

Leisure walking plan

Our ambitions to enhance, improve and expand opportunities to walk for pleasure in London

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Foreword

Our Walking action plan, published in 2018, committed to make London the world's most walkable city

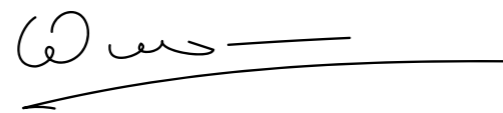
Our 2018 plan set the ambition for walking to be the easiest, most enjoyable and attractive means of travel for all short trips. This plan takes us one step further to achieving that ambition by setting out how we will create the world's largest, greenest and most accessible leisure walking network, and enable and encourage Londoners to walk more.

As Londoners grapple with the impacts of climate change, a child inactivity crisis and the spiralling cost of living, it is vital that we do more to improve London's leisure walking network and provide people with an affordable and easy way to maintain good health, and physical and mental wellbeing while protecting and improving the environment.

London is already a great place to experience on foot, with the Walk London Network being one of the largest leisure walking networks of any city in the world. This network links parks, waterways and historic sites, allowing people to both touch nature in the city and to experience London's amazing historical and architectural heritage. However, we know that barriers exist which are preventing too many Londoners from using the network and reaping the benefits of leisure walking.

This action plan seeks to enhance and improve the Walk London Network, setting out a series of improvements that can be delivered in the short and medium term. This includes auditing the network, upgrading existing routes to make them more accessible, developing new routes to better connect communities with green spaces, and greater promotion of the vast array of leisure walking opportunities across London.

We cannot achieve this goal on our own; it will require coordinated action across the 32 London boroughs and City of London, as well as a range of partners. We are establishing a new Leisure Walking Forum to bring all the right partners together to enhance and expand the Walk London Network. In doing so we will improve the health of Londoners, reduce health inequalities, increase access to green and blue space and make London a much more walkable city.

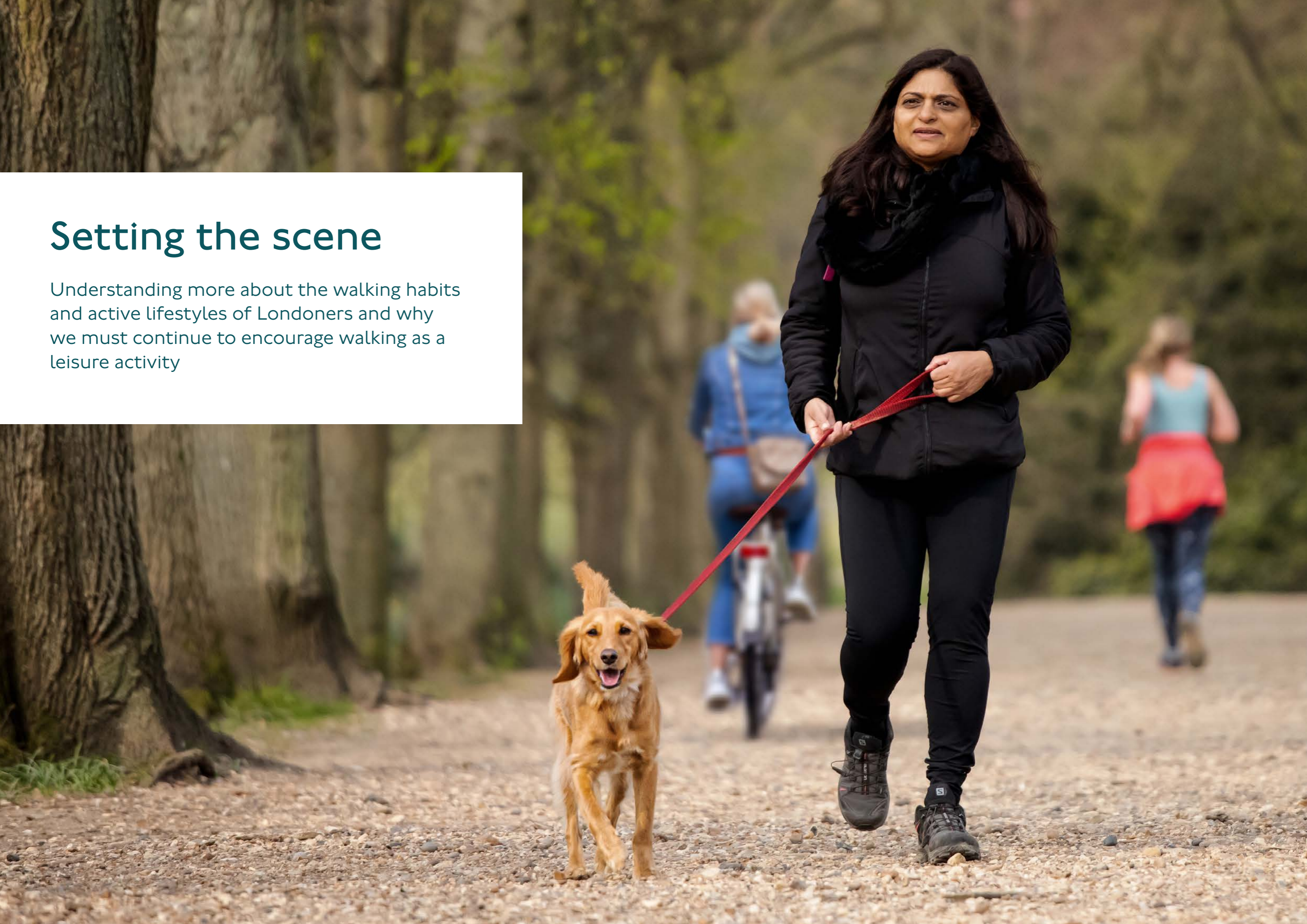


Will Norman
London's Walking and
Cycling Commissioner



Setting the scene

Understanding more about the walking habits and active lifestyles of Londoners and why we must continue to encourage walking as a leisure activity



Background to leisure walking

Walking for pleasure, as opposed to practical purposes, offers rich rewards like gentle exercise, improved health, a change of mindset and the chance to explore

For the purpose of this document, leisure walking includes those who move on wheels – using a wheelchair or mobility scooter – or walk with wheels, such as a pushchair or walking frame. It includes everyone who goes out on their feet or wheels for pleasure, and for the benefit of their physical and mental health. They may be jogging, striding solo, playfully exploring or sociably ambling.

Leisure walking trips are often also purposeful trips, for example, a walk from school to an after-school activity through a green space. A purposeful journey can also be an enjoyable one.

Leisure walking categories

Urban

This is leisure walking on our streets and in our urban spaces



Local

Pleasant ways to walk from your door to and between local green spaces



Adventure

Longer walks on off-street paths and trails



57%

of inner London residents want more space dedicated to walking*

While our 2018 Walking action plan focused on urban walking, this plan focuses more on local and adventure walking.

Our vision

We will create the world's largest, greenest and most accessible leisure walking network in London. This plan sets out our actions to enhance and expand leisure walking routes and better connect London's communities with green spaces.

* centreforlondon.org



Our plan aligns with the Mayor's ambitions for walking in London

Aligning our plans

This action plan supports the Mayor's manifesto commitment to develop a new plan for connecting parks and green spaces with local communities, making sure these green routes are accessible for everyone, including improving existing walking routes, such as the London Outer Orbital Path (LOOP) and Capital Ring. It also supports the commitment that all Londoners should live within 10 minutes' walk of green space.



