
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION FROM THE LEADER OF WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL	3
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012/13	4
A UNIQUE PLACE	5
A ROLE FOR EVERYONE	6
STORIES FROM THE CITY	7
DELIVERING OUR AMBITIONS	10
• a safer, healthier city	10
• an enterprising city	12
• a connected city	14
WHAT CAN YOU DO?	15

INTRODUCTION

My vision is for Westminster to have clean and safe streets, for our residents to pay low tax and receive the best quality public services, and for the city to be a place of opportunity for everybody to achieve their potential.

The world is changing rapidly and the role of the council is changing just as quickly. Our finances are under pressure in the same way as household funds are being squeezed. Young people are finding it harder to get their first job, pay their bills and get on with their lives. And people are increasingly worried about how the state can afford to care for the vulnerable. As a council, our members and officers are committed to meeting these challenges by working in bold new ways to provide efficient local services that meet public expectation.

Better City, Better Lives is our five year plan to meet these challenges. It outlines how we will focus our efforts where they will have maximum impact, how we will enable and empower others to take responsibility for themselves and their neighbourhoods and how we will work in new ways with central government, businesses and voluntary groups to create the right incentives to bring people together and strengthen our communities.

By working together in new ways, I am confident that we can achieve our three major goals to make the Westminster of 2018 a fairer and more responsible city, a place of opportunity for everyone regardless of their background:

A HEALTHIER, SAFER CITY

The Westminster of 2018 is a city where people live independent lives for longer and where everyone can play as full a role as possible in their community. Strong, responsible families will give every child the best start in life and local public services will be there to support them. People should feel safer in their communities and respect their neighbours.

A MORE ENTERPRISING CITY

The Westminster of 2018 is a city where every young person has the skills and opportunities to have a successful career, and businesses are able to thrive and be successful.



A MORE CONNECTED CITY

The Westminster of 2018 is a city where everyone in Westminster feels more involved in their local community. People should find it easier to make connections with one another both virtually and in person, and to feel more connected to jobs, services, information and decisions affecting their community.

Every policy, project and service to achieve this will be underpinned by guiding principles of **fairness, opportunity and responsibility**. This means that services will be targeted at those who need them most. It means we will use every chance to create opportunities for people to achieve their potential and live healthier, happier lives. And it means that residents, communities and businesses should take responsibility for themselves and their local area.

Better City, Better Lives is not just a council plan. It is a way forward for the whole city. Its success is dependent on the support, involvement and hard work of all of us who care about the future of this great city and I encourage you to do your bit for a better Westminster.

Cllr Philippa Roe
Leader of Westminster City Council

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012/13

My vision is for Westminster to have clean and safe streets, for our residents to pay low tax and receive the best quality public services, and for the city to be a place of opportunity for everybody to achieve their potential.

We froze council tax for the fifth year in a row and will freeze it again this year.

We showcased the best Westminster has to offer by hosting the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee** celebrations and played our part in the successful operation of the **Olympic and Paralympic Games**, including the hosting of 10 events and many of the celebrations.

We have **saved £84m** over the past two years whilst protecting front-line services.

In April 2012 our ground-breaking shared services agreement with Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham went live. It has already saved the three councils **£10m** and is on track to jointly save us **£40m** a year from 2015/16.

We started our ambitious **Housing Renewal** programme that, subject to the decision of local people, will transform four areas across the city over the next 15 to 20 years. The first phase of the programme is projected to deliver over **1,000 new homes**.

We delivered **307 adaptations to homes** within council housing stock and the private sector for people with disabilities between April 2012 and December 2013.

Our Your Choice programme worked with over **100 gang members** and at-risk young people to help them access support and mentoring, get into employment and training, and exit gangs.

We supported **553 residents to volunteer** between April 2012 and December 2012 and expect to have supported a total of 700 residents to volunteer by April 2013.

We brokered **2,102 employer-led opportunities** for young people, including 76 full time jobs and apprenticeships and over 1,400 work experience and internship placements.

The council voted to designate Queen's Park the **first Parish Council** in London for 50 years.

We brokered a ground-breaking deal with O2 to provide **free WiFi** access across the West End.

We launched the independent **Sir Simon Milton Foundation** which will raise £3 million to put into schemes to support the young and the elderly.

We cut the time a child in care has to wait before they find a loving home from 53 to 26 weeks.

71% of the children involved are aged under 5 and, by halving the length of care proceedings, we have dramatically improved their chances of being placed for adoption.

We extended our successful **Family Recovery Programme** to Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham and supported 1,720 families across the three boroughs to turn their lives around and bring harmony to their communities.

