects Westminster City Council and our suppliers' industry experts with community learners at WAES for interactive sessions on green topics. The project engaged over 100 residents for 15 months to co-create new adaptable resources for 3,000 future Westminster learners.

New, green jobs

A new apprenticeship scheme went live in October 2023 for Low Carbon Heating Technicians. It is being rolled out through further education colleges and training providers. It's an example of how skills provision is pivoting to keep up with industry changes.

Energy Efficiency Grants for Westminster-based micro and small-to-medium sized businesses (SMEs) and social enterprises and voluntary sector organisations (VSOs).

We have developed a pilot scheme offering grants of up to £10k for micro and SMEs, and up to £20k for social enterprises and VSOs to help insulate their buildings.

We will also support Creative Enterprise Zone* organisations by offering grants of up to £20,000 to help creative businesses become lower their heating bills.



Free assessments around carbon and energy efficiency

All eligible micro and SMEs now have access to a free energy assessment before making the next step improvements. We are also offering a free carbon footprint assessment for other businesses in Westminster.

Facilitating discussions around retrofit skills

Lack of skills needed for heritage retrofit building technologies is a major challenge for our retrofit goals. There are 11,000 listed structures and these often require specific skills.

We are working with our strategic partners on the next steps to create training pathways and opportunities for local people in this specialist retrofit area.

Partnership working

Working with our BIDs partners so that their sustainability strategies reflect Green Economy Priorities and provide referral routes to our services and grants.

The Sustainable City Charter is a business-led pledge which contains eight commitments for reducing carbon emissions from non-domestic buildings. So far, it has 75 businesses have signed up.



Building Resilience

Business and High Streets

- Signal to businesses looking to locate in Westminster, our clear commitment to a net zero city by 2040 and our inward investment offer.
- Help micro and SMEs ensure their businesses and premises to hit our 2040 Net Zero City goal.

Employment opportunities for all

- Help our community learners to achieve higher level qualifications with further and higher education providers.
- Work with suppliers to offer talks, placements and jobs in the green economy.
- Embed Green Economy knowledge in our frontline employment coaches.
- Westminster's Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) will enable micro businesses to navigate the training, skills, job opportunities and resources required for a net zero city.



WAES Green Skills Innovation Centre

This new centre will offer low carbon and green technology programmes for:

- Skills training for those who wish to pursue a green career
- Referrals to a local skills centre for further technical training.
- Learners will benefit from cutting edge facilities such as a Low Carbon Tech Room and an Immersive Classroom.



RESILIENT BUSINESSES AND HIGH STREETS

What we want to deliver for Westminster's Businesses:

- **Micro and small businesses flourish** in an environment that helps residents start and grow their companies.
- **Key local industries are nurtured** to achieve success and long-term growth.
- **Westminster businesses are plugged into a local industrial ecosystem**, underpinned by the supportive infrastructure they need to achieve their full potential.
- **Improved environmental and social wellbeing of local communities**, underpinned by improvements in public spaces and vibrant high streets.

Westminster After Dark

What we have done in our first year:

- ✓ Carried out extensive research and targeted engagement.
- ✓ Launched the Commonplace engagement platform attracting over 10,000 visitors and over 1,000 contributions.
- ✓ Increased engagement with previously less-engaged groups through targeted social media campaigns.
- ✓ Conducted focused discussion groups with key Westminster stakeholder groups, such as the Metropolitan Police, Resident Associations and the BIDs.
- ✓ Ran stakeholder assembly sessions, bringing together residents, visitors, and businesses to discuss issues that affect them collectively. The assembly worked to overcome barriers and generate pragmatic and less commercially impactful solutions.

What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ Continue with further engagement and on-street surveys focusing on nighttime visitors.
- ➔ Conduct a survey specifically for residents to delve deeper into individuals' experiences regarding evening and nighttime activities.
- ➔ Create a draft strategy based on the responses from all engagement activities.
- ➔ Once the Westminster After Dark Strategy is finalised, there will be a phase of public consultation where anyone will be able to provide feedback.