1.1million

more walking trips per day by 2024 compared to 2016/17 levels is the target set in our 2018 Walking action plan

This document closely aligns with other strategies and plans, including The London Plan, The Health Inequalities Strategy, The London Environment Strategy, and Inclusive London. It follows a number of proposals in the Mayor's Transport Strategy:

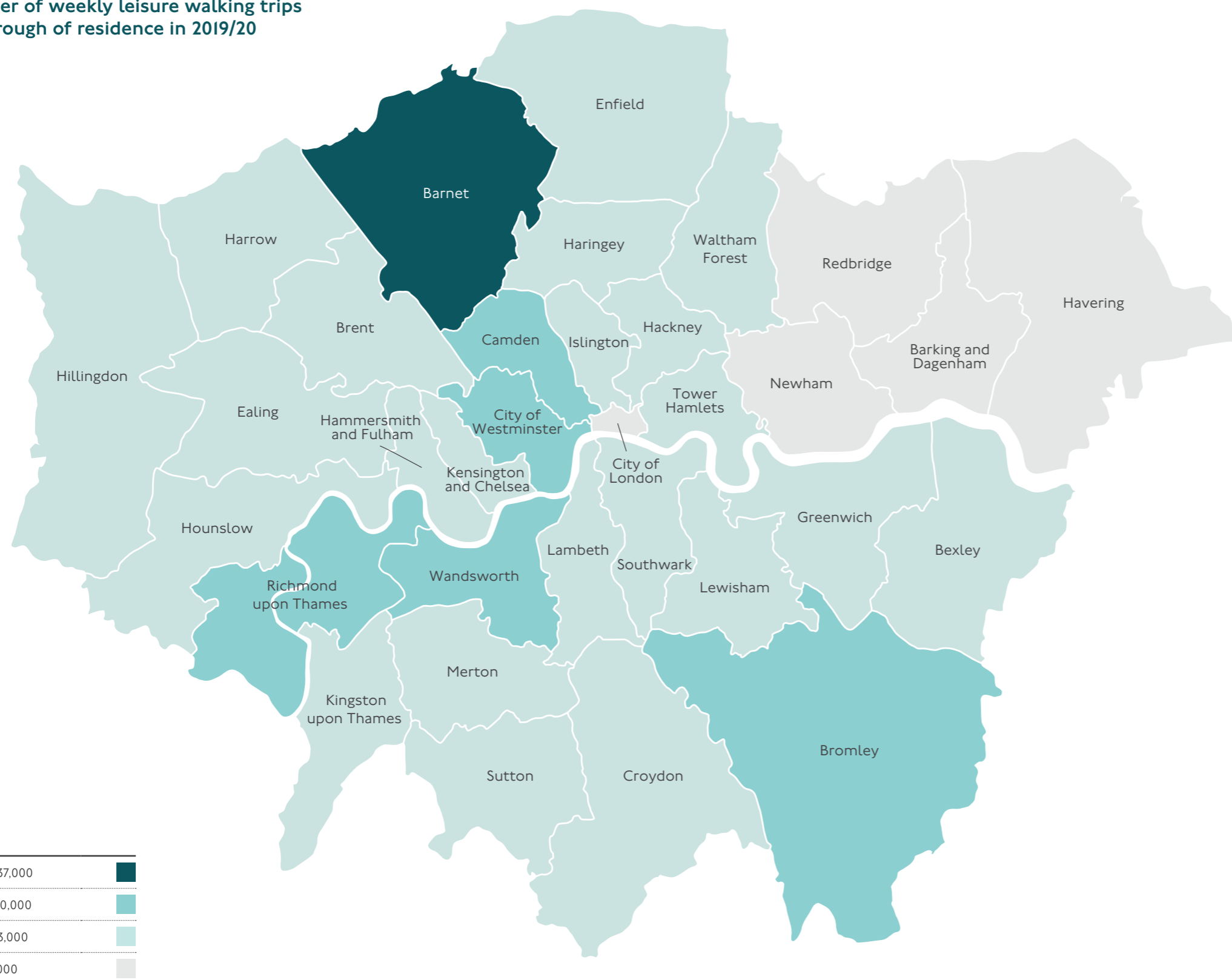
Proposal 2

Signals a commitment to make London a city where people choose to walk and cycle more often by improving street environments, making it easier for everyone to get around on foot and by cycle, and promoting the benefits of active travel.

Proposal 4

States that the Mayor, through TfL and the boroughs, and working with other stakeholders, will protect, improve and promote the Walk London network and create new leisure walking routes.

Number of weekly leisure walking trips by borough of residence in 2019/20



Key

180,000-237,000	
123,000-180,000	
66,000-123,000	
8,342-66,000	

There is some correlation between the popularity of leisure walking in a borough and the amount of that borough's green space, but it is not consistent.

This suggests that other factors affect people's propensity to walk for pleasure, such as awareness of the space, the quality of that space, the prevalence of motor traffic, the accessibility of that space from people's homes, and potentially many other environmental, cultural, demographic and socioeconomic factors.



27%

fewer sick days taken by people who walk regularly or are physically active compared with those who don't*

£1.7bn

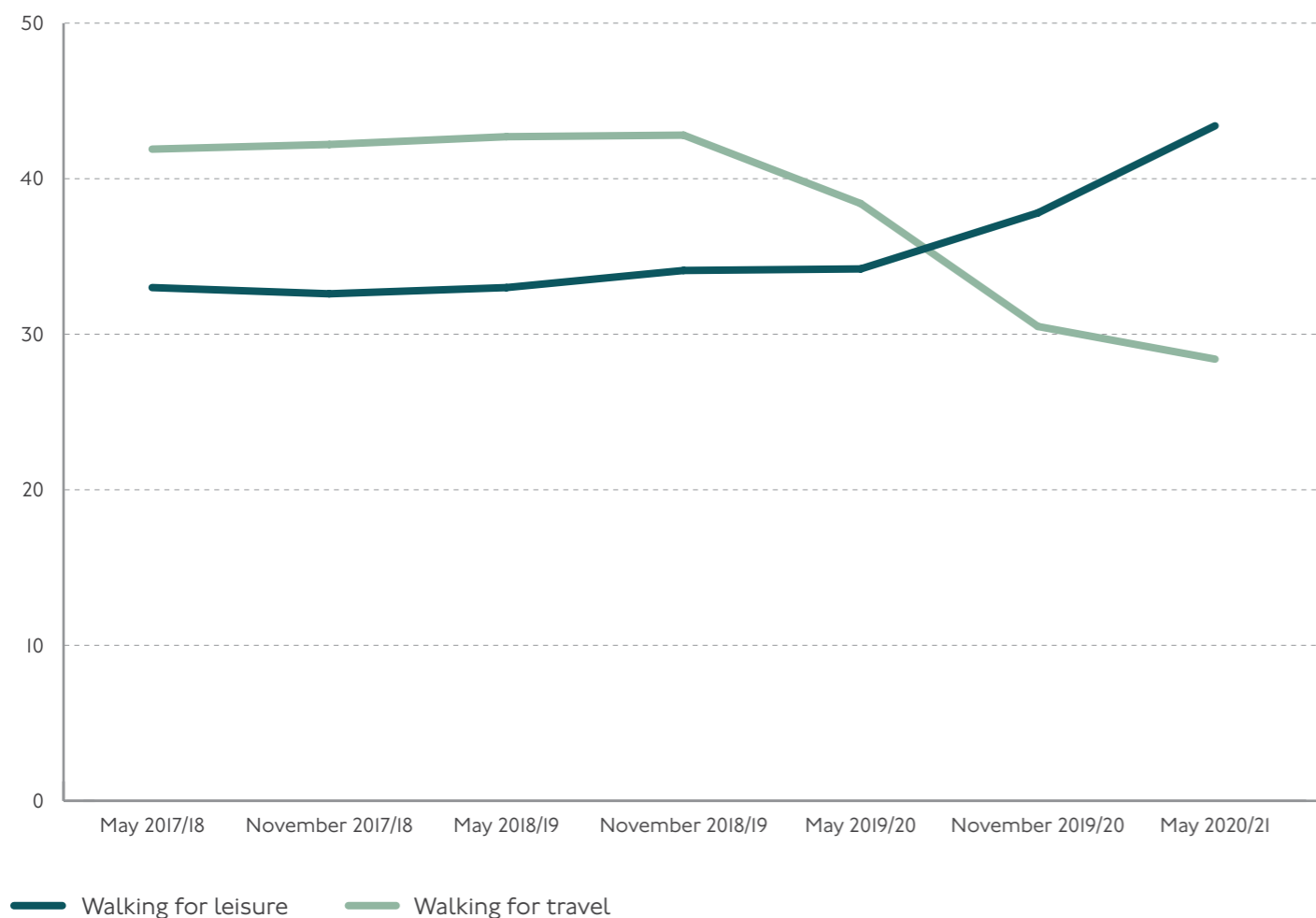
savings to the NHS in treatment costs over 25 years if every Londoner walked for 20 minutes each day**



