

YOU SAID, WE DID

September 2025



Join the resident mailing list

Stay up to date with news & updates from the City Corporation, consultations from around the Square Mile, events and opportunities to get involved.

Scan the QR code or visit:

eepurl.com/i3lFtk



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Introduction from the Policy Chairman

This edition of our You Said, We Did looks back at our last two City Question Time (CQT) events to provide answers on the issues that matter to you.

Inside, you'll find a link to the resident directory – a useful resource for connecting with services and contacts across the City – as well as information about the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund. This fund allows organisations to apply for grants to help improve our communities through educational programmes, beautification and more.

I continue to find our City Question Time events an invaluable way to hear directly from you: what's working well, what could be improved, and how we can better serve our communities.

These events are a key part of our Residential Reset – our renewed commitment to listening, responding, and delivering for residents across the Square Mile. They also give us the opportunity to share some of the exciting work being carried out by the City Corporation for your benefit.

Your feedback plays a vital role in helping us identify where change is most needed, and in shaping our efforts to make the City of London an even better place to live. We'll continue to host these events and are also exploring new ways to engage with you and make living in the City even more rewarding, including through the new City Living Resident Card.

Thank you for your continued attendance and questions. I hope you find this latest edition of our You Said, We Did both informative and useful.

Chris Hayward





CULTURE

For our May City Question Time event we hosted a 'Culture Special' which included a presentation from Dr Emma Markiewicz, Head of Profession for Culture at the City of London Corporation. Time was given for residents to ask their questions focused on culture in the City and the new Cultural Strategy.

How are you designing the Cultural Strategy to ensure it is meaningful?

To build on what we already have, the strategy development process started with comprehensive desk research and consultation. To ensure it is meaningful, we have focused on a set of cross-cutting themes and priorities identified through this work.

We have been through extensive consultation including ten focus groups, out-and-about sessions and one-to-ones that cover a broad range of cultural topics. The priorities have emerged from the consultation, conversations and working groups. We have done this to ensure that the Cultural Strategy will deliver content and actions that matter most to those who visit, work or live in the City.

How will the Cultural Strategy reflect the informal cultural appeal of the City, its streets, public spaces, and atmosphere, alongside venues and events?

Throughout our research and consultation, the City's informal cultural appeal, its streets, public spaces, and atmosphere were highlighted repeatedly. This feedback informs our thinking, and we are exploring how it could be reflected in the Strategy, alongside detailed recommendations and actions to enhance the overall visitor experience.

Could the City do more to incorporate foreign languages into cultural offerings through events such as film festivals or theatre?

Yes. The Cultural Strategy will help the City of London better reflect the diversity of all Londoners and the many cultures that shape our City. As part of this, we'll look at, for example, opportunities to incorporate different languages into cultural programming, including through events such as film festivals or theatre.

In addition to the Cultural Strategy, there are existing services that offer opportunities to learn languages. The City Corporation's Adult Education Service offers French and Spanish courses at three levels, details of which can be found online via the link below or in the new prospectus - Learning in the City 2025-2026 - available in the City Corporation's libraries.

Find out more about language courses:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/languagecourses



The service also offers ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) at five different levels. From Pre-entry, for beginners, to Level Two, for advanced pronunciation and grammar.

Are there any plans to revive the City of London Festival, which was once an inclusive and accessible way to showcase venues like Livery Halls and churches through small-scale cultural events?

The importance of Livery Halls, churches, and other lesser-known spaces has been a strong theme throughout the consultation process. This feedback is shaping our thinking on how we might 'open up' the City, and we are exploring potential recommendations and actions to support this.

How will the Cultural Strategy reflect the City's architectural heritage and its impact on the wider built environment?

The City of London's architecture is a source of pride, as we heard repeatedly from workers, residents, and visitors during consultation. We have been working closely with heritage venues, as well as planners, developers, and architects, to ensure the City's architectural heritage and wider built environment are appropriately reflected in the Strategy.

"The City of London's architecture is a source of pride, as heard repeatedly during consultation"

How is the Cultural Strategy addressing the needs of teenagers, particularly in providing engaging after-school activities that offer alternatives to anti-social behaviour?

We see the next generation as integral to the City's future as a cultural leader. The Strategy will consider youth-focused programmes to provide cultural education, opportunities, and inspiration, offering positive, engaging alternatives to anti-social behaviour.

