



# What West London wants from the New Mayor

Place West London held a vision debate intended to inform the new Mayor of London on what West London wants from them – “My vision: what West London wants from the new Mayor”. It was held on the evening of May 4, 2016, at the Place West London dinner, an annual event attracting a mix of public and private sector stakeholders in the sub-region.

A number of invited speakers each gave their three-minute suggestions for the new Mayor, and others in the audience then contributed both by speaking and written comment, collected during the evening.

Andrew Ward of Brunel University London moderated the discussion element, which he kicked off by listing his asks:

- The West London economy is the size of Frankfurt, and deserves its own LEP, not to be part of a London wide LEP which does not have sufficient focus on the sub-region’s needs.
- The GLA should restart funding for Observatories, this time built as public/private partnerships, to provide much needed data for planning, but also to include a repository of ‘smart city’ best practice.
- We need the 24 hour tube. 25% of workers travel to or from work outside standard hours. Making life easier for them would boost productivity.
- We need wifi everywhere. At the moment you can get it on the beach in Greece, but not in Park Royal. That is wrong. This was echoed by one audience member who suggested using the old analogue terrestrial TV bands and transmitters to achieve this.
- Use the planning regime to deliver more public toilets. London will be more liveable, and town centres would have longer dwell times.

Tony Laws, of Clearview Homes, said that while housing should be a priority, the new Mayor should not jump on the “more homes at any cost” bandwagon. This would be a recipe for poor quality, and produce 21<sup>st</sup> century slums. Quality in design and build remains important.

He also asked for:

- An objective review of the Greenbelt, and in particular of those areas of concrete, or disused buildings which as definitively not green, but remain undevelopable due to their location. These have no amenity value, provide no community facility, and produce no revenue for councils.
- For the local authority planning system to be given support. Many authorities are struggling on severely reduced resources, and we risk running out of planning capability, and missing whatever targets are set for new homes.

- A reassessment of the home ownership and rental sectors, and in particular an antidote to national Government obsession with ownership. Those who want to rent need to be allowed to, and need to have a private rental sector to rent from.

Shane Degaris, of Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, made a plea for homes for his workforce that are both affordable and local.

He also suggested:

- A radically different approach to NHS Estates around London, where public and private capital and assets are brought together to bring healthcare facilities up to acceptable standards.
- A genuine integration of Health and Social Services, where they are managed together for the benefit of the local populations.

Carlton Cummins, Entrepreneur, had just one request – that the new Mayor focusses on sustainability in the true triple sense of economy, society, and environment.

Sue Brown, of Tamesis Advisors made a clarion call for the new Mayor to employ more women.

She also asked:

- That West London gets more focus such as that in Old Oak, and more Opportunity Areas, and that the balance of these is more even between East and West London.
- That there is a focus on delivering homes that London's new adults are able to buy, so that children can move out of the family home when they become adults.
- For Crossrail 2 to have a station in Chelsea.
- For a halt or severe restriction of the volume of basement extensions to homes.

Andrew Dakers, of West London Business, argued for increased investment in outer London orbital transport. Improvements were coming to radial transport with Metroisation of rail, Crossrail and Old Oak. TfL has committed to adjusting North-South bus routes to connect with Crossrail, but an assessment must be done now to pick out the gaps in the sub-region's north-south public transport provision, and the formation of a plan to fill them. This investment would pay back, as GVA per worker in West London is the highest in the Capital. The new Mayor must feed, rather than kill, the golden goose that West London is.

Andrew also suggested:

- Employers need support in securing a full return to their businesses of the Apprenticeship Levy. The 'London Ambitions' report goal of 100 hours of work related learning and work experience for all school children by the time they leave education could be increased. This would improve links between education and business.
- That the Mayor should let West London decide what it wants to be famous for in 2026 when a new station (almost the size of Waterloo) opens at Old Oak marking a new era for West London. CleanTech at Park Royal (leveraging Brunel University and Imperial's strengths) and FoodTech (leveraging the University of West London's expertise) could provide an exciting narrative for the sub-region's future.

Dipna Anand, of Southall's Brilliant Restaurant, asked that schoolchildren should be taught more about cookery and healthy eating. She is already working with a Wembley college to provide educational courses about food to children, and this should be expanded, while schemes such as Ealing's Manor House cookery school should actually get off the ground.