* British Heart Foundation

** Sport England

Percentage of Londoners walking for travel or leisure in the last 28 days between 2017 and 2021 (%)*

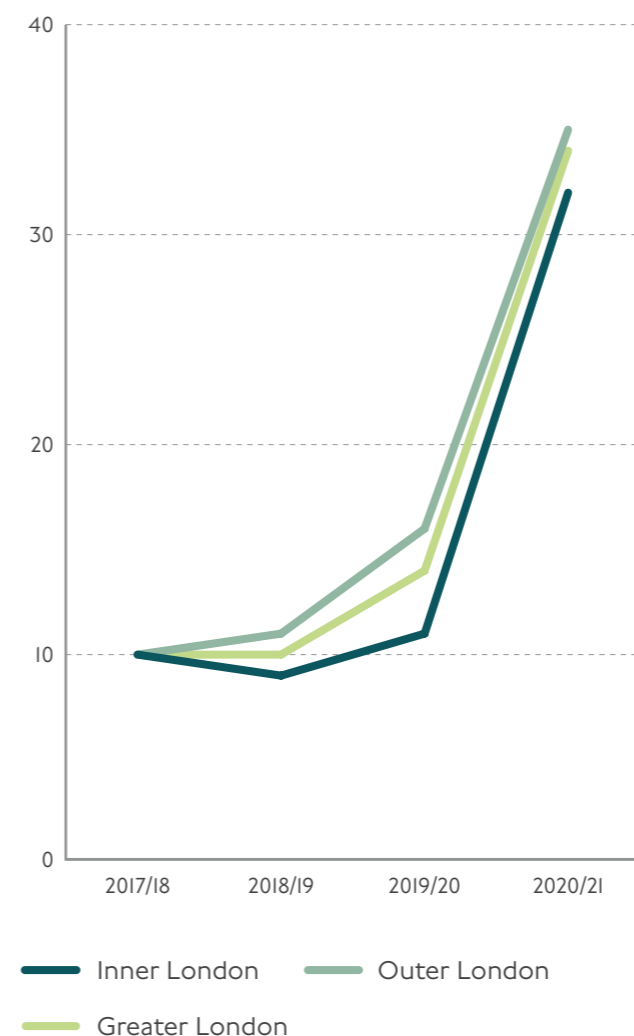


According to a customer survey, Londoners walk for the enjoyment and health benefits. Older people and women cite exercise and seeing the sights as the most enjoyable aspects of walking.

People who walk for leisure became more diverse during the pandemic. The biggest increase in leisure walking was among Black and Asian (excluding Chinese) ethnicities, who had the lowest baseline participation in leisure walking. Despite a participation gap of 17 per cent, leisure walking increased equally among people with and without disability in 2020 during the pandemic.

* Sport England

Percentage of walking trips made for enjoyment or leisure (%)*



Leisure walking did not reduce following the lifting of lockdown restrictions in 2020 and 2021, suggesting the popularity of leisure walking is set to continue.

In a survey from January 2022, 82 per cent of Londoners said they had taken a walk for leisure in the preceding few months, a two per cent reduction from the same period in 2021. The largest decrease (eight per cent) was among people aged 65 and over. The reduction was lower among people of lower socioeconomic status (four per cent) than those of a higher socioeconomic status (seven per cent).

While respondents who don't identify as being from an ethnic minority reported reduced leisure walking (down four per cent to 82 per cent), leisure walking among respondents from ethnic minorities stayed steady at 81 per cent. Leisure walking among people with disabilities increased by four per cent to 74 per cent, compared to a three per cent drop among people who have no disabilities. To encourage this continued growth in leisure walking, we need to maintain and enhance routes and parks and attract more diverse people to use them.

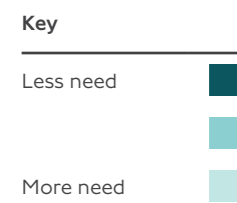
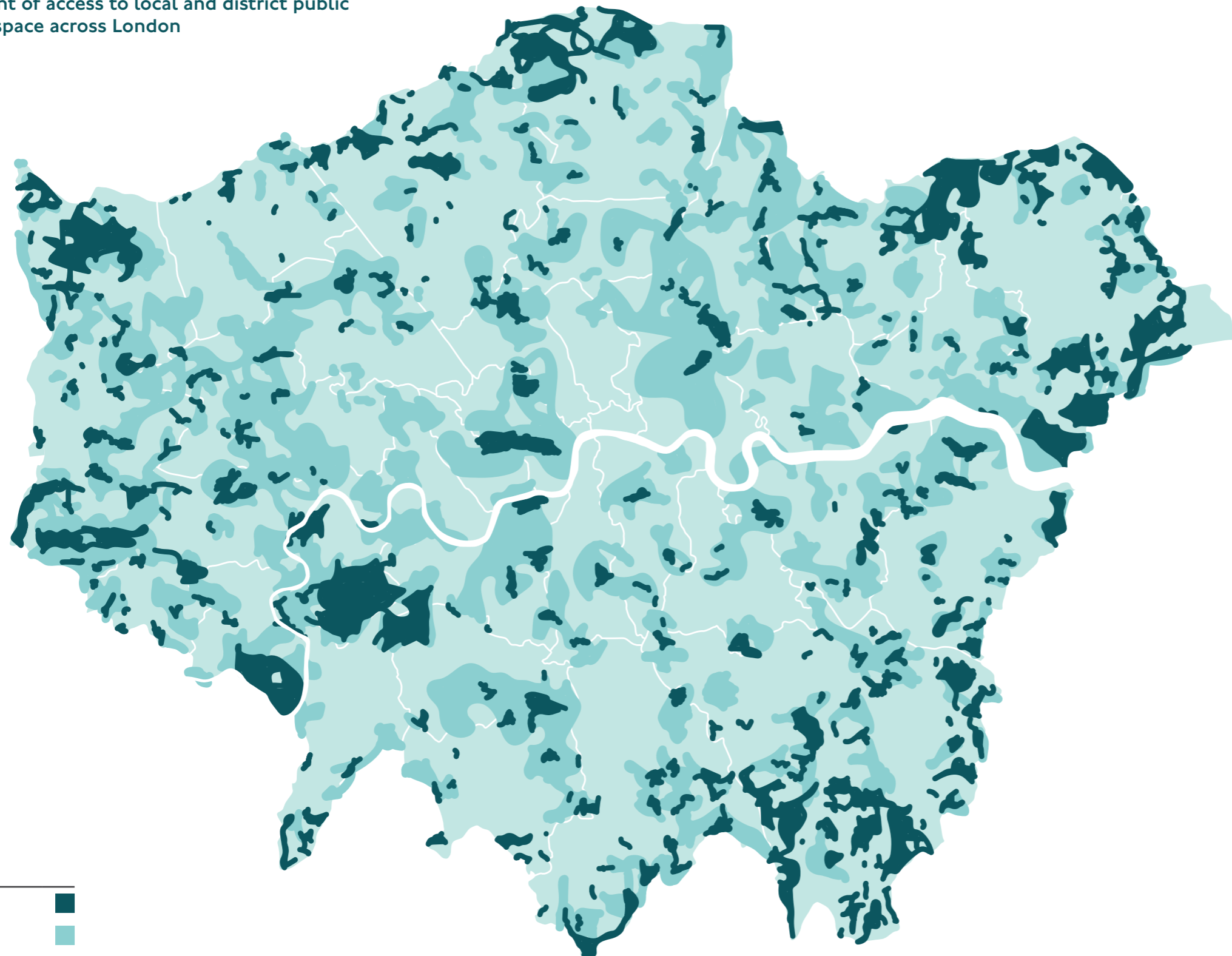