What are the plans to work with heritage and cultural bodies to protect the Barbican's iconic architecture and its role as a key part of the City's cultural offer?

We recognise the Barbican's architectural significance and its role in the City's cultural life. While specific actions are still being developed, we are in ongoing dialogue with heritage and cultural partners to explore how best to reflect and support this within the Strategy.



Does an increase in the City's rateable value, through new office developments, directly raise the proportion of business rates the City retains, or is this determined through negotiation with central government?

Generally, under the current retention scheme, an increase in the overall rateable value will increase the amount of business rates the City retains. However, the proportion of the business rates that the City can retain is determined by the UK Government, and we continue to lobby for a better settlement for the Square Mile.

While City residents may pay lower council tax rates, high property valuations mean we're still paying significantly—how is that being accounted for?

All residential property valuations are determined by a national governmental body – the Valuation Office Agency – and placed within a band (A-H). These apply nationally. Valuations are all based on the original valuation date in 1991. Whilst property values in the City might be high – placing properties in a higher valuation band – the amount of Council Tax that is paid is often less than a lower band property in another area. For instance, the top Band in the City is £2,548.14 which is only slightly higher than a Band D property in Blackpool – £2,392.21.

Your Council Tax goes towards a number of services that make the City an even better place to live – supporting the City of Police, repairing roads and ensuring a good provision to residents across the Square Mile.

HOUSING



What can be done to address the security issue with the car park gate at Middlesex Street Estate, where many people can't exit easily?

The City Corporation is working to continue improvements in these areas. The gates and roller shutters controlling car park entry at the Middlesex Street Estate are currently working, although there has previously been issues whereby the entry security had been damaged by vehicles.

We are aware that some residents have also experienced problems accessing the car park due to sensitivity issues with the current Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system. To help work around this, residents are being offered entry key fobs to allow access. As part of our commitment to improving services for residents, we will be replacing the barriers, and current ANPR entry system, introducing a new easier way to enter the car park. We will keep residents informed about these forthcoming changes.

Could any underused or soon-to-be-vacated buildings be repurposed to house homeless individuals?

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping service regularly investigates buildings proposed for rough sleeper accommodation, where they are appropriate and when funding is available to us.

There are factors that help us decide if a building is suitable, and we carry out assessments which look at safety and facilities including escape routes, toilets, and bathrooms. Space is also required for staff and necessary support services. We also consider the building's impact on neighbours such as local businesses and homes.

Recent successful projects include the YHA Hostel site on Carter Lane, repurposed as an emergency hostel during the pandemic, and Snow Hill Court, transformed from a dilapidated school into a 14-bed assessment centre for rough sleepers.

Find out more about social housing services:

[**www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/housing**](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/housing)



GREEN SPACES



Where can residents find more information about the City's green spaces, biodiversity, and related wellbeing initiatives? Can we have an update on what's been recently completed and what's being worked on at present?

The City Corporation is focusing on managing park operations and events over the busy summer period, when fire risk is high and hundreds of thousands of visitors flock to our sites. With 11,000 acres of green space managed by the City Corporation, we are working to ensure they are all fit for the future with stronger governance and greater financial resilience. This will ensure they continue to thrive as places of natural beauty and community value for generations to come.

Finsbury Circus Gardens – London's first public park and the largest open green space in the Square Mile – has reopened following a major transformation project by the City of London Corporation.

Upgrades to this historic, Grade II-listed site include: improved accessibility and seating; a larger, revitalised central lawn; and new landscaping and planting to boost biodiversity and attract a range of habitats for birds, bees, and bats – including 12 additional tree species, over 13,000 plants and more than 6,000 bulbs.



DID YOU KNOW?

The City of London Corporation cares for open spaces across London and the Home Counties, from Epping Forest to Hampstead Heath. These sites protect rare wildlife, store thousands of tonnes of carbon each year, and welcome over 25 million visitors annually. Recent work includes habitat restoration and a new trail at Epping Forest, pond restoration and a new visitor display at Burnham Beeches, improved paths at Ashted Common, and thriving hedgehogs at Highgate Wood.

Natural Environment – the City's open spaces

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/naturalenvironment



City Gardens – green spaces in the City

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/citygardens



Biodiversity in the Square Mile

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/biodiversity



NOISE



I have a specific local issue related to noise, what should I do?