High Streets Programme

High Streets are widely regarded as the barometer of health for a district. Locals, workers and visitors need our shopping parades to deliver the high-class offer that Westminster deserves.

What we have done in in our first year:

- ✓ Established the Westminster High Streets Programme to support our high streets and make them more resilient, vibrant, and diverse.
- ✓ Initially focusing on two areas: Paddington-Bayswater and North Paddington, both in the north-west of the city. The programme has been allocated £10m of funding.
- ✓ Co-developed a proposed list of prioritised interventions following extensive public engagement and analysing emerging data and comparative national high street data.

What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ Develop our plans for the Paddington-Bayswater High Streets Programme. We will be delivering shopfront improvements, installing public art, providing training for traders and developing place plans and public realm designs.



Creative Enterprise Zone

What we have done in in our first year:

- ✓ Secured the Mayor of London's Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ) Accreditation scheme for the North Paddington area and a £170,000 grant.
- ✓ Convened a CEZ Advisory Group to drive the vision and shape the programme.
- ✓ Links with the new owners of the BBC Studios in Maida Vale.
- ✓ Launched our North Paddington Creates grants programme, offering grants of up to £10k for arts, culture and creative activities that showcase support local creative organisations, improve pride in place, and attract visitors to the area.

What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ Encourage more affordable creative workspace and cultural infrastructure in the area.
- ➔ Develop a joined-up approach for public art commissioning and creative activations.
- ➔ Develop new projects to support and attract the creative and cultural industries in North Paddington, whilst providing increased opportunities for residents.
- ➔ Develop new projects to connect and showcase businesses and creatives in the CEZ.
- ➔ Support programmes and projects to unlock creative and cultural spaces on the high street, and opportunities and VCS capital funding for cultural organisations.



Enterprise Spaces

The **Church Street Triangle**, a 2,600 sq. ft. workspace operated by Arbeit, will welcome its first occupiers in October 2024. It features retail, studio, pop-up, community/private hire spaces, a social enterprise café, and public toilets.

Lisson Arches is an 11,300 sq. ft. Enterprise Space in Church Street, designed for creative production to support the local arts and antiques sector. In partnership with operator Arbeit, the space will offer flexible, affordable options, with tenants moving in by early 2025.

A new 6,400 sq. ft. workspace at **300 Harrow Road** is part of a mixed-use development. It will offer affordable space for small and start-up creative businesses, aligned to the North Paddington CEZ vision. We are currently out to procure a best-fit space operator.



*GGI of proposed Church Street Triangle interior



1. Lisson Arches - Lisson Grove, London, NW8 8FT
2. Church Street Triangle - Church Street, London, NW8 8ET
3. 300 Harrow Road - London, W2 5HG
4. PopHub Leicester Square - 41 Whitcomb St., London WC2H 7DT
5. Paddington Works - 8 Hermitage St, London W2 1BE
6. Great Western Studios - 65 Alfred Rd, London W2 5EU
7. Somerset House - Strand, London WC2R 1LA
8. Rebel Business School - 470 Harrow Rd, Maida Hill, London W9 3RU
9. Huckletree Soho - Ingestre Court, Ingestre Pl, London W1F 0JL
10. Ebury Bridge - 43 Ebury Bridge Rd, Westminster, London SW1W 8DX

Additional actions we are undertaking:

Improve access to business support services and economic opportunity

- Maximise the local uptake of initiatives such as Grow London and the London Business Hub.

Strengthen and broaden connectivity and device opportunities

- Collaborate with service providers to strengthen and broaden connectivity and device opportunities and streamline user access with a single sign-on approach.
- Empower Voluntary and Community Sector and other groups by actively supporting them to become digital inclusion hubs, including through a forum.
- Preparing for the copper switch-off by the end of 2025.