16%
reduction in Londoners walking for travel compared with before the pandemic

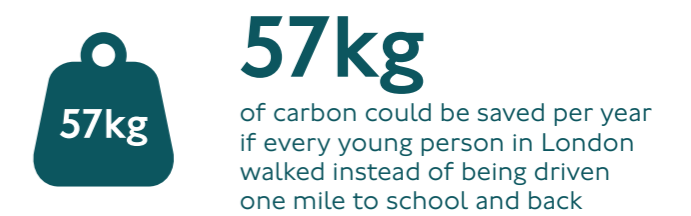


10%
increase in Londoners walking for pleasure compared with before the pandemic

Amount of access to local and district public open space across London

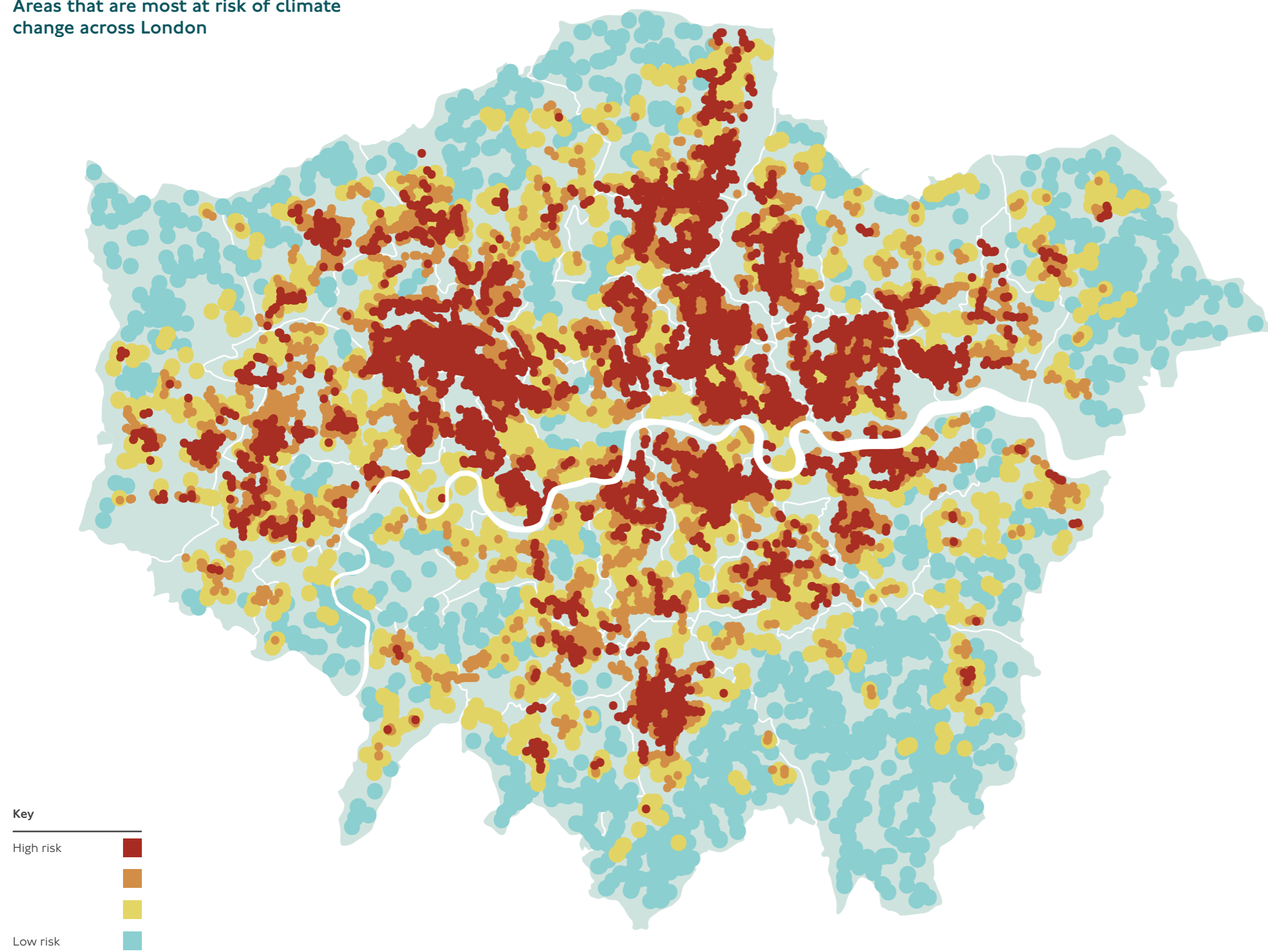


One of the factors affecting people's leisure walking habits is access to green space. This is measured by the combined distance from homes to local, small open spaces and metropolitan parks.



* centreforlondon.org

Areas that are most at risk of climate change across London



As well as creating attractive environments for walking, making streets greener helps combat climate change by making them cooler. London is experiencing hotter and drier summers that are further impacted by the urban heat island effect, where pavements and buildings absorb and retain heat more, meaning that at the height of summer people will be much less likely to go outside to walk and enjoy nature.

We can measure an area's vulnerability to climate change impacts, such as flooding or heatwaves, as well as social factors that affect their ability to respond to extreme events. Investment in climate change adaptation measures will help to mitigate this exposure.



10°C

warmer in urban areas than in rural areas with trees*

The Mayor's Grow Back Greener 2022 grant programme will provide £2m to improve access to high-quality green space for Londoners in areas with the poorest access and highest climate vulnerability, as well as a tree planting programme.

* Greater London Authority

The Walk London Network

Our key walking network in the capital, which will form the focus of our work to encourage leisure walking

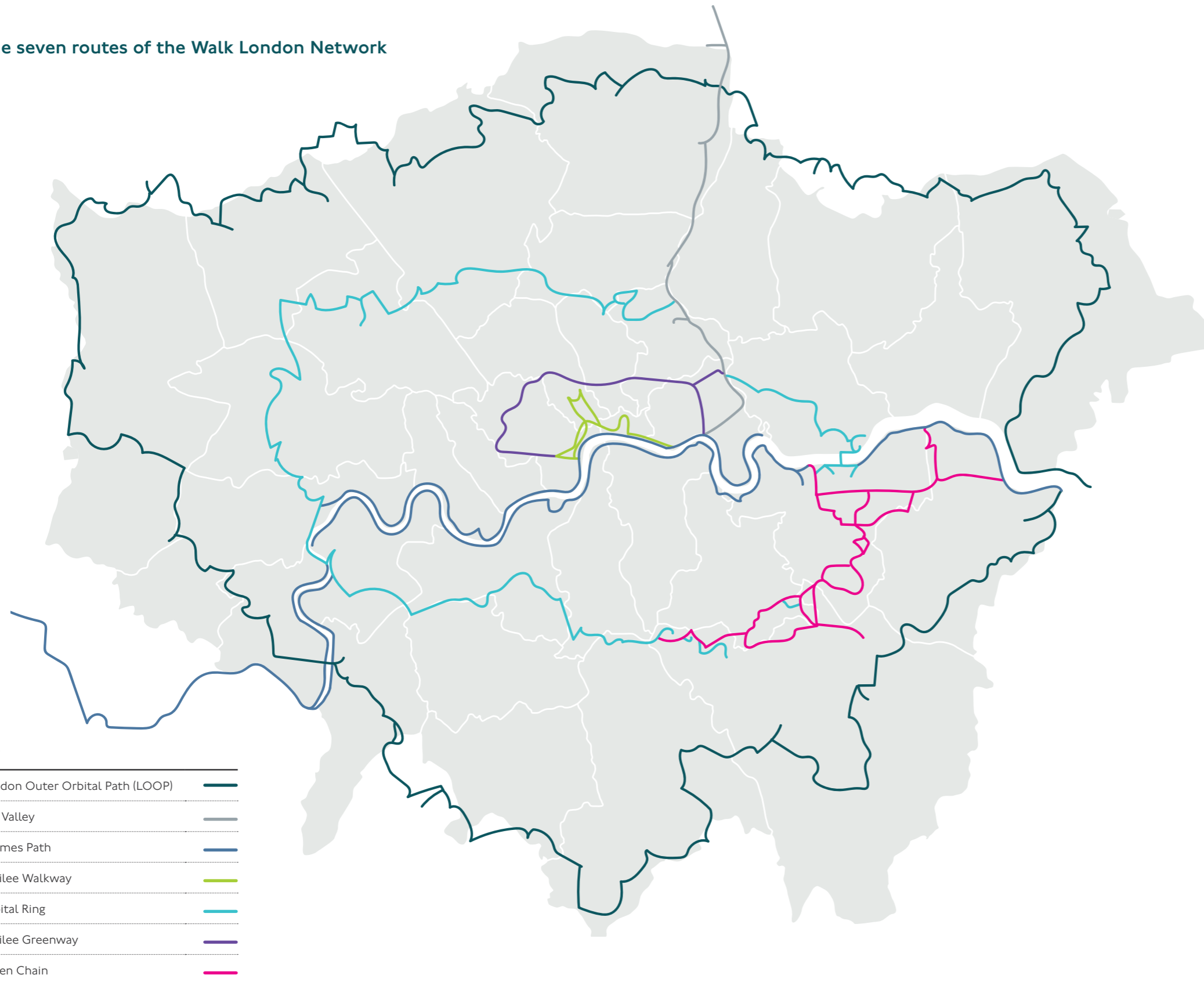
The Walk London Network is one of the largest walking networks of any city in the world. It comprises seven routes split into sections: the London LOOP, which encircles most of London; the Capital Ring, which loops around much of inner London, the Jubilee Greenway around central London; the Jubilee Walk; the Lee Valley walk; the Green Chain in south-east London; and the London sections of the Thames Path National Trail.