Through our successful **Community Budget pilot**, we have shown how new ways of working can save money. Local public services across the three boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster, and Hammersmith and Fulham will save **£80m** within five years with government backing.

We committed more than **£2m** over the past three years through the **Ward Budgets** programme to improve the lives of our residents and communities.

In September we launched a dedicated **Domestic Violence Court** which has already heard 45 cases and achieved a 71% conviction rate.

A ROLE FOR EVERYONE

At the heart of **Better City, Better Lives** is the conviction that everyone has a role in making Westminster a healthier and safer city, a more enterprising city and a more connected city.

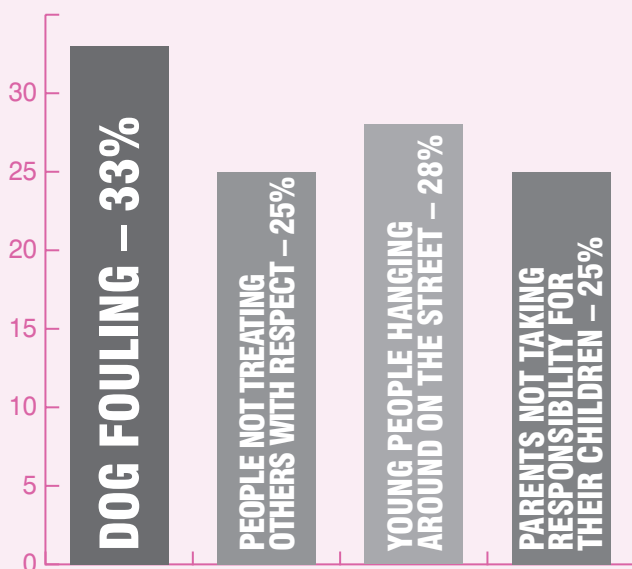
We believe that those who live, work or visit the city should take **responsibility** for making a positive contribution to the community. This means parents taking responsibility for their children's behaviour, visitors treating our streets with respect and businesses playing an active role in the communities they operate within.

We believe in **fairness** and will make sure as a council that that we will always target services at those who

need them most. We recognise the contribution many residents and workers already make to the city through volunteering and helping out in their local community.

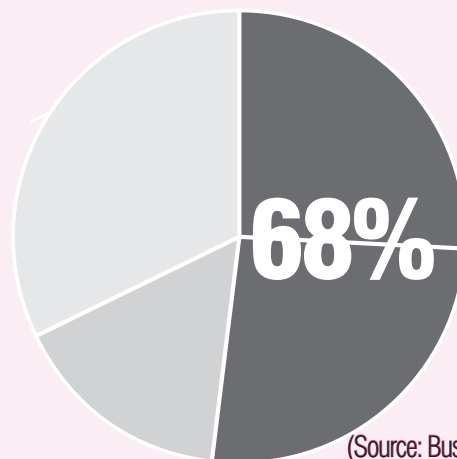
We believe that everyone should work together to create **opportunities**. This means the council and the private sector working hard to provide new homes, jobs and skills so that all residents can play an active part in the city's future.

WHAT BUGS OUR RESIDENTS?



RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

68% of businesses are interested in supporting the local community



(Source: Business Survey 2012)

PEOPLE POWER

39%

Residents would like to be more involved in the decisions the council makes in their local area

44%

Residents think they can influence decisions in their local area



STORIES FROM THE CITY

Westminster is full of great stories about how residents, businesses and visitors are already making an impressive contribution towards a healthier, safer, more enterprising and more connected city. If you've got a story about how you are getting involved, tell us about it at bettercitybetterlives@westminster.gov.uk.

HEALTHY, SAFER

Giving elderly residents a helping hand to stay safe in their homes



Well@home provides advice and support to keep warm, safe and healthier. Geoff, 84, who suffers from chronic ill health, was helped by the project to make over his home.

For Geoff, the help he got from Well@home has transformed his life: "For 20 years I have never invited anyone into my home because of its poor condition. This improvement has made such a difference to me, thanks to the council. Before I got this help, I didn't know where to turn."

Helping young people turn their back on crime

Before 14-year old Chris was referred to the council's Your Choice programme he had been out of school for over a year and was starting to get involved in gangs and anti-social behaviour. Your Choice has given Sam the opportunity to turn his back on the local gang and understand the consequences of not treating his neighbours and local community with respect.

The programme, combined with his own will to turn his life around, has resulted in Sam being back at school and recently described by his teachers as a 'model student'.



