

Mayor's Annual Report 2008/09 Summary

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

TACKLING CRIME

QUALITY OF LIFE

A MAYOR FOR ALL LONDONERS



**Greater London Authority
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Mayor's foreword

When I was elected, I promised I would tackle the key issues of importance to Londoners. Amongst my pledges, three were of the highest priority: re-establishing Londoners' trust in the Mayorality by listening to their opinions and stopping the extravagance at City Hall; getting to grips with youth crime and making it a priority; and focusing on improving the quality of life for all Londoners. Lately, the economy has been added to that list.

One of my first acts in office was to abolish The Londoner newspaper, which cost you, the taxpayer, £3 million a year to produce, and to invest the money saved in things that really matter, like trees, parks

and police instead. And we have already seen tangible benefits, with nearly 1,500 trees planted during my first year in office, and by June 2009, 32 hub police teams patrolling bus routes and stations to deter low-level disorder. It was a simple change to make, but one that firmly established my commitment to providing maximum value for money from City Hall.

The clearest demonstration of this commitment – delivered this year – was my decision to freeze the Mayoral share of the council tax.

I've also worked hard to increase accountability. For the first time, all payments made by the GLA over £1,000 are





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regularly published on our website so Londoners can see exactly what we are spending their money on. All the financial interests of my advisers are now published on the website, so people can not only see who they are, but also check whether they're meeting the high standards expected of them. I've increased the number of public meetings as well, so Londoners have more opportunities to question me directly and hold me to account more often.

Perhaps the biggest issue in our city, even with the economy dominating the headlines, is crime. When I stood for this office, I did so against a backdrop of tragic and escalating youth murders. There was a time when it became depressingly familiar to switch on the radio in the morning and hear of yet another loss. It was clear that something had to be done. Simply attributing the problem to generational change and 'hysterical' media coverage was not good enough. That

was the message I took from Londoners, and that is the message that drives me now.

So what have I done about it? My first act was to stiffen up policing through Operation Blunt 2. It was clear that our immediate task was to make it more likely to get caught carrying a knife. Increasing the sensitive use of stop and search powers, as well as knife arches, has so far seen close to over 5,000 knives lifted from our streets. But this was just the first step.

In November I launched 'Time for Action' – my plan to tackle the crucial



factors contributing to youth violence – which calls upon the multitude of agencies and organisations that care about dealing with this issue to work together more effectively. The cornerstones of the strategy are the reduction



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of repeat offending through education for first time offenders, reducing truancy, and providing more opportunities for sport. We are pressing ahead to deliver all these aims. The education programme for first time offenders has already begun, and I've committed to providing £15.5m over three years to boost grassroots sport.

The glue that binds this together, the holy grail of government, some might call it, is overall quality of life. Easy to say, harder to define – but encompassing areas as diverse as transport infrastructure, the affordability and quality of housing and the look and feel of public open spaces, which, taken together, are crucial to improving the experience of living in our city. All these areas are important, but for me, it is about improving the quality of and access to green spaces. Every neighbourhood should have a brilliant green space to enjoy, a place to go to briefly step off the speed-of-light urban merry-go-round, which is why I am investing to improve 11 parks across London and planting more street trees.

As the UK battles with recession, I am determined that London will lead the charge out of it. From my office window, I can see



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both the City of London and Canary Wharf with their towering buildings; once symbols of financial might, now losing their shine in the eyes of many. But, unlike most, I have no desire to tear those symbols down. I want to see them shine again, to generate the wealth our city and country needs to get out of this fix. Albeit generating wealth more responsibly than in the past, and generating significantly less in bonuses.

So what am I doing to get London's economy going? We're investing heavily in promoting London abroad. A large chunk of our economy and masses of jobs rely on the tourist dollar, and I will use the Mayoral megaphone to

increase their numbers. I've also launched my Economic Recovery Action Plan, an exercise that looked at everything the GLA group does and asked one simple question; how can we use all the levers at our disposal to get London prospering again? As a result and in response to this question,

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we are cutting the time it takes us to pay invoices; we are providing help and advice to struggling small businesses; we have suspended onerous environmental regulations on small vans (many owned by small businesses); we have given half price bus travel to those on Jobseeker's Allowance and we have delivered an

investment package to kick-start stalled housing developments.

It's been a tremendous year, where we've delivered several key pledges, and firmly set the direction for the years to come. I will continue to lead the charge on pulling London through the recession, and maintain my laser-

like focus on tackling crime and improving quality of life. We also have the challenges – and opportunities – of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Crossrail and Tube upgrades. Still to come, among other things, is a fantastic new bike hire scheme in central London and a trilogy of new Mayoral strategies –

the revised London Plan, Economic Development Strategy and Transport Strategy.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Strengthening London's economy is more important than ever in these challenging economic times. With unemployment continuing to rise, it is likely that there will be a sustained period of contraction before the upturn. The Mayor is committed to ensuring the GLA group does all

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it can to support the London economy and help rebuild confidence, while also continuing to address longer term issues. In particular, continuing essential investment in improved transport infrastructure and in improving Londoners skills and employability. As well as a number of pan-London projects and initiatives designed to strengthen the economy, the Mayor has delivered his promise of freezing the Mayor's council tax precept, ensuring financial benefits for individual households.