The creation of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in 2012 led to some investment in parts of the network, but since then there are sections where paths and signage have deteriorated. The overall standard is likely to decline without investment and coordination.



Our work will encourage people to walk for pleasure

The seven routes of the Walk London Network



Partner involvement

There are a number of partners involved in the Walk London Network, including London boroughs, who own a lot of the land and are responsible for maintaining public rights of way; developers, who must ensure development proposals integrate with the network and green spaces; Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which bolster local economies by making urban areas greener and more pleasant for people to visit; and local communities, who can encourage walking groups and activities.



32

London boroughs that The Walk London Network passes through

Principles for maintaining and expanding the Walk London Network



We must consider seven key principles that focus on the needs of all pedestrians when designing the walking network. These principles should be used throughout the planning and design process to ensure that we provide a consistently high-quality walking environment.



Safe

Public spaces should be safe at all times. Routes should be well lit, safe in extreme weather with good drainage, and avoid creating enclosed places.



Connected

This is how well it links with other routes. Canals, rivers, major roads and railways can create barriers, so these should be broken up to enable free movement of walkers.



Inclusive

Recognising the diverse range of people who live, work and visit London. It should be fully accessible, with level surfaces, wide paths and gentle slopes.



Legible

The route should be easy to recognise and navigate. Signs can help people reach destinations and provide extra information such as local history and biodiversity.



Comfortable

This is sufficiently wide paths, open spaces and seating areas, alternative routes and amenities such as free drinking water, toilet facilities and shade.



Attractive

We are naturally drawn to places that are vibrant, appeal to the senses, and inspire wonder or calm. Maintenance is one of the most significant factors affecting attractiveness, so quality walking routes should be designed to minimise maintenance.



Direct

A good walking route should be fairly direct and not too hilly.

The 10 Healthy Streets Indicators



Source: Lucy Saunders

- 01 Pedestrians from all walks of life
- 02 People choose to walk, cycle and use public transport
- 03 Clean air
- 04 People feel safe
- 05 Not too noisy
- 06 Easy to cross
- 07 Places to stop and rest
- 08 Shade and shelter
- 09 People feel relaxed
- 10 Things to see and do

Principles for design and maintenance

As well as considering the pedestrian design principles at the planning stage, designers should also consider the 10 evidence-based, qualitative Healthy Streets Indicators that focus on the experience of using the street, walking route or place.

We have adopted the Healthy Streets Approach to improve people's walking experience by putting them at the centre of the planning process. It focuses on creating streets that are pleasant, safe and attractive, where noise, air pollution, lack of accessibility, seating and shelter are not barriers that prevent people from getting out and about.

These indicators are interdependent and are all of equal importance. Improvements against these indicators will help create a better city for more people to live and work in. The Healthy Streets Indicators are standards that apply to both off-street walking paths and spaces, as well as streets in urban environments.

Other walking opportunities

While the focus of this plan is on the Walk London Network, there are also many other walking routes to explore and enjoy in London. These spaces provide opportunities for recreation, including walking, play and sport, health and wellbeing, attractive and safe travel routes, nature appreciation, education and heritage and community events. They support eco-systems, helping with water management and air cooling, and are crucial for wildlife and biodiversity.

Borough walking and green route networks

These are an important part of London's leisure walking infrastructure. They include waymarked routes and promoted routes with guides and maps, online or printed.

Footways

Footways is a network of quiet and enjoyable routes for walking. It connects major places with appealing and accessible streets, including mainline train stations, popular destinations and green spaces. It prompts Londoners and visitors to choose walking as the most enjoyable, efficient and healthy option.

National Cycle Network

As well as providing signed paths and routes for cycling, this network, which is maintained by the relevant landowner and promoted by Sustrans, also provides space for walking, wheeling and exploring outdoors along off-road and traffic free routes. Most users are on foot and most journeys are short and local.

Canal and River Trust

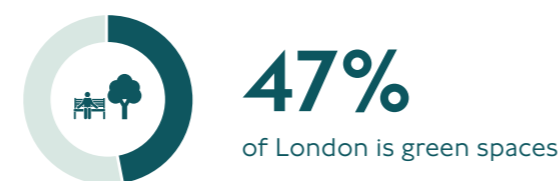
From the Grand Union Canal in the west to the Lea in the east, canals and river towpaths, on land owned by the Canal and River Trust, provide scenic, traffic-free routes to walk across the capital.

Walking tours

There are many walking tours, both guided and self-guided, across London that bring to life the capital's layered history, legends, architecture and nature. A stroll through London opens up a world steeped in history and mystery, from its Roman past to the streets that inspired Dickens.

Slow Ways

This national walking network connects all of Britain's towns and cities, thousands of villages and every National Park, with 339 Slow Ways across London. The network makes use of centres of importance as identified by the Mayor and us. Slow Ways is created and surveyed by volunteers and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.



Challenges

There are currently a number of barriers preventing people from enjoying the network. These include:

Multiple owners

There are multiple owners and managers of London's paths and green spaces, including boroughs and highway authorities, who are responsible for their maintenance and upkeep. This has led to inconsistencies in the quality of routes.

Information sources

It's a large network with no centralised information on where it needs improving, or where there are closures and diversions. An unreliable walking network puts people off walking.

Accessibility

There's a lack of accessibility, both in terms of proximity to routes and disability access.

Awareness

Communities aren't aware of it and what's available in their local area.

Diversity

There's a lack of diversity in the people who use the network, owing to a disparity between those who have access to green space and those who don't.



20-30%

of cases of depression could be prevented if people walked 20 minutes a day

This plan sets out the steps needed to bring the Walk London Network to a consistently high standard. Taking action will reduce the barriers that stop people from walking for leisure. Any work implemented from this action plan will complement ongoing work set out in our 2018 Walking action plan to make London the world's most walkable city.

The key steps are:

- Improving places to walk
- Expanding places to walk
- Promoting improved and additional walking routes

Together with the Mayor, we are committed to developing London's leisure walking opportunities and will look to all available funding sources and partnerships, including with the voluntary sector, to achieve this.



Case study: London's leisure walking volunteers

In 2019, the Ramblers launched two London-based volunteer schemes, the Capital Ring Rangers and London LOOP Leaders, to help maintain, improve and promote the Capital Ring and London LOOP respectively.

The volunteers updated the route guidance and maps, and they improved waymarking and other improvements to borough councils, landowners and managers, and publicised the routes more widely.

These two much-loved routes, originally set up by the London Walking Forum, were maintained by us for some years but are now the responsibility of the boroughs. While the walks are well-signed and easy to follow, volunteers report any deterioration of waymarking or overgrown foliage that obstructs the routes.

The Ring Rangers and LOOP Leaders work with other local community and voluntary groups, such as park friends groups. While the routes can be followed from printed or online guides, the Ramblers' want people

to be able to follow them from signposts alone, making them accessible to everyone, whether they are out for a local stroll or walking the whole route.

Other areas of London benefit from Ramblers' footpath maintenance teams, including Croydon Ramblers who repair footpaths in liaison with Surrey County Council's Countryside Access team. Typical work includes clearing overgrowth on footpaths and bridleways, replacing stiles with gates and putting up signposts.



100+
volunteers from
the Ramblers

25

walking groups that are
part of the Ramblers



20
free walks led by the
Ramblers each week

25

wellbeing walks run
by the Ramblers



Roles and responsibilities

We have a key role in developing the Walk London Network but this is dependent on many partners

London boroughs

As owners of much of the existing and future Walk London Network land, local authorities have an important role to play in delivering improvements.

