

Creative Climate Cities Profile  
LONDON



GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

1,572 sq. km



POPULATION

8.9 million



GDP

US \$565,000  
(PPP) million

CITY STRATEGY LINKS

London Environmental Strategy

Culture Strategy for London



# Welcome to London



## Culture Fact

London is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations with over 30 million visitors per year. Of these, four out of five say that their main reason for visiting is 'culture and heritage'<sup>1</sup>.



## Climate Fact

In 2016, London emitted 30.9 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. This is a 32 per cent reduction on 1990 levels<sup>2</sup>; its "extremely serious" and "serious" climate risks include: heat waves, river flooding, flash flooding and drought<sup>3</sup>.

## Introduction

One of the largest urban spaces in Europe, London is a green city – between 51-54% of its surface is vegetation, rivers and still waters. The River Thames, curving through the city to the sea, has not been straightened and confined as many city rivers have, and its banks skirt streets, parks, quays, and many of London's most historic buildings. In the air you will see parakeets, sparrow hawks, peregrine falcons, herons and egrets, and mammals such as foxes, bats, badgers and deer, which share the city with nearly 9 million human inhabitants. London also has a global reputation for creativity and culture. Its creative economy employs one in six Londoners, contributing £52.2 billion to the economy<sup>4</sup>. London is a European tech hub and also has high levels of investment not only in low-carbon technology but also goods and services.

## Environmental Ambition

Over the last few years, the creative community has become increasingly engaged with sustainability, demonstrating its commitment and developing creative solutions, from design and innovation to civic engagement through the arts. These initiatives – alongside public concern about poor air quality, waste, and green space – are helping to position sustainability as a priority for the city's development. The Mayor launched two new strategies in 2018, the Environment Strategy and the Culture Strategy. In the spirit of innovation and collaboration, a key commitment within London's new cultural strategy is to address – rather than simply reflect – the capital's social, economic and environmental challenges. Under the heading 'A Greener, Cleaner City', London's creative industries are celebrated as leaders in supporting a sustainable and circular economy that values resources and promotes material reuse and recycling over disposal.

<sup>1</sup>World Cities Culture Forum. <http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/cities/london>

<sup>2</sup>London Datastore. <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/leggi>

<sup>3</sup>C40. <http://www.c40.org/cities/london>

<sup>4</sup>Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. [Read more.](#)



# Highlights



1

## Creative Programmes & Campaigns

The Mayor of London, the British Fashion Council and Dame Vivienne Westwood have joined forces for the 'Switch to Green' campaign, asking the fashion industry to switch to a green energy supplier or tariff by 2020.

2

## Resources & Support

The Mayor's Energy Efficiency Fund (MEEF) provides small businesses and public buildings, including museums and libraries, the opportunity to become more efficient through a £500 million low-carbon investment fund.

3

## Partnerships & Innovation

In partnership with Thames Water, the Mayor is installing over 100 water fountains across London, including cultural institutions, reducing the need for single use plastic water bottles.

4

## Policy & Strategy

The Mayor has identified four priorities for the culture strategy, including: 'Culture and Good Growth – supporting, saving and sustaining cultural places and spaces'. This includes interventions to support environmental sustainability in the creative industries.

# Connecting Creative & Climate Action in London

## 1. Creative Programmes & Campaigns

**Creative content and activities that engage audiences on themes of climate and the environment**

- **Illuminated River** is a permanent art commission to light central London bridges along the river Thames. The newly lit riverside pathways will replace existing lighting with the latest energy-efficient lighting technologies, making them more environmentally sustainable and enhancing the safety of the area. London Wildlife Trust undertook a Breeding Bird Assessment covering 8.4 kilometres of the River Thames to ensure the project would not be a disturbance to breeding birds.
- The Mayor of London, the British Fashion Council and Dame Vivienne Westwood have joined forces for a **'Switch to Green'** campaign. It asks the fashion industry to take action by switching their premises to a green energy supplier or tariff by 2020. This campaign has been developed to align with the Mayor's vision to make **London a zero-carbon city by 2050**. At its launch, 'Switch to Green' was supported by major designers and retailers including Marks and Spencer, Selfridges and Stella McCartney.
- Film London, the Mayor's strategic agency for film, is partnering with Good Energy and the film industry to undertake a feasibility study and pilot project to supply renewable energy at specific bases for film and TV productions.
- The National Park City Festival in July 2019 will mark London's confirmation as the world's first National Park City encouraging Londoners to explore the outdoor environment through culture, sport and community activities. Partners include the National Theatre, Open City and the National Trust.