Noise is part of the everyday City of London experience. It is an inevitable consequence of the density of development, the intensity of activity and the sometimes conflicting needs of different communities in such a small area. If you are suffering from excessive noise in the City of London we can help with a noise complaint, advice and investigation.

The Pollution Control Team will respond to and investigate most complaints of noise or requests for advice including those related to construction sites, street works, bars and clubs, building sites, air conditioning, servicing of commercial premises, audible intruder and vehicle alarms.

If you are in the Square Mile and being disturbed by noise call 020 7606 3030. This is a 24-hour service available every day of the year.

Complaints can in some cases be complex. For instance, we have recently been working with a resident who raised a complaint at City Question Time, which was able to be remedied through the City Corporation engaging with responsible external parties, whilst our enforcement team actively intervened and discouraged the behaviour in question.

Feedback from those affected has been positive, and we've passed this on to the relevant managers to ensure their teams know their efforts are making a difference and should continue.



PLANNING

Given that some cultural offers in new developments are underused or poorly promoted, has there been consideration of allowing developers to pool their contributions to fund existing and new cultural venues across the City?


The City Plan 2040 sets out a policy that seeks on-site cultural offers from the largest schemes and allows pooling contributions for smaller and medium sized schemes. We are developing further guidance which will be informed by the City Corporation's forthcoming Culture Strategy. Existing spaces can also apply to the City Corporation's grants programmes, including the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund, the Inspiring London through Culture fund, the Stronger Communities fund and the Destination City Partnership fund.

Our planning system has delivered exciting and well-used cultural offers and visitor attractions in new developments, including Horizon 22 recently welcoming its one millionth visitor less than two years since opening. Recent schemes approved by the Planning Committee include 99 Bishopsgate, which will contain a new cultural pavilion planned to be occupied by Intermission Youth (a youth theatre charity), and 85 Gracechurch Street, which will showcase the archaeological remains of the Roman forum-basilica in a free to visit immersive public exhibition.

What is the City Corporation doing to balance commercial development and enhance the cultural environment?

In many instances, development provides opportunities to enhance and celebrate the City's cultural environment and heritage assets. Development can give opportunities to reveal historic routes, views, spaces and archaeology, and enhance the setting of historic buildings. Planning policy in the City Plan 2040 seeks to retain cultural spaces. There are also 'agent of change' policies that seek to ensure that where development happens, it does not unduly disrupt the operation of established cultural (and other) uses.

Where there are impacts on the setting of heritage assets in particular, there are long-standing approaches that ensure an appropriate balance is struck, including the weighing up of public benefits against the harm caused, which the planning team in the City are highly experienced at considering.



“there are long-standing approaches that ensure an appropriate balance is struck, including the weighing up of public benefits against the harm caused”



POLICING

Given the success of the bike patrol team in improving safety at busy junctions, is there a plan to continue and expand this initiative?

At present, the City of London Police (CoLP) continue to deliver a wide range of road safety initiative through the standing Operation Lewis (partnership initiative) and the Exchanging Places Roadshow, which was attended by 127 cyclists. This event now has six other partners in addition to the CoLP.

The Cycle Team continue with their approach under Operation Lewis of targeting the busy junctions in the busy commuter times. They continue to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to cyclists who run red lights with progress to prosecution for persistent offenders. In addition to enforcement, the Cycle Team are engaging with delivery companies to look at providing training and exploring diversionary opportunities.

CoLP is also dealing with the issue around illegal e-bikes. Over the past four months they have seized 98 and are advising forces all over the country on how to do this. They have also delivered a presentation for the College of Policing as part of Neighbourhood Policing Week and at the National Cycle Crime Conference in Liverpool.

Cycle officers and joint Police/St John's Ambulance cycle medics are deployed at peak times, with regular patrols taking place in hotspot areas, carried out by uniformed, plain-clothes, and specialist officers, with support from partner security teams.

What are the police doing to address drink spiking and related antisocial behaviour in licensed premises?

Through Operation Reframe, the City of London Police, alongside key partners, is actively tackling drink spiking in licensed premises across the Square Mile. The initiative is working: incidents are significantly less frequent here than in other parts of London's nighttime economy. Recent legislative changes have boosted public awareness, leading to a welcome rise in reporting.

Spiking cases can be challenging to investigate. Alcohol-related spiking cannot be confirmed through testing, and for drugs the testing window is only seven days as beyond that, evidence is lost.