The London Plan sets out boroughs' and our responsibilities for maintaining, promoting and enhancing networks for walking, cycling and other activities, including the Walk London Network. This includes a requirement for boroughs to prepare green infrastructure strategies that identify opportunities for cross-borough collaboration and to identify areas of open space deficiency through their development plans and include appropriate policies for addressing these.

Outer London highway authorities have statutory duties regarding public rights of way. These allow people to walk, or sometimes ride, cycle or drive, along specific footpaths, bridleways and byways over land that belongs to someone else. Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, highway authorities, with the exception of TfL, the City of London and the 12 inner London boroughs, must:

- Keep a record of public rights of way and make sure they are open for public use
- Keep the surface of public rights of way in a fit state for public use, aided by a rights of way improvement plan to be reviewed every 10 years, and progress monitored
- Remove obstructions, including those that affect people with mobility impairments and other disabilities. Policies about structures on public rights of way should be developed, specifying that structures on public rights of way must be built to the most accessible standard possible. Requests to remove obstructions must be responded to within one month
- Protect the right to use a public right of way. This includes making sure that there are no notices that prevent or discourage the use of it
- Make sure landowners carry out their duties, and take action if they don't protect wildlife and habitats while carrying out maintenance or improvements works



Our partners have a number of important roles to play

Planning for leisure walking near new developments

In the 20 outer London boroughs, new housing provision can lead to significant additional use of existing public rights of way near the development site. This can cause problems if such public rights of way are not appropriately surfaced and drained.

The relevant planning authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, will assess the impact of the development. It may seek a financial contribution from developers to ensure that existing public rights of way in adjoining urban fringe areas are appropriately upgraded to accommodate the additional use.

Any contributions to upgrade a public path would only be sought from the developer where it is known that the upgrade is achievable and where the third-party owner(s) are in full agreement.

Developers

As per the London Plan, development and regenerative proposals should ensure high quality pedestrian environments by referring to our Pedestrian Design Guidance. Development Plan. Documents should maintain and promote the relevant sections of the Walk London Network as well as borough and local routes.

The London Plan states that development proposals should integrate green infrastructure from the beginning of the design process. It also sets out developers' responsibilities to mitigate against water run-off issues in their proposals. It recommends that drainage in new developments is designed and implemented in ways that promote multiple benefits.

In the outer London boroughs, developers must check the local authority's definitive maps for records of public rights of way. Planning permission alone does not give the applicant the right to interfere, obstruct or divert a public right of way. A development should not be started before a Public Path Order has been issued and the right of way must be kept open and unaltered, unless or until the necessary public path order has come into effect.

We have issued a Transport Assessment template for all new developments of strategic importance and recommend that planners refer to this analytical process.

Applicants are expected to map key destinations and routes within an Active Travel Zone, defined at both the walkable neighbourhood scale and a wider cycling scale. The relationship of a new development to local transport options and town centres should be mapped.

Business Improvement Districts

The responsibility of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to bolster local economies can overlap with communities' need for increased health and wellbeing.

By helping to fund greener streets and urban realm improvements in town centres and retail areas, as well as improving links between town centres and local green spaces and routes, BIDs and local authorities can help turn a necessary errand into a pleasurable walking experience, and an additional incentive to make that journey. Partnerships between BIDs and local and highway authorities, such as Vauxhall ONE BID, Lambeth Council and our 'Greening Vauxhall Walk' initiative, can improve spaces to the benefit of businesses and communities.

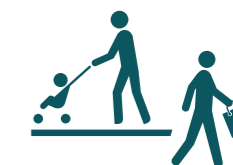
Communities

Good quality green routes and infrastructure provide the space that enables more community groups and activities to exist. Where quality green routes and spaces are lacking, individuals, communities and schools can help drive the changes they want to see and make London a more liveable city.

Local community volunteers help enable and encourage people to enjoy leisure walking. Some of the ways that people can get involved are by leading a walk, curating a themed or special interest walk, checking and reporting any issues with walking routes, helping to organise a social event, or by writing articles about or photographing points of interest for leisure walking blogs or magazines.

95%

of Business Improvement Districts say walking creates vibrant areas, attracts more customers retain staff



40%

more spent in town centres by people walking than car drivers over a month

Our actions

These are the steps we can make to help ensure the Walk London Network is at a consistently high standard



Audit the Walk London Network

The Walk London Network requires a complete audit, with a review process to assess it against the seven quality principles.

We are already aware of some priority sections of the London LOOP and Capital Ring to improve, following information provided by Ramblers volunteers. Local authorities and other responsible owners and custodians may also be aware of sections of the Walk London Network that require maintenance, for example where resurfacing is required or accessibility improvements could be made.

Action

- We will lead on an audit of the Walk London Network and identify where we need to prioritise investment. Future improvements will be delivered as and when the necessary funding becomes available
- We will carry out an audit of street signs, including Legible London signs, in 2022 to identify opportunities for wayfinding to the Walk London Network.



Our audit will help us manage the Walk London Network

Making the Walk London Network digital

Three of the seven Walk London Network routes feature on Go Jauntly, an award-winning, community-based app that promotes walking. The free app enables users to follow or create walking routes.

We would like to digitise all seven routes on Go Jauntly to enable more people to discover new walking routes and connect with nature. We also plan to make all seven routes available in a PDF format.

Ramblers produced updated accessible walking guidance for the Capital Ring and London LOOP, which are free to download from their website. They are working on guidance for the Green Chain walk.

Action

We will work with Go Jauntly and other partners to complete the digital mapping of the Walk London Network from 2022.



440,000

times the Go Jauntly app has been downloaded since its launch



Digital tools help make the network more convenient

Enable more reporting

People should be able to report where walking routes and places can be improved to the relevant responsible authority.

The FixMyStreet online tool enables people to report pedestrian infrastructure that needs fixing, cleaning or clearing. Reports are automatically shared with the relevant borough or highway authority that is responsible and the tool allows that authority to update on the action taken. FixMyStreet integrates with some authorities' own public reporting and feedback systems, including our own Streetcare tool.

Users of the Go Jauntly app can note where a walking route or place would benefit from maintenance or improvement while using the app.

Action

- We will promote FixMyStreet and Streetcare to encourage people to report any issues with their walking route from 2022
- We will support Go Jauntly to enable users to report issues with walking routes and places to the relevant authority



We will have a system when people can report back on issues

Upgrade the existing network

Before the pandemic, 40 per cent of people walking for business or commuting purposes used the Walk London Network for the pleasure of the experience, and 25 per cent said they used the network solely for recreational purposes. To retain these people and attract new interest, it is vital that we consistently maintain the network.



25%

of people before the pandemic used the Walk London Network solely for recreational purposes

Action

- We will identify and deliver improvements such as installing new signage or resurfacing paths to the Walk London Network through the Mayor's Green New Deal Fund in 2022/23. Improvements will be assessed against the seven design principles, with particular emphasis placed on enhancing safety and accessibility*
- We will continue to promote borough-led improvements to the network through Local Implementation Plans

* The Mayor's Green New Fund was set up in 2020 to boost green jobs, tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, improve air quality and address inequalities.



Our existing network will become more appealing

Develop new strategic leisure walking routes

Work is under way to expand the Walk London Network to unlock leisure walking opportunities for communities that have been deprived of them for too long.

Six new green walks, or Greenways, have been identified by the Ramblers, Living Streets, Sustrans and CPRC London. They are Counter's Creek, Five Boroughs Link, Forgotten Rivers Walk, Great Eastern Parks, Romford Greenway and Southern Rivers Link.

Subject to a cost and feasibility assessment, and with the agreement of relevant boroughs and other landowners, we will work with the boroughs to develop the first Greenway route and bring it within the Walk London Network. We will assess new walking routes by measuring access to green space, walking demand and potential and the area's vulnerability to climate change.

Planning will also consider the green infrastructure focus map, climate risk map and tree planting priority mapping available on the London Datastore, and help to tackle the health inequalities outlined earlier.

