



**CITY
OF
LONDON**

Global City of Sport A Sport Strategy for the Square Mile **2023-2030**



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Foreword

Sport is transformative. From improving our mental and physical health to redeveloping landscapes, sport is the glue that binds people and communities together. Here in the City of London, sport is crucial for the wellbeing of our residents, workers, and visitors. It can also help us reach new and diverse audiences and is a crucial tool for our soft power as a global city to boost domestic trade and global influence. It is therefore vital that the City of London Corporation has a strategy to match our ambitions.

Our new sport strategy provides a direction of travel that will ensure we become a world-leading sport and leisure destination. Initially, we will hold an in-depth review of our current leisure facilities to ensure they provide the best possible experience for users. From this, we hope that there will be exciting opportunities to invest in new and innovative sport facilities that can then be enjoyed by all our stakeholders.

Importantly, this new sports strategy is aligned to wider work within the City Corporation such as Destination City, where we are striving to make the Square Mile a thriving, seven-day-a-week visitor location. Our sport and leisure offer is integral to this. As such, the strategy is only the beginning of our ambitious sport project and we'll be working with all our stakeholders and partners to deliver on this priority.

Over the lifetime of this strategy – the next seven years – we will bring new sporting life to the City, developing new initiatives, and delivering increased participation in sport and physical activity, all while strengthening our soft power. I look forward to working with you to make this positive change happen.



Chris Hayward
Policy Chairman,
City of London Corporation



Introduction

The City of London Corporation is the governing body for the Square Mile. It has a unique and significant role in supporting and promoting London, the UK and globally.

As well as providing local authority services in the Square Mile, it promotes trade and business opportunities to an international audience, in addition to supporting the cultural sector and managing open spaces across London.

Since the London 2012 Games, and more recently hosting the Women's Euro Football Championships in England, sport is increasingly seen as a vehicle for social and economic advancement, in addition to promoting health and wellbeing. Further details on how we deliver sport across the organisation can be found on our [website](#).

Through this strategy, which outlines the direction of travel for sport in the Square Mile over the next seven years and beyond, the City Corporation stands ready to use its resources and convening power to help maximise the impact of sport to all our stakeholders.

For the purposes of this strategy, the term 'sport' covers all forms of team sport, physical activity, fitness exercise, play and wellness. Active travel is covered separately by our Local Plan and Transport Strategy, delivering measures such as widening pavements or creating pedestrian priority streets, will also help enable people to exercise, including walking and cycling for leisure, in the public realm.



Vision – The City of London is a leading global city of sport, through valued and exceptional sport facilities, events and engagement

Our sport priorities are:



01 INVEST in our sport and leisure facilities



02 ACTIVATE our streets and public spaces to encourage sport and physical activity



03 CELEBRATE the impact of sport



04 ATTRACT more high quality sport events



05 SUPPORT local community sport

Who are our stakeholders?

The Square Mile is used by a number of stakeholder groups, including:

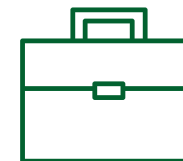
The priorities set out in this strategy reflect the findings of recent stakeholder analysis undertaken by various external consultancies since 2019.

This engagement has been through a mix of focus groups and surveys.



Residents

The City of London currently has around 8000 residents



Workers

There are over half million workers based in the City of London



Visitors

The City of London gets approximately 20 million tourist visits a year

How can we deliver sport outcomes?

The City Corporation has a long history of supporting sport, through the facilities and spaces we manage, as well as events and engagement with partners and stakeholders.



For this strategy, which is focused on the Square Mile specifically, our role in supporting and promoting sport includes:

01

Facilities

We oversee delivery of sport services and facilities at Golden Lane Leisure Centre, including a gym, swimming pool, tennis courts and indoor sports hall

02

Public Spaces

As the highway and planning authority for the Square Mile, we design, manage and maintain the City's streets and public spaces and guide the development of the built environment

03

Engagement

Using our venues and convening power, we aim to celebrate the impact of sport with our stakeholders and the wider community

04

Events

Sites in the City of London provide an inspiring backdrop for mass participation and high-profile spectator sport events and we oversee road closures and safety checks on large events

05

Activities

We support efforts by sport clubs and groups to improve the wellbeing of our residents and workers

Why are we prioritising sport and physical activity?



Similar to our cultural offer, sport provides the opportunity to demonstrate the value of the City Corporation to a wide and diverse audience. From elite to grassroots sport, it touches most people's lives in some way and can provide inspiration and hope to people from different backgrounds irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, ability and affluency.