Between January and April 2025, there were 29 reports of spiking. In most cases, no drugs or no drugs of concern were found; some involved prescribed medicines or victims who had taken controlled drugs themselves. No undeclared controlled or spiking drugs were detected. In 2024, there were two confirmed spiking incidents – one involving a male victim and another mass spiking at a work event, where the suspect admitted the offence to colleagues.

The CoLP is also working on:

- Regular covert venue testing, with failures leading to retraining or licence reviews.
- Targeted enforcement and engagement with venues and victims after every spiking report.
- Public awareness work through universities, pop-ups, and special campaigns such as Spiking Intensification Week.
- Partnership initiatives including Operation Reframe (monthly safe spaces), City Safe Bus (launching in September), and joint licensing checks with the City Corporation.
- Use of specialist deployments (drugs dogs, plain-clothes officers, joint patrols) to deter offenders and disrupt illegal activity.



SERVICES & SUPPORT

Will City social services staff receive deaf awareness training to better support deaf residents, particularly those who struggle with written communication and need more tailored assistance?

The Department is arranging deaf awareness training for all practitioners in Adults, Children and Homelessness services. This will be delivered by trainers with lived experience. A member of staff within the service is already BSL trained.

The City Corporation's Adults Education team will be delivering British Sign Language (BSL) training in the next academic year, with spaces on the course offered to staff.

How is public and parental feedback being considered in decisions about funding for the Aldgate Nursery's 0-2 provision?

The full results report from the consultation into 0-2 childcare arrangements in the City of London (March-May 2025) were presented and considered by Members when reaching a decision at the Community and Children's Services Committee on 19 June 2025.

The report and options were held in a public session and members of the public have access to the papers, and footage of the full debate is available on the City Corporation's YouTube channel.

Is there a plan to improve local recycling or reuse options for walking aids in the City, so residents don't have to send them far away or rely on distant charities?

Our Commissioning service is in the process of contacting local charities and hospitals to find out if they can accept items such as mobility aids, and what the process would involve, while ensuring health and safety. If this is something that we can arrange, we will investigate creating convenient drop off points within the City of London.

In the meantime, residents can continue to drop off no longer required mobility aids, such as crutches and frames. The closest point is Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, WC1N 3JH.

Check for other drop-off points:

www.wrap.ngo/take-action/recycle-now/recycling-locator-tool



TRANSPORT



How is the City Corporation working with TfL to improve infrastructure affecting local businesses?

The City Corporation has a constructive relationship with TfL, and both Officers and Senior Members regularly meet with TfL representatives at all levels.

Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF)

The City of London's Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF) has provided over £10m of funding to support communities across the City of London. The CILNF can fund community activities and infrastructure within the City of London with grants from £10,000 to £500,000 across five years for projects that take place in the Square Mile and benefit City of London residents and workers.

Further information about the fund and the application process including FAQs is available online:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cilnf



If you have an idea or project in development please email **grantsecityoflondon.gov.uk** for an introductory discussion and pre-application advice.

Some examples of activities held by partners funded by CILNF include – as described in their own words:

Age UK

Golden Social

Mondays 2.15-4pm, Golden Lane Community Centre

Coffee afternoon featuring weekly board games, regular visiting speakers, and on the last Monday of each month, a feature film. Open to anyone aged 55+.

Knit and Natter

Fortnightly on a Wednesday 2-4pm, Artizan Library

Textile crafts session for keen knitters, crocheters, stitchers, and those who want to learn a new skill. Open to anyone aged 55+.

Balance and Strength Club

Balance & Strength Class for Older Adults 55+

Tuesdays 10.45 - 11.45am, Golden Lane Community Centre

Balance & Strength Class for Older Women

Thursdays 10.45 - 11.45am, Portsoken Community Centre

Stay active, strong, and balanced! Join our exercise class for older adults or women in the City of London, led by a qualified instructor. Just show up or get in touch with the team.

Contact: stayingsteady@mrsindependentliving | 0330 380 1013

City Dudes Exercise & Social Group

Thursdays from 12 - 1.45pm, Portsoken Community Centre

Exercise class and social group for older male City of London residents, led by a qualified instructor. Participants are invited to stay after class and socialise with refreshments, building connections, friendships and links in their community. Support and signposting is also available from our support and advice workers.

