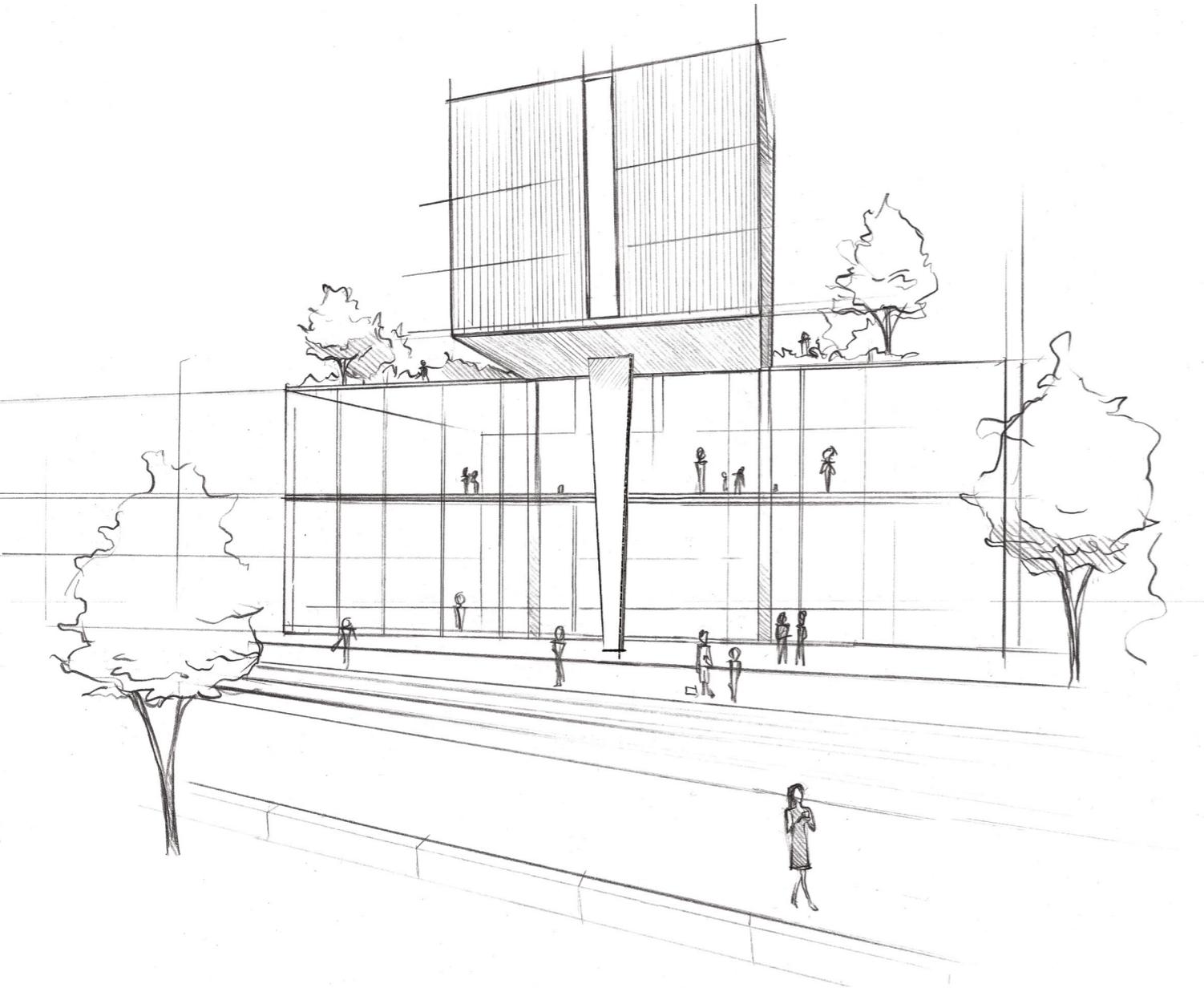


CITY PLAN 2019 – 2040

OUR APPROACH



City of Westminster



CITY PLAN 2019 – 2040

Westminster is a vibrant city which offers a wealth of opportunities for its residents, its businesses and more than 25 million tourists who visit each year¹. City Plan 2019–2040, underpinned by our City for All vision, is a plan for all these people. It sets out an ambitious strategy to make Westminster one of the best places to live, work and play.