Owing to recent events and the changing nature of work arrangements, the Square Mile is evolving to ensure it continues to be a place where people want to live, work and visit. Through this overarching 'Destination City' approach, the City Corporation is determined to offer attractive and relevant amenities so that it continues to be an internationally recognised destination for business and tourism. Sport facilities, events and engagement provide the City Corporation with an unparalleled opportunity to reach out to a wide and diverse audience and demonstrate our relevance in a global landscape. Sport can also have a positive contribution to range of benefits including:



Health and wellbeing

being active provides a variety of physical and mental health benefits



Social cohesion

sport and physical activity brings people together and breaks down social and cultural barriers



Economic

productivity, economic regeneration and local investment often stem from sport participation and events



Soft power and trade

success in sport and event hosting can enhance international diplomacy efforts and boost trade opportunities



Diversity and Equality

sport promotes the importance of diversity and equality of opportunity

Following extensive stakeholder analysis and feedback from our residents, workers and visitors there is now a clear justification for prioritising sport and physical activity within the Square Mile and in the various strategies that we prepare, including the Local Plan and Transport Strategy. In addition, agreeing clear and ambitious targets for sport and physical activity could help us deliver other strategic outcomes in relation to issues such as tackling climate change, reducing anti-social behaviour and social isolation, as well as improving outcomes for young people.

Who are our partners to deliver on the strategy?

To deliver on our sport priorities, it is imperative that we work hand in hand with our partners to achieve an ambitious set of goals. These partners include the UK Government, the Mayor of London, London Boroughs, UK Sport, Sport England, London Sport, National and International Sport Federations, and various sport consultancies and not-for-profit organisations. There will also be many occasions when we will need to work with the private sector, City businesses, developers and Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) on specific sport related initiatives.





How will we make sure we deliver on the sport strategy?

Key to ensuring the new sport strategy is delivered successfully will be appropriate oversight and management arrangements that keep the objectives on track. In addition to allocation of staff resources, a Member Lead and Sounding Board will help guide the new strategy and provide feedback on outcomes.



Regular reports on progress will also be provided to the Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee to maintain a necessary level of accountability for delivering on the strategy. It is anticipated that an action plan will be developed stemming from the identified sport priorities over the next seven years and beyond. Benchmarking against other urban areas within the UK and internationally can help ensure that our actions place the City at the forefront of urban sports, as well as highlighting alternatives sports, activity and play options that could be pursued.

Key departments involved in delivering on this strategy:

-  **Town Clerk & Chief Executive**
responsibility for overall management of the sport strategy
-  **Community & Children's Services**
responsible for our leisure contract and public health aspects
-  **Environment**
responsible for planning, public realm, active travel, highway management and open spaces in the Square Mile
-  **Innovation Growth**
responsible for business engagement and trade promotion

Owing to funding constraints, the strategy will need to be split into two phases. The first phase – Phase 1 (2023-26) - will identify five major objectives, each linked to the priorities, that should be delivered in the first three years of the strategy's implementation. Success of the strategy will be measured against the delivery of these five objectives at the end of the first three years i.e. by 2026. Agreement for funding and objectives for Phase 2 will be reviewed at the end of Phase 1 by Members and agreed prior to the commencement of the second half of the sport strategy delivery.

How will we pay for this?

Of course, in order to deliver a meaningful strategy it is essential that appropriate resources are allocated to the identified priority areas. However, given the current financial challenges facing the City Corporation, a degree of flexibility and creativity will need to be followed to achieve these outcomes.

There is also an expectation that efforts will be made to source external funding opportunities as well as realising the revenue enhancing potential that sport and physical activity can offer in the future.



