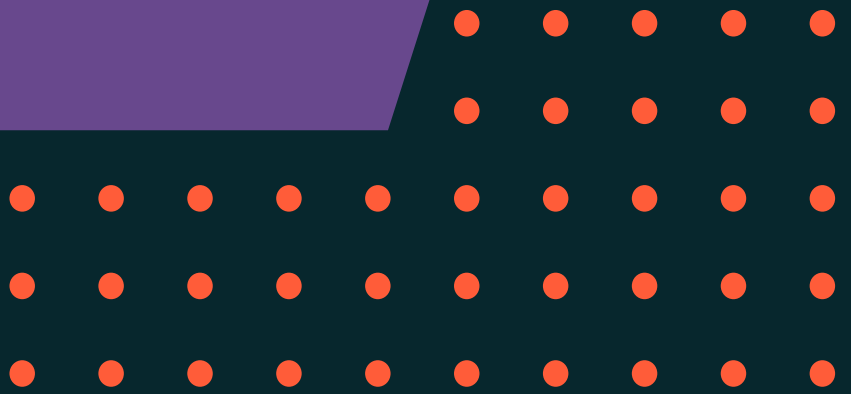




LONDONERS FOR LIFE

LONDON CITIZENS
MANIFESTO 2024



CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| THE JOURNEY TO THIS MANIFESTO | 4 |
| WORK AND WAGES | 6 |
| MIGRATION AND REFUGEES | 9 |
| HOUSING AND REPAIRS | 12 |
| EMERGING ISSUE: CLIMATE | 14 |
| RELATIONSHIP WITH US | 16 |

INTRODUCTION

London Citizens is part of Citizens UK and is the largest alliance of civic organisations in Europe, with over 200 members including faith groups, charities and educational institutions. In 2000, when the position of Mayor of London was created, London Citizens hosted its first ever London Citizens Mayoral Accountability Assembly. Since then we have run one every election. The assembly is used as a moment to present London Citizens' key issues to Mayoral candidates and win change for Londoners who are often left out of decision making.

London Citizens assemblies gave birth to the first urban community Land Trust - St Clements boasts 32 genuinely and permanently affordable homes. It was a London Citizens assembly that launched the London Living Wage campaign which has now led to £3 billion back into workers' pockets since the campaign began 20 years ago. It was also our 2016 assembly at the Copperbox that saw the next Mayor of London commit to double the number of affordable homes on new developments.

In May 2023, London Citizens' members launched a new listening campaign to

establish our priorities for Londoners, undertaking over 6,000 conversations. This document is the result of that listening, as well as lots of hard work with action teams, think tanks, and funders.

As we have undertaken listening across our membership, we have heard the struggle of Londoners to cope with the cost of living crisis, a hostile environment for our refugee and migrant neighbours, and a housing crisis that makes housing unaffordable and often uninhabitable. London often seems broken, but as London Citizens we believe that action leads to hope, which is why we have developed an agenda that we want to work together on with the next Mayor of London. We believe that this agenda and our joint efforts and energy would help fix some of London's most intractable problems. We believe that these solutions, and the work of community organising, can help bring life and health back to our city. That's why we have chosen to theme our manifesto around the idea of health and life. Not only do we want Londoners to thrive, we also want individuals and families to feel like this can be their city for life.

THE JOURNEY TO THIS MANIFESTO



BROAD-BASED ORGANISING

All of our work is rooted in our broad-based alliances. We now have 22 strong borough alliances with presence in 30 of the 32 London boroughs and over 200 dues paying member organisations. Members are faith groups, schools, universities, charities, community groups and more working together across difference to build power and make change.



LISTENING

From May to July 2023 we ran listening campaigns across our member organisations, asking thousands of people about what was putting pressure on them and their families. Through 121 conversations and house meetings we listened to over 6,000 people. We listen to: find new leaders wanting to take action, build our relational power which gives us the ability to make change, broaden our interests and build solidarity.



ISSUES WORKSHOPS

Hundreds of people who had been a part of the listening joined campaign teams and shared stories, starting to turn the big problems we had identified into worthwhile and winnable issues that we could do something about. Policy experts, funders were invited to help provide context, insight and ideas but decisions about which ideas to take forward are made by leaders from member organisations.



