City for All
Vision and Strategy 2020/21
Our City for All

We believe in creating a world class City for All.

A city where people live in a healthy, sustainable and safe environment, can grow and learn throughout their lives, build fantastic careers in world-leading industries, have access to high quality, affordable homes and retire into the community with dignity and pride. Tackling the climate emergency is the biggest challenge of a generation and we will play a leading role in delivering on our ambitious targets that will benefit the city for many years to come.

Everything the council does should enable every individual in our city to have the opportunity to improve their lives.

Westminster City Council remains absolutely focused on serving our residents, supporting businesses to prosper and working with a wide range of partners for the benefit of the city. This means paying particular attention to local priorities, such as cleaning 217 miles of streets, providing a regular refuse collection, delivering the most ambitious house building programme in a generation and having low council tax. It means maintaining high resident satisfaction with how we keep the city clean and green and delivering over 250 different and complex services, including Children’s Services (recently rated as ‘Outstanding’ for the second consecutive time), supporting rough sleepers to turn their lives around and taking action against fly tipping.

To ensure the continuing success of our communities for the future, we will lead the way and open up opportunities for everyone by building more affordable housing, connecting our residents to the diverse range of jobs on their doorstep and continue to encourage the right kind of economic growth with our business partners.

Our number one priority is to tackle the Climate Emergency head on by harnessing the full strength of our council resources with those of our partners across the city to become carbon neutral by 2040. We will put in place a coordinated and decisive programme of actions across planning, licensing, and energy provision to really make the difference. This includes ensuring the reduction of vehicle emissions and promoting green homes and jobs.

To be prepared for the future we need to be sector leading and become one of the best connected, most technologically advanced and smartest city in the world. New technologies offer the potential to transform both homes and businesses in our city, as well as how our residents and businesses interact with the council and each other. Whether it’s providing electric vehicle charging points across developments, installing smart technology in homes or expanding Wi-Fi coverage and access to super-fast broadband to make it easier for people to connect and do business across the city, the needs of our customers will drive how we roll out smarter technologies, and we will maintain a relentless focus on doing this in a way that maximises the benefits to our communities.

Our mission is to improve the lives of those that live in, work in or visit our city. We always put residents at the heart of all we do and also recognise that we are one of many organisations that can make positive changes.

That’s why we are committed to working collaboratively with partners such as the NHS, Met Police, voluntary sector, landowners, developers and businesses to deliver our ambitious vision.

In short, we will use our leadership role to ensure Westminster’s continued success so we are acknowledged as truly delivering a City for All.

Our three pillars of this City for All programme of activity are:

- **Green and Cleaner**
  - Tackling the climate emergency to create a better place now and to safeguard our city for future generations.

- **Vibrant Communities**
  - Making the most of the incredible opportunities in our city and building much needed housing for our residents.

- **Smart City**
  - Using cutting edge technology to transform council services and improve peoples’ lives.

Cllr Rachael Robathan
Leader, Westminster City Council
Cllr Rachael Robathan, Leader of the Council, switching on the 2019 Christmas lights with Ebury Bridge Estate resident, Alexander.
Another successful West End LIVE, set in the famous Trafalgar Square, attracting more than half a million people.
Delivering a City for All

We have a relentless focus and work hard for our communities, meaning we have an excellent foundation to continue delivering a City for All.

Here are just some of our proudest achievements so far:

- Delivered over 600 new affordable homes since 2017 – and we are on track to deliver more than 1,850 by 2023
- Nine out of ten residents were satisfied with how we keep our streets clean and regularly collect bins
- Sustained Ofsted-rated “outstanding” Children’s Services – one of only two councils in the country to achieve this accolade from the independent inspectors
- Introduced 20mph speed limits around 39 schools in Westminster
- Consistently delivered services to the high standards our residents expect – 88% of residents rate council services very highly
- Supported over 1,000 residents to stay in their local community by making improvements to their home
- Prevented 220 families from being at risk of homelessness
- Declared a climate emergency, signalling our intention to become a carbon neutral city by 2040
- Officially became a London Living Wage employer in 2019
- Upgraded 745 empty council houses to the best standard, and designed to be dementia friendly, with more planned this year
- Our state of the art care home, Beachcroft, is nearing completion. It will incorporate the latest technology and include facilities such as a dementia-supportive garden
- Brought together 5,000 residents to celebrate our third annual MyWestminster Day in June 2019
- Agreed a new protocol with power and utility companies to make sure roadworks are coordinated and disruption is minimised
- Won 11 London in Bloom awards for our parks, gardens and cemeteries
Raised over £900,000 through the voluntary Community Contribution Fund for local organisations to spend on tackling rough sleeping and helping socially isolated residents and young people.