Rob McDonald, from Peter Brett Associates, said that we are on the edge of the next industrial revolution, in transport. He said that there will be a step change in how people buy travel, and that developments like Old Oak will straddle the change. The development of fully autonomous vehicles which are predicted to be on London's roads just a few years after the HS2 station opens, have the potential to encourage increased private car use. He therefore urged the new Mayor to promote a different attitude to the transport of people and goods, to look at Helsinki's plan to sell 'mobility as a service' (MaaS) packages by 2025, which will lead to the potential for the same or greater movement with only 20 to 30% of the vehicles. Rob wants West London to be the trail blazer of mobility as a service, and to demonstrate that highway infrastructure need not be the constraint to movement that it is seen to be, freeing up roads for the services that really need them. A lot of the basic building blocks are already in London from car club schemes to world class multimodal travel apps. Rob wants the Mayor to champion MaaS to make this step change.

Neil Impiazzi, from SEGRO, echoed Andrew Ward's call for a West London LEP, and urged the new Mayor to recognise the role that West London plays in the UK economy, and how it allows the UK to compete better with other countries.

He also wanted the Mayor to look at:

- The challenge presented by the conversion of employment land to housing. While housing is important, so is employment, and models need to be explored where more mixed developments provide new homes, and places for the people who live in them to work at. In the last five years an area of employment land larger than Park Royal – 1300 acres – has been lost across London. Some of this has been good development, but there needs to be control of what is released in the future.
- A review of how we deliver goods bought online – and perhaps a plan to safeguard land that may be needed for the burgeoning e-commerce sector to deliver goods without clogging the roads.
- A strategy to assist businesses displaced by regeneration, to help them move and continue to thrive.

Lorraine Collins, from Uxbridge College, urged the Mayor to remember the small businesses. Many recent programmes such as apprenticeships have assisted larger companies, and the smaller ones need and deserve assistance with growing their skillbases.

The most often made comments from the audience were about the need to produce more new homes (7), and more that can be afforded by Londoners now and in the future. Next came calls for support for the expansion of Heathrow (5), or at least for a decision to be made.

On housing the new Mayor is encouraged to look at American models of home rental, and to understand that "first dibs on new homes for Londoners", while admirable, would not on its own

address the issue it attempts to. Also some flexibility around, for example, size standards would allow more affordable homes to be built.

On education, we need more and better secondary schools with a varied offer – perhaps copying the two tier German system. We need better quality teaching, perhaps with better incentives for people to enter the profession. And there needs to be more attention paid to getting girls to enter male dominated industries.

Apprenticeships should be expanded, and vocational education be given a greater role. The Mayor was urged to encourage ever greater partnership between business and the education sector – particularly in Schools and Further Education. Business has a responsibility to engage with the education sector and the commenter hopes that the Mayor's office can further encourage that to ensure that the education sector is aligned to a more clearly articulated view of the needs of businesses.

On transport, there were more calls for a 24 hour tube service (3) (and for it to cover the whole network), and for support for Crossrail 2 (3), as well as expanding safe routes for cyclists and keeping rail and tube fares down.

There was a call for investment in connecting the Central Line to Uxbridge through a link from West Ruislip to Ickenham, which would significantly enhance connectivity to this part of West London.

A ban on HGV traffic needs careful consideration and could create more problems than it would solve – with additional noise at night a likely effect. Commercial traffic needs serious thought, not just private cars.

In business, there was a call from bricks and mortar retailers for a way of applying business rates more to pureplay online retailers, to level the playing field, as well as one to balance the conversion of town centre office accommodation into homes through PDR with the continuing need for employment space.

In energy & environment, the Mayor should look at significant green energy grants for the installation of renewables into buildings, and aim to make London an exemplar clean, green and healthy city.

In health, one made a call to save Ealing Hospital, and another for a healthy eating festival in Southall.

In development and planning there were calls for more green spaces, for the Mayor to build on the London Land Commission, and echoes for Tony Law's call for a Greenbelt review. Some want the planning system to be able to take quicker decisions.

Neil Impiazzi's appeal for a more balanced approach to the challenge of housing squeezing out employment sites given land values was echoed by a few. West London needs a properly thought through strategy to ensure the acknowledged need to build more homes (including the right proportion of affordable housing) is balanced with a mix of commercial, logistics and manufacturing sites to reduce travel to work times.

The OPDC is a welcome addition to the West London landscape, and the Mayor should continue to support it and see it as a test bed for many new ideas.

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