Contact: vicky.harrison@mrsindependentliving.org | 07957 432 098

Barbican Tuesday Club

Tuesdays 2:45 - 4pm, Barbican Library

Meet new friends for refreshments and great conversation, we organise visits to places of interest, and have people of interest visit us!

Contact Vivienne: 020 7638 8490

Tony: antony.croot@macace.net

07503 544062

Care To Dance

Mondays 6-7pm from 13 October, Artizan Street Library and Community Centre, 1 Artizan Street, E1 7AF

We are a charity led by social workers and trauma informed dance artists and support young people through dance. We hold weekly dance workshops for young people aged 6-11 year olds where they learn different styles of dance and have opportunities to attend many performances and social events.

To sign up, contact: Debby.Rigby@cityoflondon.gov.uk or eeyservice@cityoflondon.gov.uk

City FOOD Club

Thursdays 1 - 3pm, Fridays 5 - 7pm Artizan Street Library and Community Centre

Good food at low cost - helping reduce food waste. Join Family Action's weekly FOOD Club in Aldgate for just £1 a year. Members can buy a weekly food box worth ~£15 for only £4. Open to anyone living or working in the City of London.

Book your place: LondonFoodClubs@family-action.org.uk

Dragon Café in the City

Every other Wednesday, 12:15 - 6:30pm, Shoe Lane Library

Dragon Café in the City is a welcoming space, fostering social connections through an eclectic pick & mix of free, creative and wellness workshops designed, to support wellbeing and good mental health. Open to all in the City of London and beyond, it provides opportunities for people to connect, engage, and build resilience together.

Contact: info@mentalfightclub.art

London Museum Studios

Tuesday - Thursday 9am - 5pm

First Floor, Studio Smithfield, 1 East Poultry Avenue, EC1A 9PT

Those who live, work, study, or run activities in the City of London or Islington can sign up to be a community partner, meaning you can book rooms for free – for meetings, workshops, films screenings, or whatever else you'd like to host!

Contact: londonmuseumstudios@londonmuseum.org.uk

Or check out the space by booking an induction: bit.ly/4mOuWBF



Music Wellbeing Project

8, 15 & 22 September 3:30 - 4:30pm

Portsoken Community Centre

3, 10 & 17 October 11am - 12pm

Golden Lane Community Centre

Bringing people together through music to uplift, connect, and create shared joy (for unpaid carers).

Thames Lens Outdoor Exhibition

Until Tuesday 30 September

North Bank Riverside Walkway Near

Millennium Bridge, London EC4V 3QR

Thames Festival Trust's annual Thames Lens photography competition provides an amazing opportunity for non-professional photographers to interpret the vibrant and multifaceted character of the River Thames in London.

Visit: thamesfestivaltrust.org/whats-on/thames-lens-exhibition-2025-24218/

Contact: contactethamesfestival.org





Volunteer Centre Hackney

Community Befriending

Our Community Befriending team matches, trains and supports volunteers to provide companionship to isolated residents, either in person or over the phone. If you or someone you know could benefit, contact below.

Contact 020 7241 4443 and ask for Bridget

Or maybe you would like to volunteer as a befriender? Timing is flexible, all you need is an hour a week to check in with a vulnerable member of your community. We will match you with the right person based on interests, language and whether you like to meet in-person, or speak on the phone/online. We will provide training and support.

To apply visit: vchackney.org/services/community-befrienders/

Volunteering

Are you a City resident or employee interested in giving some time to support local causes? Then look no further than Volunteer Centre Hackney! We are an accredited volunteer centre with nearly 30 years' experience supporting organisations with all aspects of volunteering and helping individuals to find the perfect volunteer role. We can also support you to run your own local projects and activities whatever your passion or interest.

Visit: vchackney.org/services/vch-volunteer

Contact: info@vchackney.org | 0207 241 4443 (ask for Jane or Louis)

For more information on funded partners, check our online Resident Services Directory.

Visit: cityoflondon.gov.uk/residentservicesdirectory



CITY LIVING

Keeping our residents up to date

RESIDENT SERVICES DIRECTORY

We've created an online Resident Services Directory to make it easier for you to see what support is available in the City. Whether you're looking for community services, or local facilities, it's a quick and easy way to find the information and contacts you need.

Scan the QR code or visit:

cityoflondon.gov.uk/residentservicesdirectory



Reporting a problem

Residents are encouraged to report any problems through the City of London App.

Scan the QR code or visit:

registers.cityoflondon.gov.uk/applications/RAP/