Gained over 14,000 supporters for our #DontBeIdle campaign to cut engine idling at the kerbside.

Collected over £71m in Community Infrastructure Levy charges to improve infrastructure for residents including schools, green spaces, community centres and roads.

Helped 42,600 children in Westminster get the best start in life through our healthier schools programme.

Supported over 1,000 unemployed residents into work.

Inspired 800 young people to become interested in the creative industries through our City Lions programme, which is particularly targeted at those from underprivileged backgrounds.

Created 110 apprenticeship opportunities with Westminster-based employers.

Helped 600 residents to start up businesses through our PopUp Business School.

Trialled electric-powered waste collection vehicles to reduce carbon emissions.

Secured £2.8m for a European Regional Development Fund project that aims to connect small and medium-sized enterprises within Westminster to superfast broadband connectivity. The programme has connected 600 businesses to date.

Helped over 1,200 people #EndTheNightRight thanks to our Soho Angels – reducing the burden on local NHS services.

Invested £500,000 in youth services which includes funds for five youth hubs and 17 youth projects.

Funded 106 local organisations, through the MyWestminster Fund, to the tune of £600,000 for local projects to benefit their communities.

Another successful West End LIVE attracted crowds of more than half a million people, boosting the local economy.

Celebrated community heroes, who volunteer to make Westminster a great place to live through the MyWestminster Community Awards.

86% of residents said that different communities in Westminster get on well together.

Installed more electric vehicle charging points than any other local authority, with many more planned. So far we have delivered 470 charging points which equates to 59 per square mile and eight times more points per resident head than the UK average.
Revolutionised our planning system to make it more transparent and easier for residents to use, including introducing live video streaming of our planning committees.

Improved the Report It section of our website, allowing residents to tell us about incidents across the city instantly online.

Partnered with universities in Westminster to find technological solutions to our biggest challenges, improve service delivery and save residents money.

Engaged over 28,000 residents as part of our Community Champions programme to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in their local area.

Supported over 738 residents with disabilities, health conditions and significant barriers to employment into work placements, paid work and apprenticeships. The council is a proud role model of this initiative – we negotiate opportunities through social value and Section 106, and have opened our own social enterprise café.

Over 4m visits to our sports and leisure facilities.
Greener and Cleaner

Working with our partners to trial green initiatives on Ebury Street – these Living Pillars are made by retrofitting biodiverse planting to lamp posts and other column structures to support pollinators and improve air quality.
Our vision

Greener and Cleaner

Westminster will be the UK city known for leading the way in tackling climate change and improving air quality.

Our children will inherit not just a better, healthier living environment but also a working model of how a global city can successfully take on the environmental challenges facing the next generation. Our city will maintain the highest standards in street cleanliness and excellent open spaces that our communities can remain proud of. Westminster, as the UK’s shop window, will be a showcase destination as we welcome businesses and visitors from across the globe.
What we will do

We have declared a Climate Emergency and are responding with vigour and pace to drive forward a comprehensive and robust programme of positive change in everything we do.

We have the determination to develop a comprehensive programme of activity over the next decade to achieve our vision so future generations are proud to call Westminster their home. Over the coming years, we will take a leading role in tackling the climate emergency, aiming to become a council with net zero emissions by 2030 and a carbon neutral city by 2040. We will do more to improve air quality for our residents and visitors.

Our new Climate Action Group, chaired by the Leader of the Council, will embed our green commitments, drive forward our programme of change and overhaul all relevant policies and service delivery areas.

Additionally, to remain a global destination at the heart of the nation’s capital, we will continue our commitment to clean streets and provide first class refuse collection services.

We understand these are big commitments so we will embark upon a wide range of activity this year to massively kick start our ambitious programme.
Here are just some examples of our key commitments for 20/21:

- Establish a Climate Action Group to undertake a root and branch review of our carbon footprint and sustainability across the council, and work with our partners in a Climate Emergency Alliance to develop and publish a Climate Emergency Action Plan.