A city that will inspire the world.

To read the full City Plan 2019–2040
visit [westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040)

¹ Visit Britain – Local Authorities Combined Analysis (domestic overnight & day visits)

FOREWORD



City Plan 2019–2040, first and foremost, is a plan for people. It 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.

Although this plan projects us forward to 2040, the transformation starts now. Being a city where people want to live is at the forefront of our agenda. Whilst a quarter of all homes in Westminster are social rented – a statistic of which we are very proud – we have a pressing need for new, affordable homes. Regeneration of key areas such as Victoria and Paddington, and the north west of the borough, will invigorate both our residential and business capabilities.

It's absolutely vital that development must never be at the expense of our heritage. Our new neighbourly development policy will make sure planning for Westminster is about conservation not preservation, and building tomorrow's heritage today. Our iconic landmarks and areas of Outstanding Universal Significance form a stunning backdrop where people build lives, forge careers, and make memories. We have identified 'specialist clusters' to be protected; places whose character adds significantly to London's global appeal, such as Soho, Mayfair, Harley Street and Savile Row.

Sustainability must drive everything we do. This strategy defines what we need to achieve and how innovative planning and design will achieve it. Greener living must inform the choices we make – sometimes literally. Soft landscaping and streets lined with trees, bring natural beauty and mitigate against the harmful effects of CO₂. A stunning city encourages walking and cycling, bringing further environmental benefits.

With higher rents and changing patterns of how people shop, bold action will ensure London's West End remains the jewel in our commercial crown. This strategy sets out a game-changing Central Activities Zone (CAZ) to deliver a world-class leisure experience. We're investing £50 million each year for the next three years in the Oxford Street District, with more than 90 different projects proposed across 85 separate locations. A major new public piazza on Oxford Street will be a place where pedestrians come first, as Westminster becomes a truly walkable city.

As we set out to create our city of the future, there is one question that should be at the forefront of our minds in every development we undertake: Will this be an asset to people's lives? If we can answer this positively every time, the Westminster of 2040 is one we will all want to be a part of.

Councillor Richard Beddoe
Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning
Westminster City Council

CONTEXT

Stretching just over eight square miles, Westminster is one of only two London boroughs to hold city status. As home to the UK government, the monarchy and some of the world's most iconic landmarks, it is a city of great economic, historic and cultural significance.

We have some of the most affluent residential areas in the country, but also some of the most deprived. It is a dense borough. Housing shortages have been exacerbated by the increasing disconnect between what people earn, and the cost of property across all tenures. We have also seen a growing decline of rental properties. The reality is we have not just an immediate need for new, affordable housing, but an ongoing responsibility to fulfil demand over the next 20 years.

As well as being home to more than a quarter of a million residents, Westminster is also home to some of Europe's foremost business headquarters. It is a city of great economic diversity with 85% of businesses employing less than 10 people². Our built environment has to take into account the different demands of every sector to promote and inspire further growth. With growth comes the responsibility for sustainable design which conserves both our heritage and our future. Design that inspires people to connect with their environment, and each other.

Every action we undertake must have people at its heart as we work towards the more sustainable Westminster of the future.

The policies in our City Plan have been developed following extensive engagement across many years. The plan was first adopted with just strategic policies in 2013. An extensive programme of non-statutory consultation was undertaken between 2013 and 2015 on draft policies. Since then it has been subject to three formal reviews to fast track the incorporation of some policies; this full revision to the City Plan incorporates all outstanding policies, drawing on feedback from previous consultations.



² Interdepartmental Business Register, ONS

OUR APPROACH FOR WESTMINSTER

City for All is our vision for Westminster. Our City Plan sets out how we will achieve this through planning policy.