Support priority business growth sectors

- Help ambitious start-ups to grow and create jobs by expanding our Start-up to Scale-up programme. Provide additional support to scale-ups and those with potential.
- Develop sector resilience and growth plans, starting with Healthcare and Life Sciences.



Create more inclusive and affordable workspaces

- Continue to monitor the volume of employment space through reporting under Westminster's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). Evidence from the AMR will be used to inform the need for future employment space planning policies.

Make Westminster the best place to start and grow a business

- Increase awareness of alternative funding sources for micro businesses.
- Programmes of support are available to female-owned businesses, disabled-led businesses, high street businesses, sole-traders and micro-businesses as well as aspiring entrepreneurs and start-ups.



Our longer-term plans:

Make Westminster the best place to start and grow a business

- Explore whether a Westminster Licensed Business Accreditation Scheme can be implemented.
- Support the growth and resilience of our high potential sectors.
- Build relationships with local businesses to improve our understanding of their needs and increase the profile of the positive impact they are having in our communities.
- Explore the size and composition of the Circular Economy in Westminster to better understand the support requirements and job potential.
- Build on GLA's research by exploring the feasibility of Social Innovation Districts.
- Support the development of local knowledge networks, leading to commercial opportunities and enabling residents to access jobs in the knowledge sector.

Ensure our high streets continue to adapt and evolve

- Develop a vision for a smarter economy in partnership with initiatives such as the London Office of Technology and Innovation.



Spotlight on Responsible Economy

The objective of the **Responsible Economy** is to harnesses the Council's relationships with employers and businesses to deliver impact and social value in our communities, as part of the Fairer Economy.

What we have done in our first year:

- ✓ Facilitated over nearly 450 residents into jobs.
- ✓ Injected £27m into the local economy through council suppliers' and developer spend, as set out in our Social Value Impact Report 2022-24.
- ✓ Grown our Responsible Business Network, supporting more than 75 community organisations during the past year.
- ✓ Secured commitments to support local recruitment and training from major local employers through establishing the Westminster Anchor Alliance.



What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ Continue to invest in our Social Value programme to deliver greater impact.
- ➔ Introduce a new match-making online platform to connect local businesses with charities so they can support community organisations.
- ➔ Generate more good quality employment opportunities for residents through our relationships with suppliers, developers and wider businesses.
- ➔ Deliver job fairs and 'meet the charity' events to help businesses make a positive contribution.
- ➔ Initiate a training and enterprise programme 'Makers' to support the wellbeing and careers of care leavers and young people, in partnership with local businesses and Westminster Kingsway College.
- ➔ Ensure our procurement policies prioritise ethical and environmental considerations.
- ➔ Increase our spending with local organisations, small businesses, and voluntary and community groups to boost the local economy and strengthen community resilience.





VIBRANT WEST END



Vibrant West End

What we want to deliver for the West End

Changing patterns and external factors

- **Enhanced public infrastructure and events** to make the area more attractive, accessible, and affordable for visitors.
- **Established and emerging West End enterprises thriving** in an environment that promotes a more diverse and resilient business community.
- **Community safety and wellbeing is improved** through targeted local initiatives.



Dirty Money Charter

Westminster has long been a focal point for money laundering in the UK, with the rise of American Candy stores on Oxford Street being a prime example. We have co-produced a set of commitments with academics, NGOs, the public sector and businesses tackle this, along with a Fair Tax commitment from the Council.

This culminated in the Westminster Against Dirty Money Charter with the New West End Company, the Fair Tax Foundation and Heart of London Business Alliance – the first agreement of its kind setting out three pillars:

- Supporting Fair Taxation.
- Transparency and Accountability.
- Constructive Challenge.

This is a commitment to work with businesses to do everything we can to tackle dirty money in the city and encourage partners to come forward.

Improved Report It

We launched a new waste reporting tool, one of the first public-facing tools in the public sector to utilise advances in AI technology. Through an online chat tool, people are able to report occurrences of waste, graffiti and animal fouling. It now takes less than 60 seconds to report issues. A webform for residents to report issues will also be available.