- Complete an audit of our policies and publish a green gap report that covers how we will achieve clean energy, greener homes and jobs, green communities, and how Westminster City Council will lead by example in taking steps towards becoming carbon neutral.

- Implement the main findings from the Air Quality Plan consultation, setting up zero emission zones across the city, prioritising schools, libraries and health care centres and increasing city-wide air quality monitoring.

- Support our schools to invest the £1m Clean Air Fund on local road improvements and green infrastructure.

- Adopt an Environment Supplementary Planning Document that details how the environment policies in our City Plan can be delivered.

- Find new ways to promote sustainable modes of transport, including a consultation on our approach to parking policy, expanding our car-sharing scheme, and rolling out electric vehicle charging points across all our developments.

- Reduce waste, transform recycling facilities, and enhance our environmentally friendly and low emission waste collection service.
The Clean Air Fund has reached £1m to make the areas around schools **greener, healthier** and **more sustainable**.
One of our regeneration schemes at Tollgate Gardens, built to exemplary architectural and sustainability standards.

We declared a climate emergency, signalling our intention to become a carbon neutral city by 2040.

Zumba classes for the over 60s at MyWestminster Day, helping residents stay happy and healthy in their local community.
Arts and crafts at MyWestminster Day, one of our annual events, which brings people together from across Westminster to celebrate our vibrant and diverse city.
Our vision

Vibrant Communities

Westminster will be a city which builds the homes it needs to remain a welcoming, vibrant place for people from every background, at every income level and at every age. An environment where economic growth works to its optimum, creating job opportunities and improving living standards.

We will open doors to new experiences and life chances for our vibrant communities through excellent education and employment prospects. Everyone will have an equal opportunity to succeed and be healthy no matter what their background. People will be able to retire with dignity and pride in Westminster and residents who need care will be supported within their own community.
What we will do

Residents and families will have access to the best support at every key stage of life.

We will continue to provide an outstanding offer for children and young people, supporting residents into more jobs and training opportunities, and helping people and families move into well-designed, green and affordable homes. We will also renew our focus on designing and delivering services for the most vulnerable so they can be cared for within the community. For example, through supported living and new care homes for the elderly, outstanding services for young people with care needs, or helping people at risk of homelessness.

A key foundation for Westminster’s ongoing success is the City Plan that will be adopted in 2020 and sets out to deliver an ambitious strategy to make Westminster one of the best places to live, work and play – not just in London or the UK, but globally. The City Plan will enable the building of around 20,000 new homes by 2040, of which at least 35% will be affordable. We will be at the forefront of ensuring the best building design standards so that people can be proud of their homes and business premises, which will be comparable internationally in terms of sustainability and will be environmentally friendly.

We will transform key parts of the city to encourage the right kind of economic growth to create business and job opportunities for those that live and work here. We want to revitalise and renew areas including Church Street and Ebury Bridge providing new homes and ensuring developments are inclusive for all communities. We will also transform our housing services to provide an outstanding offer for our 11,500 social tenants and 9,000 leaseholders.
We will work with residents, businesses and local groups to transform key parts of the city, including Harrow Road, Victoria, Strand Aldwych, Paddington, Soho and the North Bank. Our Oxford Street plans will be even more ambitious, delivering the smartest high street in Europe and designed to the highest environmental standards that will be the envy of any comparable world city.

We will increase prosperity and reduce inequality by enhancing our residents’ access to good quality, well-paid employment opportunities and ensure Westminster is a healthy place to live, do business and succeed, from the start of life through to older age. It means creating a city of diversity that is inclusive and promotes mental wellbeing and healthy living.

These are big goals to work towards but we are confident we can achieve them so as to enhance our vibrant, welcoming and successful communities.
Here are just some examples of our key commitments for 20/21:

- Open Beachcroft, a new state of the art, 84-bed care home for older residents as part of our ongoing commitment to ensure people can stay in Westminster as their care needs increase.

- Ensure residents on our housing estates have access to a range of coordinated services to help them into training, education, employment, business start-up advice, health and wellbeing services. This includes rolling out a pilot in Church Street which aims to increase the incomes of the most disadvantaged households.

- Improve Oxford Street and the surrounding area to strengthen its world-renowned status as a great place to live, shop, work and visit, now and for future generations. We will work in close collaboration with residents, businesses and landowners to develop our plans to be even more ambitious.