STORIES FROM THE CITY



Taking responsibility

Run Dem Crew is a running club, which also provides mentoring and advice to young adults, as well as the opportunity to explore London in a safe, supportive environment. Cory Matthews helps to run the West London branch:

“We are a collective, a family, a crew. We come together every Monday not necessarily to share our passion for running, but to give others the opportunity to be better, healthier, stronger and more importantly ‘Fit for Life’.”

ENTERPRISING

Helping young people into West End jobs

Paul Jones, 19, from Abbey Road, found a job through Recruit West End, supported by the council alongside The Crown Estate, New West End Company and Cross River Partnership. After finishing college, Paul was unemployed and started volunteering at a social enterprise. He was then put in contact with a Recruit West End workplace co-ordinator who supported him in getting an interview at Primark.



“I wasn’t very confident about doing a group interview so my coordinator gave me some one-to-one coaching. He supported me throughout the interview – it went really well and Primark sent me a contract that same day.”



Hub Westminster and local resident start a new academy for entrepreneurs

The Academy at the Hub was set up to deliver a strong set of business skills and a supportive, inspirational environment to would-be entrepreneurs in London. Already it has delivered more than 80 classes, supporting over 1,000 people.

Local resident Antonio Borges and Hub Westminster have formed collaborations with successful entrepreneurs, academics and corporate partners to deliver the programme.

STORIES FROM THE CITY



Supporting apprenticeships and internships through Theatreland and the Arts

Soho Theatre offers young Westminster residents the opportunity to learn creative writing and literacy skills through their Soho Young Company.

Charlotte Josephine joined the Soho Young Company in 2011 and has recently won the prestigious Soho Young Writers Award for her play *Bitch Boxer* which tells a story of a young woman boxer, inspired by London 2012. Charlotte said: "winning the award has jump-started the beginning of my career as a writer."

CONNECTED

Creating opportunities through volunteering



Volunteering as a team leader with City Guides, 16 year old Hanaa has had the chance to volunteer at various exciting events, including The BAFTAs.

"I started volunteering because I needed something to do over the summer. I was thinking about my future as life can get quite scary when you hit 16. Volunteering was something fun to do to support my future."

Helping new mums get together and learn a new skill

With the help of a grant from her local Ward Budget, Lizzie Bruce has been able to run a year-long project that gives parents an opportunity to meet other local mums and dads and talk about shared issues.



"Knitting Network gets members out meeting new people, having a bit of a break from child care and learning a great new skill. For many members it is the highlight of their week. It's easy to get stuck at home looking after small children and many new mums feel quite isolated."

Businesses play their part in supporting their local community

Over 50 volunteers from the UK's biggest property company gave up their time on 1st February to help local charity, the Marylebone Project, which supports homeless women on the path back to independent living. Staff from the Land Securities London Development Team, which is leading the £2billion project to transform Victoria, spent the day helping develop the charity's social enterprise, Made in Marylebone, giving an in-kind financial investment of £65,000.

Lizzie Monks, Partnerships Officer for Time & Talents Westminster, said: "This will make a huge and really long-term impact to the charity which is fantastic."



DELIVERING OUR AMBITIONS:

A SAFER, HEALTHIER CITY

We want to ensure that everyone in Westminster feels healthy and safe.

OUR PRIORITIES	KEY PROJECTS
Longer, healthier independent lives where everyone is empowered to play as full a role in society as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will promote the huge range of opportunities for residents to be active and stay healthy, including the Westminster Mile and other Olympic legacy projects.• We will invest at least £150k to help our young people be more active with at least 100 hours of free activities provided in our communities every week.• We will start the construction of the new £17m sports centre on the Moberly site and will deliver the new £1m flagship health and fitness facility at the Porchester Centre.• We will work in new ways with GPs to transform the quality of life for our residents, visitors and commuters.• We will pursue further savings, efficiencies and ways of joint working through our Tri-borough partnership with Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham. This will include the creation of a shared Public Health service and further integration between Adult Social Care and Central London Community Health Care.• We will implement plans that, over the next 5-7 years, will provide up to 110 more extra care units, replace an estimated 25 residential care places, and reduce the amount of one-size-fits-all residential care through the proposed development of two flexible extra care nursing homes.• We will ensure that 75% of 2 year-olds in Westminster will receive a developmental review, targeting 2 years-olds in the city's most deprived wards.• We will continue to promote wellbeing and champion the Big Society by securing up to £70m of investment in improving access to psychological therapies, empowering social tenants to get more involved in decisions taken by their landlord, and drive forward the council's Green agenda.
Stronger, responsible families which give every child the best start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will ensure that 50% of families on the Troubled Families programme will have resolved their re-offending, Anti-Social Behaviour, and poor school attendance.• We will double the rates of children leaving care to Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders.• We will halve the numbers of Children subject to a Protection Plan for the second time.• We will reduce the numbers of adolescents needing to come into care.• We will achieve a 20% increase in the recruitment of adoptive parents.• We will recruit 25 foster carers.• We will ensure that all children will be placed with permanent carers within 12 months of entry into care.• We will ensure that 80% of children requiring foster care will be placed with Tri-borough foster carers by 2014.• We will double the number of free day care opportunities for 2 year-olds.