It sets out a blueprint for how Westminster will enter the next few decades in a strong and competitive position. To achieve this, we need to be adaptable to change. To focus on an environment where communities and businesses can thrive, with plenty of open spaces to enjoy. A place where people can thrive.

A vision for homes and communities

An immediate need for affordable housing, brings with it opportunity. The opportunity to build not just houses, but communities. Safe communities that bring people together. Healthy communities with green open spaces. Communities that will transform the lives of the people who live here.



A vision for a healthier and greener city

Climate change is affecting us now. Everything we plan, everything we design, everything we build should make our city a more carbon-neutral place to live. Energy-efficient transport, less waste, cleaner air. Open spaces that connect people to our natural environment, so people can enjoy more fulfilling leisure time. A healthier city is a better city.

A vision for the right kind of growth

Growth is the lifeblood of any city. But growth is only possible when that city is a rewarding place to live, work or visit. The right type of new developments will help us build on our remarkable legacy to create a city where people choose to be. To sustain that growth, we have to create a city where people want to stay.



Westminster ranks **No.1** of the 32 boroughs in the city in the Well-Being Index³.

As we move towards 2040, we want to be No.1 for well-being in the **world**.

³ The score relates to health, economic security, safety, education, mobility and environment.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH IN WESTMINSTER

Every city needs growth to flourish. But growth is only possible when that city is a rewarding place to live, work or visit. To achieve this, we need to respond to our changing needs. The need for affordable housing. The need for office space that reflects the way we work today and in the future. The need to maintain Westminster’s global reputation as one of the best visitor destinations in the world.

Our challenges

With a growing population comes an increased need for housing. Housing that’s affordable in a climate where there is enough employment to support a good standard of living. Growth also puts increased demands on our infrastructure and need for more commercial spaces. Space, which is already at a premium in the city. Estimates suggest a need for more than 75,000 office-based jobs alone up to 2041.

Our plan

Regeneration is key to growth. The West End Retail and Leisure Special Policy and Opportunity Areas will bring thousands of new jobs and new homes to the city. An ambitious strategy for Oxford Street will see the West End become the world’s best outdoor street shopping experience. Its unrivalled mix of flagship and branded stores, bars, restaurants, theatre and cinema will make it not just the ultimate

retail destination, but the ultimate leisure destination. Westminster will offer an experience that simply can’t be matched.

Our exciting ambition will transform our waterways and north bank of the River Thames to create vibrant new hubs for business and leisure. The Grand Union Canal will be a renewed place for residents, workers and visitors to get together, enjoy nature, relax and be active. Ambitious projects to regenerate Victoria, Paddington and the north west will bring a new vitality throughout the borough.

Building communities will be given the same priority as building homes. Our residents will feel a sense of belonging and enjoy a rewarding quality of life. Our business environment will continue to attract robust, diverse investment across a wide range of sectors and a dynamic workforce eager to work here.

This is a plan that builds futures.

Growth

Housing target: **1,495** new homes per year

Affordable homes target: **35%**

Jobs: **75,000** new jobs

IMPROVED HOUSING IMPROVED LIVES

Westminster is one of London’s most densely populated boroughs, and it is a population that continues rising year on year. The average monthly rent is over £2,000 a month⁴. The issue is further compounded by a shortage of housing stock in all tenures. Although 25% of our housing stock is available for social rent, less than 2% of homes are available to middle income households. This creates a unique problem: people who can’t afford to rent or buy in the open market, but are ineligible for social housing.

Our challenges

How affordable an area is can be easily estimated by dividing the average house price by the average household income.

Based on current figures, the average salary for a Westminster resident would have to increase almost twenty five times more to reach the affordable level of buying in the borough. Renting poses a similar challenge.

We also face a changing and challenging demographic. Projections from the GLA estimate that Westminster’s population will increase by 7% by 2030 and to an unprecedented 13% by 2043⁵.

Our plan

With these challenges comes the opportunity to transform the lives of the people who live here. Our City Plan looks at building communities where people of all ages and all abilities will be able to feel safe and have a sense of belonging. Communities that enhance quality of life, with green open spaces within a five minute reach of every household. By 2040 we will have created enough new homes to meet our targets and provide genuine housing choice for our residents.