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KEY ACTIONS

- For the first time since the GLA's inception in 2000, the Mayor has **frozen the council** tax precept to provide financial relief for Londoners struggling to make ends meet. This has been achieved by identifying savings of **nearly £101m** in the budgets for the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the GLA itself.
- The Mayor published his Economic Recovery Plan in response to the economic downturn, which included a £24.3 million package from the LDA **to support small businesses**.
- Phase 2 of the East London Line, a significant infrastructure project, which will **complete the London orbital train route and ease congestion**, has been secured, with a £64 million funding deal the Department for Transport.
- The Mayor has secured **major investment in the housing market** with £5 billion going into affordable housing over the next three years, £285 million into improving existing housing stock over the next two years, and the First Steps programme to help Londoners get onto the housing ladder.

TACKLING CRIME

Reducing crime and the fear of crime is one of the Mayor's foremost concerns. It is central to his manifesto and reflects Londoners' concerns about this issue at a time when public confidence in addressing youth violence and crime on public transport was beginning to wane. Prominent amongst the Mayor's pledges were commitments to address youth crime, violence against women and transport crime. However, amongst a range

of other initiatives, action against dangerous dogs and the manifesto commitment on crime mapping were also delivered during the past year.

The Mayor further emphasised the central importance of the issue of crime in London by becoming Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority and by appointing a Deputy Mayor specifically for policing and crime, Kit Malthouse.

From 1 June 2008
**drinking
alcohol is
prohibited
on public
transport**

Making everyone's
journey more pleasant



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KEY ACTIONS

- Fifty additional British Transport Police (BTP) officers will **patrol trains and stations in outer London**. Transport for London will be investing more than £6 million during the next two years to fund the extra officers to clamp down on low-level crime and disorder at outer London rail stations.
- New hub teams – comprising eight officers – have been deployed at a variety of interchanges across the capital to help **reduce crime on public transport**. A major recruitment and training programme was carried out and all 32 teams will be rolled out by June 2009.
- Operation Blunt 2, launched by the Mayor in May, has seen 275,000 stops/searches carried out, leading to 9,600 arrests and over **5,000 knives, guns and other weapons seized**.
- A new Violence against Women Strategy is being drafted and the Mayor has secured **£700,000 funding for rape crisis centres** over the next three years.
- The **ban on drinking from or carrying an open container of alcohol on the transport network** came into effect in June, and has already had a positive impact on the number of instances of drunken behaviour on the network.

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QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life is a concept relating to the degree of wellbeing experienced by an individual or group of people both now and in the future. There are a number of aspects to quality of life, including health, social, economic and environmental factors. The GLA aims to improve local quality of life for Londoners in a number of ways including:

- improving transport. Given the number of people who travel into, through or out of

London daily, be it for business or pleasure, the quality and convenience of the transport system is paramount to their quality of life

- improving the standard, accessibility and affordability of housing to benefit first-time buyers, families and those in social housing
- improving access to green spaces, which has shown to have not only positive physical benefits in encouraging exercise, but also psychological ones in helping to lower stress levels
- improving the quality and accessibility of the physical environments in which people live, work, and play



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- more broadly, delivery on the Mayor's wider duty on sustainable development ensures that London contributes to improvements in quality of life for everyone both now and in the future.

KEY ACTIONS

- A successful design competition for the **new bus for London** was held. Talks have started with potential manufacturers to put the new bus on London's streets by 2011.
- New **air-conditioned underground trains** were unveiled, which will be rolled out on the sub-surface Tube lines from 2010.
- The **Freedom Pass was extended to 24 hours** and free travel secured for war veterans and their families. Reduced fares for those on Income Support have also come into effect.
- The Mayor's Fund was established in June 2008 with the Mayor as the Patron to focus on strategic **action on child poverty** in London.
- £2 million has been awarded to Burgess Park in Southwark for a complete makeover, with **ten further parks benefiting** from grants of up to £400,00 to improve facilities.
- 1,500 of the **10,000 street trees** pledged by the Mayor were planted in 2008/09.

The Mayor's election manifesto pledges focused on making the Mayoralty more accountable, improving relations with local government, reinstating Londoners' trust in City Hall and giving them a greater say in the way the city is run. The Mayor also wants to see a

more inclusive, cohesive and equitable London, not one that continues to be divided by huge inequalities in income, employment and quality of life.



KEY ACTIONS

- The Mayor is **committed to representing all Londoners**, in all 32 boroughs and the City of London. To enable **outer London to have a greater voice**, he set up the Outer London Commission to secure closer working arrangements with businesses, local government and other stakeholders with interests in London's suburban centres.
- Three public meetings were held during the course of the year, including one dedicated to the issue of Heathrow expansion, giving Londoners a chance to **question the Mayor directly**.
- Payments made by the GLA and LDA of over £1,000 have been **made public** on the authority's website, increasing financial transparency.
- The public now have access to the Mayoral advisers' declarations of interest on the GLA website, **increasing their accountability to the public**.
- A **Forensic Audit Panel** was set up and delivered its report within the 100 days stipulated by the Mayor. The LDA and GLA are now working on the recommendations issued.
- London's **cultural life continues to thrive** with an ongoing programme of events, but with a keener focus on the environment, with the Mayor producing Green Guides for theatre and music, with film due in May 2009.

Other formats and languages

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Chinese

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Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có văn bản tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa chỉ dưới đây.

Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείσθε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde hazırlanmış bir nüshasını edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki telefon numarasını arayınız veya adrese başvurunuz.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये पते पर संपर्क करें

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি (কপি) চান, তা হলে नीचेের ফোন নম্বরে বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان أدناه

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.