- We will target **free day care** opportunities for 2 year-olds in Westminster's most deprived wards.
- Subject to a vote by local people, we will start work on our ambitious Housing Renewal programme that will build **1,000 new homes**, 490 of which will be prioritised for low and middle income families and overcrowded Westminster households.
- We will start on site to deliver the new £12m **Marylebone Library**.
- We will tackle the nuisance issues caused by **shisha smoking** on Edgware Road and other streets in Westminster.

More visible enforcement and improved public access to police

- We will **reduce further the numbers of young people becoming criminals**.
- We will **target service provision towards offenders who are Children in Care** and subject to an Order.
- We will work in partnership to ensure **greater public access to and visibility of local police**, including looking at options for co-locating police officers within council properties and community sites.
- We will invest **£1m of capital in CCTV** provision in Westminster to help deliver a safe and orderly city.
- We will start a two year Adult Reducing Reoffending pilot that will work with the estimated **636 offenders** a year across Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea who are given custodial sentences of less than a year.
- We will invest an additional **£100k in planning enforcement** to ensure a safe environment which encourages investment, retains Westminster's character and protects residents from unregulated development.
- We will invest an extra **£300k in additional cleansing services**, including additional sweeping during summer in our busiest areas as well installing an extra 50 bins and street sweepers throughout the borough to ensure that Westminster remains the cleanest borough in the capital after being awarded the only five-star rating in London by the Clean Britain Awards.
- We will **promote responsible dog ownership** and crack down on irresponsible behaviour by dog owners through a package of measures that help ensure the city is both clean and safe.
- We will launch **our Air Quality Action Plan** that will see us work with businesses, schools and transport operators to cut emissions, raise awareness about air quality issues, and encourage measures that minimise emissions such as installing more Electric Vehicle points, joining Source London, new 'no idling' signage in Westminster's coach bays, freight consolidation initiatives and reviewing our Code of Construction Practice.



AN ENTERPRISING CITY

We want every young person in Westminster to have the skills and opportunities to have a successful career. We want businesses of every size to thrive and succeed.

OUR PRIORITIES	KEY PROJECTS
<p>School leavers and adults with barriers to work are better able to enter employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through expanding the Workplace Co-ordinator programme and implementing a jobs pledge with housing renewal developers, we will support over 1,000 employment opportunities for local residents over the next five years. • We will launch our new Employability Passport to give extra help to 1,200 young people across Westminster so that they are better prepared to find their first job once they leave school. • We will reduce the number of 16 to 18 year olds not in education and training by 50%.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will increase the number of Care Leavers who are in Education, Employment and Training by a quarter. • We will ensure that there is a place in education, employment and training for every young person after they complete their GCSEs. • We will support the Sir Simon Milton Foundation to bid for a new University Technical College that will provide a world-class facility for training the next generation of engineers and technical experts. • We will ensure that 75% of Westminster's pupils will achieve 5 grade A*-C at GCSE in 2013. • We pledge that every secondary school in Westminster will be rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OFSTED.
<p>Conditions for start-ups and SMEs to be created and grow, particularly those owned by residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will make sure that landlords and businesses based in Westminster only need to ask once for expert advice on complying with the law, reducing unnecessary inspection and paperwork. • Next spring we will commence work to establish a business start-up hub in the north of the city providing over 10,000 sq ft of new enterprise space. • We will launch an Enterprise Spaces Strategy setting out a five-year framework to develop a new cluster of enterprise spaces (up to 50,000 sq ft). • We will launch a third phase of the Civic Enterprise Fund for 2013-17, injecting £2.1m into innovative economic development projects and supporting 1,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses to access to a range of opportunities. • We will create a dedicated business unit within the council for our businesses to access support, advice and information. It will work with them to help reduce barriers to their success.
<p>Local benefits that incentivise and reward responsible behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide a Council Tax support system that means that those eligible receive 100% council tax benefit. • We will promote and run the new Westminster City Save scheme, offering special offers and discounts to Westminster residents as well as promotional opportunities for businesses • We will ensure value for money for Westminster's Council Tax payers by continuing to crack down on all types of fraud affecting the council, including housing benefit fraud, blue badge fraud, council tax fraud and housing fraud.