Housing

- 114** people per hectare in Westminster, **double** the London average of **56**
- £43,893** average household income in Westminster in 2017
- £1,054,400** average house price
- 121,000** households
- 31%** owner occupied
- 40%** privately rented
- 26%** social housing
- 3%** other tenure
- 4,500** new homes built in the city over the last five years

4 Valuation Office Agency: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714133/London.pdf

5 <https://data.london.gov.uk/gla-population-projections-superseded-custom-age-tables/>

A THRIVING CITY, A THRIVING ECONOMY

The scale and breadth of Westminster’s economy is like no other. Ours is a business landscape where international business and finance headquarters sit shoulder to shoulder with niche creative and retail clusters. Together, these form more than 55,000 different enterprises providing around 754,000 jobs⁶, making Westminster the largest employment centre in the UK.

With some of the world’s most iconic landmarks and districts, tourism is a main staple of our economy. Tourism in London rose 10% last year⁷, and as we increase our offering as the world’s most vibrant city, so too will we increase our visitor numbers.

Westminster has a significantly higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than any other London borough, contributing £53.6 billion to the economy in Gross Value Added (GVA). That accounts for 3.2% of the UK total and more than 14% of London’s⁸. What is good for our local economy is good for the national economy.

Our challenges

The city has some of the most affluent areas in the UK, but also some of the most deprived⁹, and it is these areas which demand immediate attention in terms of appropriate, affordable housing for the city to flourish.

A daytime population in excess of more than one million people a day puts enormous pressure on every aspect of our infrastructure.

Our plan

With most office space concentrated in the West End, Paddington, and Victoria, City Plan 2019–2040 will bring investment to take these areas to the next level of economic growth. This is a plan that supports growth that benefits everyone, by creating an environment where people can flourish. More homes, more jobs, more opportunity. Our plan sets out to create a thriving city. With that will come a thriving economy.

Economy

- 55,000** businesses
- Highest economic output** of any other London local authority
- £55 billion** of economic output per annum
- 764,000** employees
- £53 billion** GVA
- 400** premises with a music and dance licence

6 ONS Regional Labour Market: LI01 – Local Indicators for Counties, Local and Unitary Authorities (April 2017)

7 London & Partners: <https://www.londonandpartners.com/our-insight>

8 Greater London Authority Economics, Current Issues Note 55: Examining GVA in London’s local authorities in a London and UK context, 1997-2015 (September 2017)

9 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation

MAKING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

To keep a city working, people need to be able to move round it efficiently. Westminster has one of the world’s most complex transport networks; needed to accommodate the daily demands of more than a million people. Since 2001, together with Transport for London, we have seen a change in how people travel, with an increase in cycling and use of public transport. Making sure we manage our roads and streets properly will be a key issue throughout the life of this plan.

Our challenges

Each day an influx of workers and visitors sees our population swell from 248,000 residents to more than one million. This creates huge pressure not just on our transport system, but also the pedestrian environment, and some parts of the city already struggle to accommodate ever-increasing ‘people pressure’. The challenge is how to transform travel in a way that meets demand, is efficient yet at the same time reduces, rather than adds to its environmental impact. Adding to this, the city will need to adapt to changing technology where electric vehicles will be more prevalent and our roads will need future proofing as autonomous vehicles roll out.

Our plan

As we approach 2040, public transport will become more attractive in Westminster. New public transport services include the opening of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail 1), which will better connect three areas of Westminster with Heathrow Airport, the City of London, Canary Wharf, and beyond; an additional 1.5 million people will be able to reach central London within 45 minutes. Crossrail 2, HS2, Heathrow expansion, and extensions and upgrades to the Northern and Bakerloo lines will increase capacity, taking the strain off an already crowded system. Our plan will help to deliver these major infrastructure schemes.