01

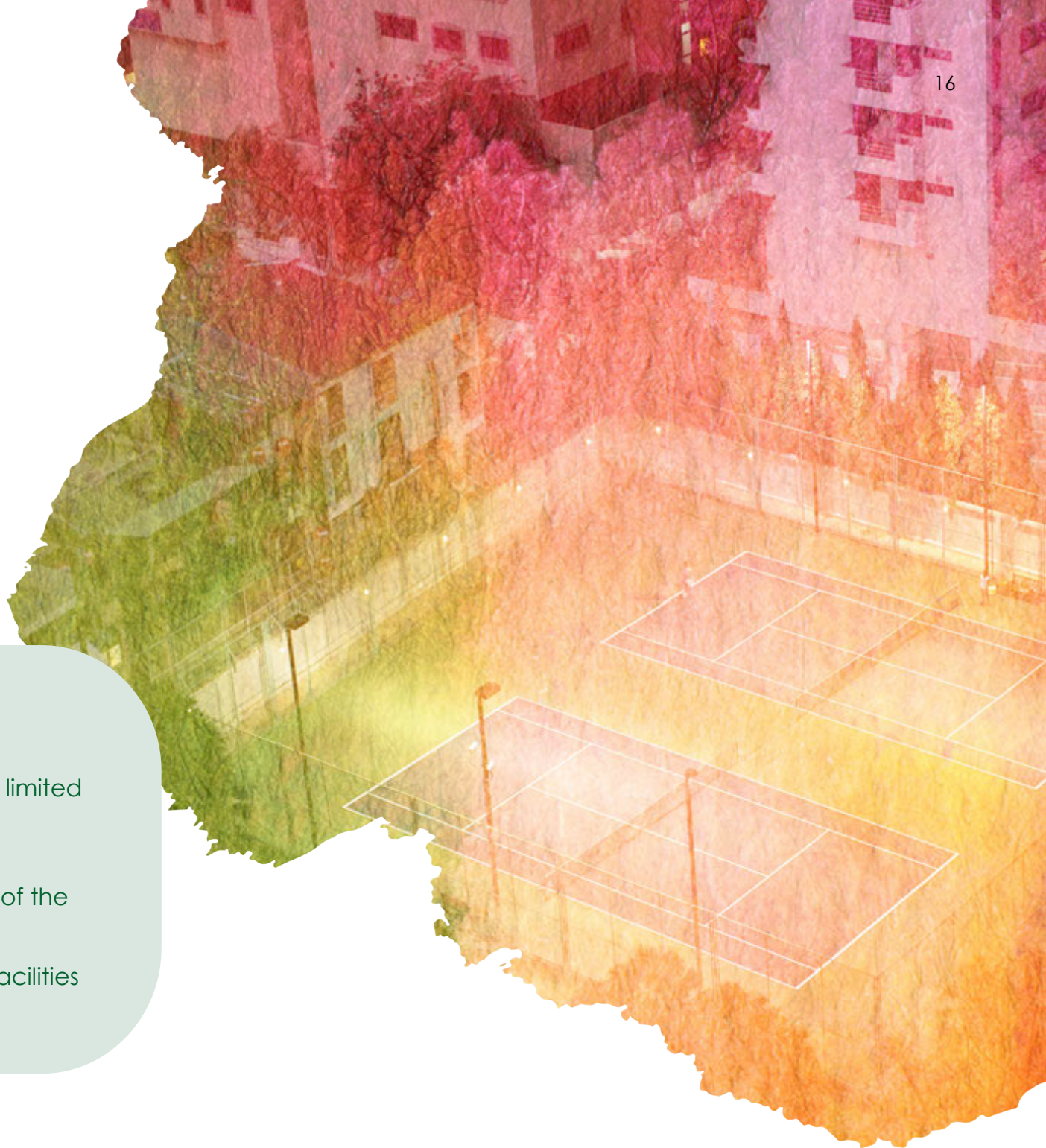


Invest

in our sport and
leisure facilities

What do our stakeholders say?

- The current leisure centre is not accessible for everyone and has limited scope for expansion
- We want unique state-of-the-art facilities, which take advantage of the urban landscape
- Swimming, sport and wellbeing facilities are important to us





01 Invest

How will we deliver on this priority?

a By assessing options and delivering for long term future sport and leisure investment in the Square Mile

We will undertake an in-depth feasibility study, with costed business plan, on the long term investment options for sport and leisure facilities in the Square Mile. Similar to other local authorities, we will look at partner opportunities to help with costs involved in building and managing the new site. Any proposal will need to be commercially viable in the long term and ensure revenue streams are maximised.

b By optimising existing facilities and recreational areas to maximise use and benefits to our stakeholders

We will consider the role and future of our existing leisure centre at Golden Lane, as well as opportunities to partner with neighbouring boroughs to ensure access to leisure services can be maintained. We will also explore options to enhance existing sport and play areas across the Square Mile to ensure they meet adequate standards and local needs. Where this is not the case, we will look to work with partners on improving these facilities.

c By collaborating with local partners and the private sector to offer a wide range of unique and appealing sport facilities and attractions

We will continue to welcome private gym, spa and leisure providers into the Square Mile and work with them to ensure our stakeholder needs are met. Where applicable we will also look to partner with these organisations to help deliver on our own sport objectives.

02 Activate

our streets and public spaces to encourage sport and physical activity

What do our stakeholders say?