Enterprising and sustainable local public services that make our funds go further

- We will **freeze council tax** for the sixth successive year.
- We will continue to support the growth of Westminster Community Homes as an independent charity providing more affordable housing in Westminster including the current programme to add a **further 90 units** to the stock.
- We will implement our Whole-Place Community Budget proposals that will, within five years, create annual savings of approximately £80 million per annum across local public services within the Tri-borough area and **drive growth, reduce dependency, build homes, create jobs, lengthen lives and rehabilitate criminals**.
- We will consider the recommendations of the independent **West End Commission**, ensuring that there is a strong vision to maintain the success of the area.
- We will encourage our housing manager, CityWest Homes, to continue to deliver some of the **highest levels of leaseholder and tenant satisfaction within London**, whilst improving value for money for leaseholder and tenant services.

A distinctive and sustainable destination of choice for international investment

- We will deliver the **£8.5m phase 2 of the Piccadilly 2 Way** scheme, improving access in the public realm.
- We will continue to enhance **Leicester Square** as an international destination for culture, restoring a Grade II listed statue of Shakespeare and developing a new ticket booth to promote West End shows.
- We will make a commercial investment in the start-up of **Soho Create**, a new self-financing international event for the entertainment sector.



A CONNECTED CITY

We want everyone in Westminster to feel more involved in their local community. We want to make it easier for people to make connections with one another, and to feel more connected to vital services and information.

OUR PRIORITIES	KEY PROJECTS
<p>People help themselves and each other before asking the council for help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will increase and improve our services available online, including the expansion of webchat facilities and the introduction of mobile apps, improving access and creating better value for money. • We will expand the use of Interactive Voice Response and identify further opportunities to provide customers with the ability to self serve. • We will continue transforming our parking service by extending marshals, bay sensors and mobile apps, and launch a new Park Right Guide.
<p>People from different backgrounds get on well together</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a new approach to working with local voluntary and community groups to grow community spirit from the bottom up. • We will launch an online welcome pack for new residents. • We will celebrate the contribution of older people to their communities, and put on a second Silver Sunday that will give up to 1,000 older people a chance to try new things, stay active, meet new people and combat loneliness.
<p>Increase in the number of people who volunteer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will help more people volunteer by funding a volunteering brokerage service that will support up to 850 people into volunteering opportunities in 2013/14. • We will re-launch City Guides, creating up to 150 opportunities for people to volunteer at prestigious events, such as the BAFTAs and the London Marathon. • We will create opportunities for up to 100 people to become sports volunteers by promoting clearer routes to volunteering opportunities locally and launching a new Active Volunteers programme.
<p>Residents and businesses have a greater role in decision making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support Queens Park in establishing the first Community Council in London for 50 years. • We will support local communities to establish new Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Plans, where appropriate. • We will test new ways of giving residents more say over how local services are run on Churchill Gardens and look to see how this can be applied to other areas of the city. • We will continue to help Business Improvement Districts to design and deliver public realm projects to meet their public realm aspirations and will work with HOLBA and NWECA to establish property owners BIDs as soon as the legislation is published.
<p>Low cost digital access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support the roll out of WiFi and Fibre Optic broadband across the city. • We will pilot internet protocol television in some parts of the city, giving residents enhanced access to digital media and online services.
<p>Sustainable investment in infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a Community Infrastructure Levy for Westminster that ensures long-term investment from developers in strategic infrastructure. • We will work in partnership with Transport for London, London Underground Limited and the Victoria BID to renew the Victoria Opportunity Area.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We believe that we will only be able to make Westminster healthier, safer, more enterprising and more connected if we all play a part.

Many residents, businesses and visitors already do a tremendous amount and we want to recognise and reward this. We also want to hear new ideas about how you could get involved in your local community.

To send us your ideas or to find out more, visit bettercitybetterlives@westminster.gov.uk

GET INVOLVED



Recruit a local **young person** to a vacancy in your business



Organise a **bake sale** to raise money for a local charity



Visit a local neighbour



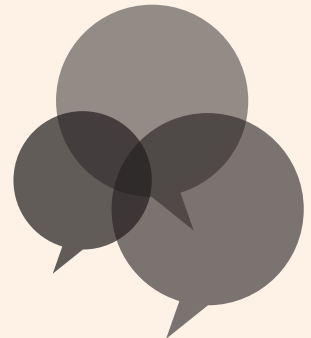
Organise a **street party** in the summer



Volunteer to help a cause you really care about



Pick your litter up when shopping in the West End



Attend your local **Area Forum** and have your say on local issues