## 2. Resources & Support

**Investment, training and materials that support environmental knowledge and practical action**

- The **Mayor's Energy Efficiency Fund (MEEF)** provides small businesses and public buildings, including museums and libraries, the opportunity to become more energy efficient through a £500 million investment fund. MEEF provides flexible and competitive finance and offers a wide range of funding options to deliver new low-carbon technology or upgrade existing low carbon infrastructure.
- The Mayor has created investment funds which aim to address several of its strategic goals simultaneously, for example, the **Good Growth Fund** is a £70 million regeneration programme to support growth, sustainability and community development in London. Many cultural and creative businesses are eligible and encouraged to apply for mayoral support which could make cultural venues more energy efficient, e.g. the **RE:FIT scheme** which is part of the wider £34 million **Energy for Londoners** programme.
- The Mayor's **Entrepreneur Award** engages university students on generating low-carbon and circular economy market opportunities. Funded by Citi Foundation, the Award invites students to compete for £20,000 by inventing and innovating products and services that positively impact the environment. In 2019, the Mayor will expand the programme to include three awards focussed on the environment, technology and the creative industries.



### 3. Partnerships & Innovation

**Diverse disciplines and communities sharing and co-developing ideas and resources that accelerate environmental action**

- London's Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE, chairs the [World Cities Culture Forum](#), a network of global cities committed to sharing best practice on cultural policy and practice. World Cities Culture Forum has selected 'culture and climate change' as a strategic priority to engage its membership and is working with Julie's Bicycle and C40 to provide resources (see the '[Culture and Climate Change](#)' [Handbook](#)) and leadership through the Creative Climate Cities support programme. Under the Mayor's leadership, London also plays a leading role in the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, sharing learnings and best practice from its work to tackle climate change – including initiatives implemented within the culture sector.
- As part of World Cities Culture Forum's Leadership Exchange programme, London partnered with New York's Department of Cultural Affairs to visit the '[Materials for the Arts](#)' site and consider its replication within London. Materials for the Arts works with creative organisations and businesses to collect unwanted goods that are reused for free by not-for-profit creative and educational organisations.
- In partnership with Thames Water, the Mayor is installing over one hundred water fountains across London, reducing the need for single use plastic water bottles. The Mayor is encouraging cultural institutions to sign up to [Refill London](#) and offer free tap water to the public.

### 4. Policy & Strategy

**Guiding policy and strategy frameworks that drive climate and environmental action, investment and accountability**

- The Mayor of London has identified four priorities for the Culture Strategy, one of which is: 'Culture and Good Growth – supporting, saving and sustaining cultural places and spaces'. Within this priority sits 'A Greener, Cleaner City' – the strand which describes various interventions to support the creative industries in reducing their impacts and driving sustainable innovation; topics include renewable energy, nature, water, plastic, sustainable fashion and film.
- London's [Environment Strategy](#) Policy 5.1.2 commits to 'Protect, conserve, and enhance the landscape and cultural value of London's green infrastructure'. The strategy profiles prominent cultural venues and consortia, for example, [Lyric Hammersmith](#) and [London Theatre Consortium](#) which both develop and share good practice, including environmental initiatives.
- The Greater London Authority recognises its duty to demonstrate leadership in the field of event sustainability management by conducting its event related activities in line with its [Event Sustainability Policy](#). The priority areas identified within the Policy include: monitoring energy and waste; reducing carbon emissions, waste and environmental impact of transport use; and promoting energy efficiency, clean technology and sustainable food options. The Event Sustainability Policy is shared with the event production companies (which are required to implement and report on actions within the policy) and other stakeholders such as community groups, sponsors, and programme and media partners.

# What Next?

## Spotlight

### SECTOR ROUNDTABLES

The Greater London Authority appointed **Julie's Bicycle** – an international expert in convening arts and culture on climate and environmental action – to lead a series of industry roundtables. The roundtables were developed to research and recommend ways for London's culture and creative industries to support the Mayor of London's Environment Strategy.

Roundtables focussed on three topics: reducing and removing single-use plastics from cultural institutions; switching to 100% green energy; and circular economy approaches to support sustainable production. A report consolidated the research, good practice and recommended next steps.

A number of opportunities have been identified:

1. **Share good practice**

As a first step to implementing the Culture Strategy's commitment to "Advocate for the creative industries to become circular, sustainable and 'go green'" (Policy 10), the Mayor will work with the creative sector, sharing practical resources and good practice case studies, through the London Waste and Recycling Board's Circular London programme.

2. **Showcase and celebrate**

Work with the [Museum of London](#) and [East Bank](#) (major new cultural developments) to position these developments as examples of environmental best practice in both building design and operations, as well as environmental policy and advocacy.

3. **Develop implementation plans**

Develop the implementation plans, partnerships and resources needed to deliver the Culture Strategy and its environmental ambitions.

4. **Collaborate**

Schedule regular meetings between departments for culture and the environment to develop shared projects. For example, the culture team could support the environment team in specific initiatives such as London Flood Awareness Week, National Park City Festival and London Climate Action Week, ensuring take up by London's culture sector.

5. **Update events policy**

Update the Greater London Authority Events Sustainability Policy to align with its recently updated [Responsible Procurement Policy](#) and mainstream the new sustainability approach to all relevant events.

With special thanks to:

Jackie McNerney, Senior Manager,  
Culture and Creative Industries

**MAYOR OF LONDON**



Julie's Bicycle  
SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

—  
**BOP**  
Consulting