- We want to use our green and grey spaces for exercise and sport
- Space for team games and informal sport is important
- Active travel must be prioritised and enhanced





02 Activate

How will we deliver on this priority?

a By expanding free-to-use outdoor sport and fitness facilities on our streets and public spaces

We will look to find suitable locations in the Square Mile that can accommodate bespoke free-to-use outdoor fitness equipment and, where space is limited, consider alternative multi-use facilities that encourage physical activity. In the long term, a network of outdoor facilities will be progressed across the Square Mile to provide no cost access to fitness equipment all year round.

b By encouraging sport and fitness as an integral part of appropriate new developments

As the planning authority for the Square Mile, we will work with developers to ensure new planning applications reflect on the need for sport and leisure access in local public and publicly accessible spaces, including spaces within buildings, where appropriate. We will consider how this priority can be identified in the new City Plan.

c By delivering our Transport Strategy to give people walking, running and cycling more space and priority on our streets.

We will continue to invest in our streets to make them safer and more attractive places to walk, run and cycle.

03



Celebrate

the impact of sport

What do our stakeholders say?

- We love coming to Guildhall to celebrate sport
- The City Corporation plays an important role in bringing sport and business leaders together
- Sport can generate so many positive outcomes and its great that we reflect on this





03 Celebrate

How will we deliver on this priority?

a By utilising our venues and convening power to promote the benefits of sport to a wide and diverse audience

We will continue to host events that celebrate the benefits of elite and grassroots sport to our stakeholders. Using venues such as Guildhall and Mansion House, we will welcome visiting dignitaries and guests to the City of London and provide unique backdrop to help raise awareness of the wide-ranging benefits of sport

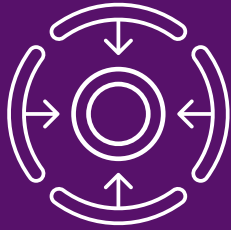
b By maximising our domestic and international reach to promote sport opportunities in London and the UK

We will utilise our overseas programme to promote London and the UK as a destination for major sport events and sporting success. We will also work with partners to use sport as a tool for international diplomacy and support the expansion of high profile international sports to London and the UK.

c By supporting events and initiatives that encourage collaboration between sport and business

We will develop our role as an interlocutor between sport federations and global business firms. At a time when business and financial gain from sport is so prescient, we will bring business and sport leaders together to discuss shared issues and find solutions to current challenges.

04



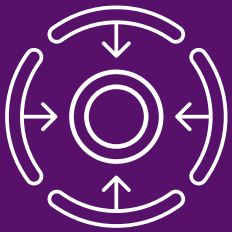
Attract

more high-quality sport events

What do our stakeholders say?

- A third of people from across the UK would be interested in visiting the Square Mile to watch a high-profile sport event
- Watching road races and events on the City streets offer a unique opportunity to promote the Square Mile's attractions
- Sport events need to be tied in to local stakeholder outcomes





04 Attract

How will we deliver on this priority?

a By enhancing the relationship with sport event organisers and actively promoting the City as a destination for sport

We will work with organisers of sport events to ensure they are supported and embraced as an important partner in delivering on objectives to make the Square Mile more appealing to visitors. As part of this relationship, we will also look to maximise outcomes from the event for our local community, including residents and City workers.

b By reviewing the delivery process to maximise positive outcomes from mass participation and spectator events

We will review internal and external processes for planning sport events on City streets and public spaces and consider any opportunities to enhance efficiencies and maximise outcomes to benefit local stakeholders.

c By encouraging domestic and international sport organisations to visit and operate within the Square Mile

Efforts will be made to encourage sport bodies to base themselves in the City of London. Additionally, alongside efforts to investigate options for leisure provision in the Square Mile, consideration will also be given to providing collaborative office space for domestic and international sport federations on a permanent and temporary basis.

05



Support

local community sport

What do our stakeholders say?

- It would be great if some of the City's iconic attractions be used for pop-up sport activities
- We love the social side to sport clubs and classes
- Accessible and inclusive activities, such as yoga and pilates, are important to us





05 Support

How will we deliver on this priority?

a By opening up our venues and spaces for sport and physical activity classes and group sessions

We will review current assets owned by the City Corporation to see whether any buildings or outdoor spaces could be made available for sport activities and group sessions. We will also work with businesses, schools and developers to ensure consideration is given to this aspect when designing new buildings and public realm in the Square Mile.

b By ensuring our sport facilities and play areas are fully accessible and open to all

We will audit our current sport facilities to ensure they are fully accessible and, where this is not the case, address the issues that are preventing access. We will also consider gender, social and cultural barriers that might limit access to a facility or space and seek to resolve these matters where possible.

c By championing youth focussed sport clubs and initiatives targeting people over 60, with a disability or from disadvantaged backgrounds

We will work with local sport clubs to help them establish regular community focused activities and sessions in the Square Mile, providing support on external funding opportunities as well as assistance with access to local facilities and spaces. Particular focus will be given to young people, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as people over 60, carers and those with a disability.



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