

The Proposals in brief

Please contact leaders@futureoflondon.org.uk if you'd like to speak to any of the candidates about their Proposals for London in more detail.

Mikyla Davidson, Arup – FeminiCITY - An urban experience app for women in London

In her book 'Invisible Women' Caroline Criado Perez explains how a lack of gender-disaggregated data has led to cities being designed around male needs as the default. This is the reality in London and the inequality is even more profound for women from lower-income, discriminated and minority groups. My proposal is a new app aimed at bridging the gender data gap, and unlocking more of London for the women and girls who live, work, and play here. With data on the 'female experience' to-hand, designers and decision-makers will be better equipped to deliver a more inclusive London for the future.

Harry Wackett, Montagu Evans – Building in flexibility within the existing planning system to enhance housing delivery

We are facing an ongoing housing and affordable housing crisis nationally and regionally. Alongside this, the residential development market is current facing the perfect storm with sales values flattening and development costs rising. It has also been reported that, whilst affordable housing provision on a site can be negotiated downwards, there are large amounts of unspent CIL and S.106 contributions. My proposals are to tackle the housing crisis and issue of unspent contributions by creating flexibility within the existing planning system (rather than reforming the system) to: 1) ensure resources are available to local authorities to spend CIL and S.106 contributions; 2) allow unspent capital to be recycled to deliver affordable homes, and; 3) support Registered Providers with the provision of additional grant funding to deliver housing in London.

Krishan Nathaniel, LB Harrow – A Bigger Splash: Climate Resilience and an Outdoor Swimming Strategy for London

As the climate crisis raises summer temperatures, city life is becoming more challenging and the need for cool spaces more acute. Swimming can play a vital role in relieving this pressure. Many European cities like Madrid and Berlin feature a range of public swimming centres, yet London falls short, with only a handful of lidos and swimming ponds currently catering to its almost nine million residents. What London needs is a network of outdoor swimming ponds and pools across its 32 boroughs, a strategy which would provide valuable space to cool down in peak weather, address climate resilience inequality and add to the city's vibrance.

Angela Jones, LB Hackney – The London Youth Institute for Space and Place: Putting young people at the heart of the future development of London's urban fabric.

Responding to young people's needs through urban design is vital to the health of our cities. I propose the creation of a London Youth Institute for Space and Place, catalysed by a vision of an inclusive London, whose urban fabric meets the needs of all children and teens, regardless of gender, culture or disability. With young people from across the city represented on the board, the Institute will be a centre of excellence, connecting research, design innovation, policy, and training. It will champion a youth-led, participatory approach, engaging London's young people in the design and testing of inclusive urban spaces.

Ahmad Bismillah, GLA Good Growth – Crossing the Rubicon: London's future as a happy place

In January 49 BC. Julius Caesar led a single legion, Legio XIII, south over the Rubicon from Cisalpine Gaul to Italy to make his way to Rome. In doing so, he deliberately exceeded his legal authority and made armed conflict inevitable. Caesar's action ushered in incredible transformations as cities and people connected. The city of the future constantly evolves and fundamentally reorganises power to collaborate and innovate for residents, workers, and visitors. Through the microcosm of London's highways, I will lay out a blueprint for how public sector actors can cross boundaries and create a connected, liveable, and happy city."

Jay Marway – Health and the City

Most of us make a pledge to take better care of our health, only to be sabotaged by working in a fast-paced city like London. Evidence also shows there are a higher number of mental health issues and depression in cities compared with rural areas. In order to give our Londoners their health back, I propose we introduce subliminal city prompts in three key areas we know support wellbeing: food, exercise and nature. Through these, I believe we can create a culture which not only gives Londoners permission to prioritise themselves, but also creates an environment which supports that decision.

Stephanie Goldberg, GLA Housing & Land – Back to the Future: Learning from our past to build a healthy tomorrow

Cities are densifying. Research suggests that although people are living closer and closer together, they are feeling more and more alone. A worrying trend if you consider that our physical health is inextricably linked to our social wellbeing. This begs the question: are we building socially healthy cities? My proposal for the future of cities is that we look backwards, working with residents of mature residential estates to analyse design features and understand their experiences to uncover what fosters or impedes feelings of social connection in these spaces. We then embed our findings in planning policy, so that the buildings we're building today support the health of residents tomorrow.

Jamie Leonard, Devonshires – Time to Club Together – the importance of sports clubs and why it's time to reinvest in recreation

Latest Sport England figures suggest that 4.8% of Brits participate in team sports on average two or more times a month. This is down from 7.8% in 2016. At the same time participation in racket sports has fallen from 5.5% of the population to 2.7%. Whilst London performs marginally better than the national average on these metrics the trend remains downwards. There's also significant anecdotal evidence that sports clubs within the capital are at capacity and have long waiting lists. This proposal examines the future for leisure activity in London and how changes to the built environment can help us recover lost ground.

Rachel Thevanesan, Westminster City Council – To what extent does trust with the community impact on the success of regeneration scheme and how can this be best achieved?

Effective co-creation of regeneration proposals that are to be delivered for the benefit of local communities can only be achieved when trust with the community has been established, and where the community voice has sufficiently been captured which in turn informs the proposals that are to be delivered. How do we measure success of a regeneration project? One metric is to assess whether the proposals delivered within a local area, have addressed the needs of the local people which have been identified through consultation and engagement. Local authorities across the country are presented with significant challenges when it comes to delivering successful regeneration within a local area, that does not result in displacement or

gentrification. Investing in resources that will result in the fostering of meaningful positive relationships between the community and the local authority will be key.

Jan Slominski, LB Croydon – Urban Greening: Street Retrofit

The mayor of London has declared a climate emergency and has committed to a net zero-carbon future, and the Environment Act 2021 introduced a requirement for biodiversity net gain. Our urban areas face competing pressures for new housing, development, infrastructure, and climate change mitigation. I propose a new cross-boundary urban greening bank for London represented by all of London's boroughs, funded by biodiversity credits and urban greening factor mitigation. The urban greening bank's mission is to retrofit London's streets, with new street trees addressing overheating, water storage, cleaning air and revitalised biodiverse corridors to create London's future urban green spaces.

Giorgia Scognamiglio, LB Waltham Forest – Culture infrastructures of the future: supporting the “behind the scenes” of cultural activity

London is a city recognised as the global capital for arts and culture. However, in the last couple of years there has been a worrying decline in London's cultural spaces and more generally the creative and cultural sectors experienced unprecedented challenges due to Covid-19 and accompanying economic shocks. There is now a clear acknowledgement of the social and economic value of the cultural sector, and its ability to deliver growth and drive regeneration but also enrich our lives and drive innovation. However, often when planning any culture strategy, the attention is often on the delivery of major projects or initiatives for culture consumption, without always acknowledging all the existing networks of creative communities and the underlying conditions of their activities. Starting from the need to widen the localised knowledge of those networks, we should reflect on what we can do to make our boroughs more hospitable for existing and future communities of creative practices, ensuring that investment do not only focus on visitor-oriented strategies but also support the places and those producing “everyday cultures”.

Jay Allan, London Communications Agency – Unleashing the power of play – how gaming can encourage young people to shape the future of London

Young people make up a large proportion of our city and are crucial in shaping its future. But research shows that only 11% of 16–18-year-olds have been asked to share their thoughts on the future of their neighbourhoods. Involving young people in shaping their cities is crucial in strengthening social cohesion, developing trust with developers, and inspiring a new generation of urban visionaries. But how can we encourage them to get involved a fun, meaningful and inclusive way? We need to make engagement with young people mandatory and exciting – and new legislation and gaming could provide the answer.