Action

- We will assess the Greenway routes to see how they will provide green space to those who need it the most
- We will identify the first Greenway route and work with the relevant boroughs and other partners to set out the route, access requirements and maintenance. Any new route would adhere to the seven pedestrian design principles to ensure it is safe, inclusive, comfortable, direct, connected, legible and attractive



New routes will open up more opportunities for more people



Case study: The Ripple Greenway

The Ripple Greenway is a new, linear 1.3km park that provides a green link between an existing community and the new communities in the Barking Riverside housing development.

Sustrans worked in partnership with the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, the Greater London Authority and local communities to reimagine the space.

A stakeholder management group was established, made up of representatives from each community group, to work out how to make the park accessible to everyone and meet the diverse needs of residents.

A team of designers then created a concept design to make a space that felt safe and fun as well as accessible. An exhibition and

survey enabled people to give feedback. Funding provided by the Mayor's Green Capital Grant and Be First, the borough's regeneration specialists, made the concept a reality.

Trees for Cities helped replace metal fencing with rich wetland habitat and naturalised beaches. They also led tree and flower planting events.



1.3km
is the length of the
Ripple Greenway

Improve walking experiences on local streets and places

A practical first step to encouraging leisure walking on local streets involves building on what's already there. Existing routes that need maintenance, or minor improvements such as better drainage, can provide quick wins without significant investment.

While funding and resources are constrained, it may be necessary for boroughs to prioritise improvements to walking experiences that complement other initiatives, for example by making Low Traffic Neighbourhoods greener, intersecting with planned borough Local Implementation Plan projects and enabling new accessible links to green spaces. Such improvements have benefits for all walking but especially shorter distance, local, leisure walks.

Action

- Together with the GLA and London boroughs, we will improve walking experiences on local streets and places by using Local Implementation Plan funding to deliver Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, School Streets and other projects that take a Healthy Streets Approach to improving the public realm. We will also use Green New Deal funding to make local streets greener by 2023, which will make them more attractive and more resilient to climate change
- In 2023, we will provide guidance on removing access barriers, ensuring that they do not inhibit legitimate access to pavements, parks and paths, particularly for people with protected characteristics



We will help improve walking opportunities for local communities



Case study: Green and Healthy Streets Fund

The Mayor's £4m Green and Healthy Streets Fund supports projects that redesign streets to integrate green infrastructure and climate resilience measures, alongside interventions that support active travel, reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality. We are helping to deliver the projects across London.

The programme supports the Green New Deal Mission under the London Recovery Programme, and aligns with policies in the London Environment Strategy and the Mayor's Healthy Streets Approach.

All London boroughs were invited to submit schemes for funding, with projects prioritised in areas of highest climate vulnerability according to GLA climate risk mapping, and with greatest potential to increase walking.

Green New Deal funding will provide new street infrastructure, planting and flower

beds, and green screens as part of these projects. Boroughs are expected to engage local communities in all projects, and have ongoing maintenance plans in place. Example projects receiving funding include:

Bowes Primary Area Quieter Neighbourhood (Enfield)

This project introduces new green spaces, sustainable drainage measures, and greener streets to the Bowes Quieter Neighbourhood. It aims to improve the safety and quality of School Streets, while also encouraging walking and cycling by improving infrastructure and connections.

Wayland Avenue Low Traffic Neighbourhood (Hackney)

This will replace existing parallel parking bays in two locations, with large, linear rain gardens and sustainable drainage areas. Rainwater will be guided towards the rain gardens, and the space will be made more attractive with benches and street art.

Sutton Town Centre flood resilience scheme (Sutton)

This scheme involves removing concrete bases around trees to create new linear bioswales that can retain surface water. Bike shelters and benches with integrated planting will also be installed to encourage biodiversity.

Our roads

We will be awarded a further £1m for similar projects on London's roads, such as transforming the Joe Strummer pedestrian subway at Edgware Road into rain gardens. The subway has been closed for several years. We will fill in the entrance ramps and stairs with soil and vegetation to create a series of rain gardens. This will reduce flood risk by taking surface water run-off from the adjacent pavement and road, while creating a safer, more attractive environment for pedestrians.



£2.85m

awarded to 11 London boroughs to deliver 19 green and climate resilience projects

+85

drainage measures including rain gardens and tree pits



10

new pocket parks and green spaces

+325

trees to be planted along streets



Promote and encourage walking for health and wellbeing

The Mayor's 2021 manifesto called on us to collaborate with the NHS in London to encourage more people to build healthy travel options into their daily lives, to help reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases. Together with the GLA and the London Region's Office for Health Improvements and Disparities, we are exploring how to work alongside the NHS and the national Moving Healthcare Professionals Programme. This programme supports healthcare professionals to increase their knowledge and skills to promote physical activity to patients to prevent and manage ill health.

Putting this principle into action, the Ramblers have relaunched their wellbeing walks. They work with 25 London boroughs to deliver regular, short group walks that are open to all but are specifically designed for older people and those with long-term health conditions to support them to be physically active.

Action

We will work closely with the NHS to encourage more people to build healthy travel options into their daily lives, to help reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases.



Case study: Go Jauntly and social prescribing

During lockdown, Go Jauntly released a 'nature notes' feature, in partnership with the University of Derby. It is the world's first app-based green prescription.

The tool, developed as part of a £1.3m Improving Wellbeing Through Urban Nature project, has been shown to significantly improve the quality of life for people who are living with a mental health difficulty.

Nature notes can be used within your home or garden or as part of your local walks. It can also be used to help people self-manage mental health and wellbeing.

In partnership with us, Go Jauntly won the Mayor's Civic Innovation Challenge in 2018. Go Jauntly also received the coveted Editor's Choice award on the App Store.



Case study: Discover Your London walks

UrbanWise, who secured funding through our Walking and Cycling Grants London programme in 2021, engages with disadvantaged groups, including those with low incomes, ethnic minorities, refugees and people with physical or mental health challenges across West London to create special interest walks.

UrbanWise gives people the opportunity to discover London and provides them with the tools to become more adventurous.

Participants are encouraged to share their experiences, make new friends, develop confidence and inspire others to do the same.

UrbanWise is halfway through delivering its three-year project. So far, it has created 18 walks, ranging from two to five miles. It has engaged with more than 80 people, giving socially isolated participants the chance to visit parks such as Hampstead Heath, Kensington Gardens, Regent's Park, and

exploring other interesting locations such as Kew Gardens and Little Venice.

To keep the walkers engaged, UrbanWise gives talks on local history, provides pedometers and rewards the most regular walkers with further equipment. A key part of the scheme is to educate people on the benefits of walking, promote our suggested walking routes and provide training for local organisations and community groups to produce their own safe and exciting walks.

'I adored the Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park Walk. I wasn't familiar with the area and would not have felt confident or physically able to do the walk without UrbanWise. It was such a beautiful day and I just feel more confident now in that area. Hyde Park is close to me but I didn't know how to break it down'

Dalen
Participant on the project

Promote and encourage people to enjoy leisure walking

Leisure walks and parks are tourist attractions in the world's greenest capital city. To encourage more people to enjoy central London on foot, we teamed up with London Living Streets to produce Footways maps that highlight networks of quiet and interesting streets. The website Visit London made use of London's status as the world's first National Park City to inspire people to visit more of London's green spaces.

Action

We will explore opportunities to work with listings sites to promote the discovery of walking networks as free activities for Londoners and visitors.



Case study: London Nature Trails

Environmental public engagement campaign London Nature Trails is based around four newly curated green walking routes. The routes take people through lesser-known nature sites, including green corridors in areas lacking large parks and open spaces. The routes were advertised locally through faith groups and civil society organisations to reach under-represented audiences, including lower-income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

The project launched in the summer of 2022. During the launch weekend, the GLA worked with stakeholders, community organisations and grantees to run family-friendly activities in areas close to the main walking routes. The four routes are Wanstead to Royal Docks, Brockley to Bermondsey, Alexandra Road to Kings Cross and Wembley Stadium to Burnt Oak. Routes and maps were delivered by Footways, with funding from the GLA and support from us, Go Jauntly and the Ramblers.

Promote and encourage walking for the next generation

Establishing healthy attitudes to walking at a young age is vital for tackling health inequalities and reversing the downturn in physical activity among young people seen during the pandemic.

The work by organisations and their volunteers has enabled children to experience nature and the outdoors on foot. The Canal & River Trust's Explorer programme, for example, inspires children's learning by connecting them to our waterways through educational resources and themed activities along towpaths.