- Put residents at the heart of decision-making by continuing engagement with local communities on improving key areas in the city, including Strand Aldwych, Victoria, Paddington, Harrow Road and Soho and collaborate with partners to create a strategy for enhancing the natural environment and public realm of the North Bank river front.

- Ensure our businesses, suppliers and developers open up opportunities for those that live in Westminster such as supporting community initiatives, employment and training opportunities for our residents, and supporting an additional 650 young people through our City Lions youth programme.
Adopt a new approach for housing repairs and major works including reviewing the process for resident scrutiny in housing management performance, being clear about who is responsible for repairs and major works and increasing the proportion of repairs inspected upon completion to ensure we are delivering the quality our residents expect.

Transform our Pre-Birth to Five Programme to help parents ensure their children have the best start in life, improve our local offer for children with special educational needs or disabilities, expand and update the Portman Early Childhood Centre, and reduce all forms of school exclusion.

Renew our focus on supporting the vulnerable and those in supported living, including becoming a leading dementia-friendly city, looking after those with autism and launching a personalised approach for people needing social care.

Work with our partners to do everything we can to support the vulnerable and make Westminster safer by implementing a new assessment centre for rough sleepers, refreshing our approach to tackling anti-social behaviour including on our housing estates, and launching a campaign to reduce drug use.

Ensure adults and children at every age can stay healthy by easily accessing everything our community has to offer through enhancing our partnership approach to education and healthcare with agencies, including voluntary sector organisations, libraries, sports and leisure, GP surgeries and other care professionals. This will include a pilot in Churchill Gardens Estate to trial how new approaches to supporting people, creating smarter homes and creating greener and cleaner environments can positively impact wellbeing.
Westminster City Council celebrates London Pride.

We have engaged over 28,000 residents as part of our Community Champions programme to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in their local area.

Illustration of the future of Ebury Bridge – one of our regeneration schemes which will deliver around 750 new high quality houses, of which at least half will be affordable.
We have delivered over 600 new affordable homes since 2017 – and we are on track to deliver more than 1,850 by 2023.

Ehis, a Westminster student moving into her new home at Dudley House.
Microsoft making history in Westminster – opening their flagship store in Oxford Circus in July 2019. This is Microsoft’s first physical store in the UK and the most accessible store they have ever opened.
Our vision

Smart City

Westminster will be one of the best connected and most technologically advanced cities in the world. We will harness new technologies to make us the easiest council in the UK to do business with. Our ambition is to create a best-in-class website which will be easier to interact with than your bank, taxi service or favourite shopping platform, and be the first choice for residents, businesses and visitors to do business with us.

We will ensure that internet connection speeds and access across Westminster are unrivalled by any other major city, making sure that technology works for the benefit of those who live, work and visit this complex urban environment. Being a smart city provides unique opportunities to enhance our communities’ experiences and capabilities, achieving a better and more joined-up council that will deliver better services more efficiently.
What we will do

Technology is evolving faster than ever. We want to be a global leader in harnessing the potential of a smart city.

No-one will be excluded or disadvantaged as we seize new opportunities and stretch ourselves to ensure that technology makes our residents’ lives easier. Whether through installing assistive technology in our homes to promote independence amongst some of our most vulnerable residents, having the greenest technology-enabled waste collection service or expanding access to super-fast broadband to make it easier for people to do business in tomorrow’s world, no stone will be left unturned.

We aim for Westminster to be a recognised global leader in smart city approaches and technologies. Our customers will choose to use our digital services, which will be designed to meet their needs and be as inclusive to all residents as possible. More than this, our cutting-edge technologies will enable us to deliver against our ambitions for a greener city by utilising real time data and artificial intelligence to improve services. From using digital sensors to notify us instantly when road maintenance is needed or change street lighting levels.

We will also support our entrepreneurs and businesses by enabling and encouraging outstanding digital infrastructure.