Cultural Events

We produced and delivered the largest ever West End LIVE in Trafalgar Square which featured performances from over 40 West End shows, attracting an audience of 70,000 over the weekend.

The event had a huge impact on theatre ticket sales, with theatre revenue increasing by over 20% and advance sales increasing by over £10m in the week following the event. 72% of the audience also visited shops, bars, restaurants, museums and galleries as part of their visit to the West End that weekend.

The council also supported several other West End based cultural and community events over the course of the year including Pride, Diwali, Vaisakhi and Chinese New Year, whilst also facilitating a range of festive light installations.

Other highlights included a new ice rink in Hanover Square which raised funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital, as well as several high-profile Film Premieres in Leicester Square.





Regent Street

What we have done in our first year:

- ✓ In 2023, Westminster City Council and The Crown Estate listened to residents, local workers, domestic and international visitors, to understand their priorities for the area.
- ✓ 3,500 people contributed to shaping a new vision for Regent Street, which will focus on prioritising pedestrian experience, preserving the area's heritage and introducing nature and greening.

What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ We are expanding our focus from Regent Street to include Haymarket and Piccadilly Circus. Westminster City Council and The Crown Estate will soon be appointing a range of consultants to help us develop street layout and movement options, as well as early public realm design.



Meanwhile On...

July 2024 marked an important milestone in the programme with the announcement of several new store openings and profiling the exciting new brands that will be diversifying the retail scene on Oxford Street and the wider West End.

We will continue to work with Someday Studios to activate empty units or those currently with a low-quality offering to bring in more exciting new brands.

We are pleased to have worked with a number of small, entrepreneurial brands already, and have seen a number of new openings in these spaces including Canvas, Kindred and Love Cocoa.



Additional actions we are undertaking:

Changing patterns and external factors

- Lobby government to reinstate VAT-free shopping and reform business rates to level the playing field with online retailers.
- Tackle the problems residents face from pedicabs, e-scooters and dockless bikes.
- Review our licensing policy to support a responsible hospitality and cultural offer and create more diversity and opportunities for residents and businesses.

Character and uniqueness

- Where possible, support Neighbourhood Forums (including in the West End) to incorporate economic development objectives in their 'planning and place' documents

Balancing Priorities

- Protect commercial floor space in the West End, so that head and back offices can thrive alongside retail, arts and culture.
- Take a balanced approach to managing the impacts of commercial activity on residents, whilst supporting businesses with their priorities, particularly in the nighttime economy.

Quality Experience for All

- Help businesses implement energy efficiency and carbon saving measures through a Retrofit Taskforce for occupiers of older buildings.
- Continue to tackle disruptive and dangerous activities which affect people's experience in the West End, through engagement and enforcement.

Our longer-term plans:

A clear long-term future

- Co-develop a distinctive vision and brand to showcase the West End's unique offering.

A collection of neighbourhoods

- Consider different options for making the West End easier to navigate.
- Consider a localised licensing policy approach based on neighbourhoods, which considers the local mix of residents and businesses.

Everyone shares the benefits

- Explore the proactive use of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) and Section 106 Funds to support local economic development activity.

A place for everyone

- Explore ways we can make the West End more suitable for older people, drawing on guidance such as the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities.
- Explore a campaign that focuses on free amenities, such as free toilets, hearing loops, ramp access and green spaces.
- Attract more visitors by animating outdoor spaces with free events. Pursue new arts partnerships and further cultural interventions.
- Promote affordable retail, hospitality and culture offers more effectively, to challenge perceptions of cost barriers



EMPLOYMENT OPPURTUNITIES FOR ALL



What we want to deliver

- Better quality jobs and decreased levels on in-work poverty.
- Reduced unemployment and economic inactivity of residents, especially amongst those who face barriers to employment.
- Enhance education-to-employment pathways by focusing on skills in emerging sectors.

Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)

Hospitality courses at WAES

In 2023/24, Westminster Adult Employment Service offered short and intensive hospitality employability programmes where over 60% of learners went on to obtain employment in the Nine Elms Centre.

New WAES courses

This year we launched “Getting into Teaching” programmes, which led to many learners obtaining jobs at WAES. From September, we will start our new Green Skills programmes which range from one-day courses to intensive skills bootcamps.

Careers Advice & Welfare Support at WAES

The Careers and Employability Hub helps learners get ready for work with CV and online application support. Our Welfare Officers help learners overcome barriers that might affect their learning and work.



My Skill Zone

My Skill Zone is an online training platform offering more than 2,000 learning modules for residents. All content is free and can be accessed 24/7.

What we have done in our first year:

After securing the My Skills Zone licence we have:

- ✓ Registered more than 600 users for the platform, since it launched in November 2024.
- ✓ Run two social media campaigns.
- ✓ Secured licences for a further three years.

What we will do in the next two years:

- ➔ Double the number of users to 1200 in year two.
- ➔ Gather feedback from users to build on and improve the platform.
- ➔ Integrate certificates of achievement.
- ➔ Improve the accessibility features on the platform.
- ➔ Consult with young people and residents with learning difficulties to see how the platform can be more accessible and appealing to them.



Digital Dash

In partnership with Bloomberg Associates and Paddington Development Trust, Digital Dash matched young people from North Paddington with mentors from top tech firms such as Visa, Finastra, Optum, and Cognizant, which are (or were) located in Westminster's "Paddington Opportunity Area". 20 young people collaborated with the global tech mentors to create digital products that can solve local neighbourhood problems.

Westminster Works

Over 400 businesses have benefited from the Westminster Works recruitment scheme between 2022 and 2024. The project is funded by the council and delivered by Attis Towns and the social enterprise, Step Ahead. The project helped businesses to fill over 480 London Living Wage vacancies by March 2024.

Education, Employment and Skills Board (EESB)

This year we launched the EESB to bridge the gap between skills and work. The EESB will help us develop a framework that will ensure the skills and employment support supply aligns with the skills demand from employers.

We are now focussed on research and data mapping to determine the skills gaps that exist now and in the future.



Digital Skills and Inclusion

We will focus on offering customised support to voluntary and community sector groups, addressing the specific digital skills needs of typically excluded individuals. Additionally, we will expand the digital ambassador programme to ensure a more individualised approach to support.

Additional actions we are undertaking:

Improve equal and equitable access to opportunity, pay, good work and progression

- Deliver a campaign to promote the London Living Wage, apprenticeship levy transfer and the Mayor's Good Work charter. We will monitor the government's potential introduction of a new skills levy.
- Support people with learning disabilities into employment by working with smaller businesses.

Improve employment and benefits advice for all

- Collaborate with libraries and community venues to align skills and training with the vision for Community Hubs.

Address health barriers to work and training

- Develop a Mental Health Digital resource to upskill frontline services and communities: building awareness and capacity through a Suicide Safer Communities Initiative, Autism Friendly Communities and Mental Health and Wellness Training Offer across all sectors.



Deliver consistent high-quality careers advice

- Work with young people at schools in North Paddington, identified as at risk of becoming disengaged, focusing support at the end of the academic year.
- Deliver early career programmes for under-represented groups, engaging with the community through recruitment events and job fairs.

Our longer-term plans:

Ensure organisations who offer programmes to support job-seeking residents are joined up, leading to a clear understanding of the local offer and that it is reflective of residents' needs.

- Work with local providers of employment services to ensure they effectively support with issues affecting residents' ability to gain and sustain employment.
- Encourage providers to work in collaboration to reduce duplication so residents access the most appropriate support programme.

Through our work with the Education, Employment & Skills Board

- Work with skills partners, employers and stakeholders to produce an evidence-based Strategic Skills Plan. This will set out actions required to build an accessible skills offer that supports residents to progress in their careers and employers to recruit talent.