Connections

- 4** terminal rail stations
- 4** river bus terminals
- 32** underground stations
- 150+** bus routes
- 170** cycle hire docking stations
- 350 km** of highway
- 6.4 km** of canal frontage

A GREENER AND HEALTHIER CITY

As our climate changes, so does our city. Tackling these issues now is the only way we can meet future demands. For the past two decades Westminster has been designated an Air Quality Management Area; reducing our CO₂ emissions to create a “Clean Air City” remains a top priority. The City Plan 2019–2040 looks at ways we can minimise negative effects on our environment in everything we do. We will be working with developers and industry partners to achieve our targets of a greener, healthier Westminster, because failing to do so simply isn’t an option.

Our challenges

The impact of climate change is more acute in Westminster. The city’s CO₂ challenge goes beyond the negative carbon impact from transport. Typically, in UK cities, buildings generate around 40% of CO₂. Here in Westminster, that figure is around 90%. We also face an increased flood risk, not just as a result of climate change but the nature of an intensively built environment and the use of non-porous materials in design.

Technologies and best practice within the construction industry is moving at a fast pace and during the life of the plan there will be changes to how we get the best use out of buildings.

Tackling environmental problems is essential not just to support sustainable economic growth, but for the health and well-being of every single person in the city and beyond.

Our plan

Over the next 20 years our air quality will improve dramatically. As we become less reliant on fossil fuels, it will have an impact on how we build, putting a greater emphasis on renewables.

Improvements to our infrastructure will make electric vehicles a more viable option, as people move away from petrol and diesel cars. There will be a move towards ‘active travel’ as Westminster builds on its reputation as a walking and river city to bring healthier and greener transport choices. An enhanced natural environment, upgraded pedestrian and more cycle routes will be better not just for our environment, but the people who live here.

By 2040 every resident will be within a five minute walk of a public open space and all businesses in the West End will be within a ten minute walk of a tranquil space. Through the plan, the Westminster of 2040 will be a city that’s greener, a city that’s healthier.

A greener and healthier city

- 5** Royal Parks account for 17% of the city
- 15,000** council owned trees
- 9,000** street trees
- 650** Tree Preservation Orders
- 8** Air Quality Focus Areas
- 180,000** tonnes of waste annually

A DESIGN FOR LIFE

Westminster is a city of contrasts. A place where the historic Palace of Westminster and the world famous Piccadilly Lights share the same iconic skyline. Our built environment is as diverse as the people who live here. We have limited land availability, but almost limitless demands.

We have more than 11,000 listed buildings in 56 Conservation Areas, which cover 78% of our city. Conserving our design, our character, our heritage and natural environment has to be considered every step of the way. Westminster is a city that means different things to different people, but needs to work for everyone.

Our challenges

Development brings with it the opportunity to build new homes and new jobs, but that development can never compromise our heritage. Planning for Westminster must be about responsible conservation not preservation. The Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey are World Heritage sites defined as having ‘Outstanding Universal Values’, which will impact on any development within a significant surrounding area, and any area outside this zone which could also compromise the view.

It is estimated that around 75% of buildings expected to be in use in 2050 have already been built, so we need to do more to retrofit our existing buildings. Three quarters of our housing stock was built before 1915, and half before 1870¹⁰.

Again we are presented with the challenge of how to adapt older buildings to serve both functional and aesthetic demands.

Our plan

Special Policy Areas like Soho, Harley Street and Mayfair each bring their own unique contribution to our city and our economy. City Plan 2019–2040 puts enhanced measures in place to keep a closer eye on development. Commercially, this will help to safeguard the livelihood of smaller, independent retailers, whilst maintaining the character and spirit of these areas for the enjoyment of generations to come.

Tighter legislation is making buildings more energy efficient. Less waste makes everyday living more affordable and reduces our carbon footprint. By placing the people at the heart of the design process, through neighbourly development, we improve the quality of life for everyone.

Design

- 56** Conservation areas
- 21** Historic Parks
- 11,000+** Listed buildings
- 85** London Squares



¹⁰ Westminster Housing Condition Survey 2001

**CITY
PLAN
2019 – 2040**



City of Westminster

To find out more about the City Plan please visit
westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040