These are big goals and our progress will be dependent on us being at the forefront of technological advances. To be a smart city, we will embark upon a wide range of intense activity this year.
Here are just some examples of our key commitments for 20/21:

- Ensure IT provision across libraries can respond to changing needs and ensure that no-one is left behind by not having modern digital technology in their homes.
- Create a best-in-class council website making it easy to find information and complete online transactions.
- Explore options for enabling responsive home technology for our council homes, such as voice-assistant controls.
- Implement our Digital Street Market project and roll-out Wi-Fi and digital training to all six Westminster markets.
- Facilitate full-fibre broadband to our social housing properties by the end of 2021 and ensure all new affordable housing is built with access to this.
- Enhance how we use data so we can design and provide services to meet customer needs even better.
- Trial the integration of innovative smart city technologies. The trial will include the use of road sensors to manage light levels, improve safety and ease traffic flows. It will also include enabling 5G infrastructure and electric vehicle charging facilities across the city.
- Develop and pilot work in Oxford Street with the ambition to be the smartest high street in Europe.
We have partnered with universities in Westminster to find technological solutions to our biggest challenges, improve service delivery and save residents money.

Helping entrepreneurs to flourish by rolling out WiFi to all our street markets across the city, making transactions easier for customers and traders.

Housing staff ready to help residents – building on resident feedback we are expanding our use of technology to improve services.
We are tackling air pollution by making it easier for residents to switch to electric vehicles through the most comprehensive charging point network in the country, with a further 1,000 planned by March 2021.

One of our many electric vehicle charging points in use in the West End.
Ensuring residents are at the heart of our plans for Church Street, one of our key regeneration areas.
Working together to deliver a City for All

We believe that creating a City for All is everyone’s responsibility. Every single one of us – whether council, resident, family, business, voluntary group or visitor – has a part to play in contributing to our local community and improving the place where we live and work.

Here are just a few ways in which you can do your bit:

- **Join Team Westminster** and experience new volunteering opportunities, meet new people and support your neighbours.
  
  You can sign up at [do-it.westminster.gov.uk](http://do-it.westminster.gov.uk)

- **Apply for a MyWestminster Fund** grant to put your local projects into action and strengthen community identity.
  
  You can find out more at [westminster.gov.uk/mywestminster-fund](http://westminster.gov.uk/mywestminster-fund)

- **Donate to the Westminster Charitable Trust** through the Westminster Community Contribution Scheme, supporting young people, helping rough sleepers off the streets and helping lonely people feel less isolated.
  
  You can find out more at [westminster.gov.uk/westminster-trust](http://westminster.gov.uk/westminster-trust)

- **Join our City Lions programme** if you are between 13 and 16 years old to make the most of the fantastic opportunities in our city.
  
  You can find out more at [citylions.org](http://citylions.org)

- **Get involved in Open Forums** to speak directly with the Leader, Cabinet and senior officers about the local issues that matter the most to you. We also will be rolling out a series of area based meetings to discuss local issues.
  
  You can find out more at [westminster.gov.uk/open-forum](http://westminster.gov.uk/open-forum)
A fun day in the sun at our Ebury Bridge pop-up beach, which welcomed over 800 visitors from across the estate and South Westminster.
Westminster in numbers

Population

- Home to Government, the Royal Family and 255,000 residents including 45,000 young people
- Population increases to 1.1m with the influx of workers, shoppers and tourists in the day time

Economy

- Highest economic output of any local authority at £53.6bn per annum
- Largest night time economy in the UK, generating £3bn per annum towards the UK’s economic output
- Largest employment centre in the UK providing 715,000 jobs
- 51,400 businesses, generating £2.2bn of business rates
- More than 210,000 people are employed in the evening and night time economy across 12,000 businesses in the city

Heritage

- 8.3 square miles encompassing 11,000 listed buildings and structures including the Westminster World Heritage Site
- 56 conservation areas covering 78% of the city’s footprint
- Five Royal Parks and 19 historic squares and gardens

Environment

- 470 electric vehicle on-street charging points in the city, with many more planned
- Home to 172 open spaces, 87 of which have public access
- The total area of parks and green space is estimated at 527 hectares, equal to 24% of Westminster

Culture

- More than 150 languages are spoken in Westminster’s schools
- Nearly 2m visits to our 13 libraries, providing a wide range of services for people who live, study and work in the city
- The borough is home to Soho, one of the world’s most influential media clusters. More than one in five jobs in London’s creative economy are in Soho
- Home to 56 theatres, five concert halls, three other music venues, 13 comedy clubs, 15 cinemas, 24 museums and 16 art galleries
- 27% of all London’s jobs in music, performing and visual arts are based in Westminster
- Westminster is home to six of the UKs most visited free cultural destinations