We teamed up with Go Jauntly to create walks that link parks and playgrounds across the city.

Action

We will make funding available in 2022-23 for walking projects through the Walking and Cycling Grants London programme and will review applications for quality projects that support young people and other underrepresented groups to walk for leisure.



40%

of London's children are overweight or obese





Case study: Islington i-spy walks

In 2021, Islington Clean Air Parents, Islington Living Streets and Footways London established a series of family-friendly i-spy walks to encourage children and parents to enjoy walking in low-pollution areas.

The walks incorporate green spaces such as parks, playgrounds or nature reserves and involves an i-spy game to find clues and discover historical and natural sights.

It was devised by children and their parents who walk the route in advance and pick

interesting features. Examples include types of tree, wildlife species, roof gardens, hidden passages, statues and architecture. The routes often include shortcuts, green spaces and Islington's new low traffic areas, People Friendly Streets.

The walks highlight the huge potential for walking in attractive, safer, healthier streets. One suggestion is to develop one of the walks as a new green corridor, linking Upper Street, to Lewis Cubitt Park. It would also be ideal for rain gardens and tree-planting.



40-50

children and parents attend the i-spy walks regularly

'Children were playing together, parents were relaxed as they enjoyed the freedom and safety of low traffic areas'

Rachel
Islington Clean Air Parent

Understand demand and use

More needs to be understood about who, where and how many people are walking or not walking for leisure, so that efforts can be better targeted to increase leisure walking and monitor progress.

More specifically, monitoring of routes is needed to understand where they are used, to identify which routes need an increased maintenance schedule, and which routes require more promotion or better wayfinding. This includes where leisure walking happens on low- or no-traffic walking routes, as well as in more built-up street environments. Understanding the demographics of walkers will also help to tackle inequality.

The main reasons why people walk for leisure are broadly understood. To ensure our efforts are better targeted, further research is needed to better understand what motivates or deters people, in particular:

- Are there differences in perceptions and popularity of urban, local and adventure walking?
- What sensory experiences do people expect from a walk?
- What other incentives are effective, such as saving money, saving fuel or reducing carbon emissions?
- How do we engage with unrepresented groups?
- What are the barriers to leisure walking, particularly for more deprived and inactive communities and people with disabilities?

Action

We will engage with Londoners through our Have Your Say forum and through London Walking Forum members to better understand what motivates and deters people to better target efforts to increase leisure walking and monitor progress.

1 in 3

walkable trips would take less than 10 minutes for most people to walk



1 in 5

Londoners feel worried about their personal security while walking

Improve accessibility

Recent surveys of the London LOOP and Capital Ring by Ramblers volunteers identified where accessibility improvements can be made.

The Planning For Walking Toolkit includes guidance on how to make walking environments accessible to all, with practical advice on surfaces, footway widths, access, gradients, materials, amenities and transport access. Our guidance note on access barriers, to be published in 2023, will provide more clarity to relevant authorities on how to ensure access points to walking routes and places properly consider accessibility for all.

Action

We will promote borough-led accessibility improvements to the Walk London Network through Local Implementation Plans, using the Planning For Walking Toolkit and guidance note on access controls as quality standards.



21%

of Londoners claim too much traffic is a barrier to walking



Our routes must be accessible and appealing to all users

Improve mapping, wayfinding and information

There are many different walking routes mapped out in various formats and stored in different places. These need continuous review and updating by various content owners. Having one source of information where routes and green spaces can be found, added and connected, would make leisure walking options simpler to find, plan and navigate, and easier to promote, monitor and evaluate.

As well as being of use to individuals, this would be a resource for organisations involved in social and community initiatives. It would also help make a case to access further infrastructure funding.



109

journeys between central London Underground stations are actually quicker on foot than Tube

Go Jauntly's dynamic Green Routes wayfinding option plots the leafiest, quietest, least-polluted way to walk to any destination in London. The use of this algorithm in other wayfinding platforms would enable more people to find the most pleasurable walks in the capital.

Action

- We will work with the London Walking Forum stakeholders to explore the benefits of an online leisure walking data hub, which would be a central repository for existing route information
- We will support the wider adoption of the Green Routes feature to help people access green space and quieter routes through London on everyday walking trips



Our Legible London signs help with wayfinding across the capital

Coordinate action

No single organisation working in isolation can deliver the changes needed. A key role in progressing leisure walking opportunities in the capital is played by the London Walking Forum. Its members are us, Living Streets, Sustrans, Ramblers, London Councils, Transport for All, the GLA, London Sport, the Canal & River Trust. Quarterly meetings are chaired by London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner.

Action

Together with the GLA, we will progress the actions identified in this plan through the London Walking Forum, working with London councils, stakeholders and responsible delivery partners, including boroughs, landowners and managers, developers and BIDs to ensure continued dialogue and engagement on leisure walking.



Case study: The Canal & River Trust volunteers

One of the members of the London Walking Forum is the Canal & River Trust. The trust welcomes people to volunteer their time and skills in a variety of roles to enhance London's local waterways, from full-time roles in the office to occasional days out on the towpath.

People can volunteer as lock keepers, at welcome stations or in governance roles. Explorer volunteers lead exploratory walking sessions for primary schools, Cub Scouts and Brownie groups. Local Towpath Taskforce volunteers help support their local canal by cutting back vegetation, clearing paths, collecting litter, painting, planting and generally tidying up.

About Transport for London (TfL)

Part of the Greater London Authority family led by Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, we are the integrated transport authority responsible for delivering the Mayor's aims for transport. We have a key role in shaping what life is like in London, helping to realise the Mayor's vision for a 'City for All Londoners' and helping to create a safer, fairer, greener, healthier and more prosperous city. The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets a target for 80 per cent of all journeys to be made by walking, cycling or using public transport by 2041. To make this a reality, we prioritise sustainability, health and the quality of people's experience in everything we do.

We run most of London's public transport services, including the London Underground, London Buses, the DLR, London Overground, Elizabeth line, London Trams, London River Services, London Dial-a-Ride, Victoria Coach Station, Santander Cycles and the London Cable Car. The experience, reliability and accessibility of these services is fundamental to Londoners' quality of life.

We manage the city's red route strategic roads and, through collaboration with the London boroughs, we are helping to shape the character of all London's streets. These are the places where Londoners travel, work, shop and socialise. Making them places for people to walk, cycle and spend time will reduce car dependency, improve air quality, revitalise town centres, boost businesses and connect communities. As part of this, our expanded Ultra Low Emission Zone and fleets of increasingly environmentally friendly and zero-emission buses are helping to tackle London's toxic air.

During the pandemic, we took a huge range of measures to ensure people were safe while travelling. This included extensive cleaning regimes across the public transport network and working with London's boroughs to introduce the Streetspace for London programme, which provided wider pavements and cycle lanes so people can walk and cycle safely and maintain social distancing. London's recovery is vital to the UK's recovery as life returns to normal. We want to ensure London avoids a car-led recovery and we continue to reassure people the capital and our transport network is safe and ready for them.

We have constructed many of London's most significant infrastructure projects in recent years, using transport to unlock much needed economic growth. This includes major projects like the extension of the Northern line to Battersea Power Station and Nine Elms in south London, as well as our work at Barking Riverside and the Bank station upgrade.

Working with Government, we completed the Elizabeth line in time for Her Majesty the Queen's Jubilee. This transformational new railway adds 10 per cent to central London's rail capacity and supports the delivery of high-density, mixed-use developments, which are planned around active and sustainable travel to ensure London's growth is good growth. We also use our own land to provide thousands of new affordable homes and our own supply chain creates tens of thousands of jobs and apprenticeships across the country.

We are committed to being an employer that is fully representative of the community we serve, where everyone can realise their potential. Our aim is to be a fully inclusive employer, valuing and celebrating the diversity of our workforce to improve services for all Londoners.

We are constantly working to improve the city for everyone. This means using intel, data and technology to make services intuitive and easy to use and doing all we can to make streets and transport services accessible to all. We reinvest every penny of our income to continually improve transport networks for the people who use them every day. None of this would be possible without the support of boroughs, communities and other partners who we work with to improve our services. By working together, we can create a better city as London's recovery from the pandemic continues.