MANIFESTO WORKSHOP

On 17 October we hosted a manifesto workshop with over 300 people. Teams of leaders shared their priorities and got consent from each borough alliance for the development of proposals that we wanted the next Mayor of London to work with us on. This was our own democracy in action.



LAUNCHING THE MANIFESTO

From February member organisations will launch the London Citizens manifesto in their organisation. Students from schools will host assemblies, faith organisations will share the manifesto after services. We will ask members to back the manifesto, share it with others' and think about who is best to attend the London Mayoral assembly on 25 April.



VOTER REGISTRATION

During Voter Registration Week in March member organisations will be encouraged to register members of their organisation and educate them as to the changes around voting and the need for ID.



MAYORAL ASSEMBLY

On 25 April, thousands of us will join in person and even more online to put our agenda to the next Mayor of London.



VOTE

On 2 May 2024 Londoners will vote for the next Mayor of London. This year will see a change to the way Londoners vote for their Mayor. Traditionally you have been able to have a second choice candidate whereas this year it will be a first past the post system.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE MAY 2024-APRIL 2028

We will spend the next four years working with the next Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to make our manifesto a reality.

WORK AND WAGES

Low wages and insecure hours affect many people in London Citizens member institutions, with one in eight jobs in the city paid below the real Living Wage.


The real Living Wage campaign was born out of London Citizens organising, and there are now over 3,700 employers in the city who pay their staff a real Living Wage, based on the cost of living. Since the start of the Making London a Living Wage City initiative in 2021, our work has put over £228m back in the pockets of low-paid workers.

Insecure work is the other side of the coin of in-work poverty. In addition to low paying jobs, Londoners are increasingly finding themselves in low paid and

insecure jobs. In fact, workers in London are considerably more likely than those elsewhere to see their shifts cancelled unexpectedly, and suffer more from high costs of things like last-minute transport or childcare than anywhere else in the UK.

Employers signed up to the Living Wage Foundation's 'Living Hours' scheme commit to decent pay and secure work for their staff. The scheme ensures all workers get at least four weeks' notice for shifts, a contract that reflects the hours worked, and a guaranteed minimum of 16 hours a week (unless the worker opts-out).

We want to make London a city where every worker feels secure and earns enough for a dignified life.



I am a proud care worker. It's long hours and not enough pay but It's God's work and it's meaningful... Given how meaningful the work is I'm angry that my employers and other care providers don't give us a fair wage. For me it means I sometimes have to work a triple shift. That's a day followed by a night shift followed by another day. It's exhausting. I've just got married and as I look forward to the possibility of family - how can I stay in this job I love so much?

CARE WORKER AND LEADER, WEST LONDON CITIZENS



OUR TRACK RECORD

- ◆ Since September 2021, through the Making London a Living Wage City initiative we have won tens of thousands of pay rises for workers and that figure keeps growing. This is more than £228m in increased wages
- ◆ We have worked with the GLA to increase the number of health and social care employers paying the real Living Wage. Since September 2021 we have gone from eight to 24 NHS Trusts and from 84 organisations to 163, with a combined uplift of nearly 10,000 staff
- ◆ Since September 2021, we have invested in and are developing over 250 community and worker leaders across London and have involved nearly 12,000 people in the movement

WE ASK THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON TO CO-CHAIR THE MAKING LONDON A LIVING WAGE CITY STEERING GROUP AND:

1. Call on National Government to ensure all adult social care workers in England are paid at least the real Living Wage, as a step towards ensuring that all care workers are paid at least the real Living Wage
 - ◆ Make a joint cross-party call with regional mayors to the next UK Government that sufficient funding and guidance is provided to ensure that all publicly funded social care jobs in England are paid the real Living Wage, including sleep-in shifts and appropriate travel time. A real Living Wage for social care workers has been achieved in Wales and Scotland. This is the first step to ensuring all social care workers can be paid at least the real Living Wage in England
2. Make London a Living Hours City
 - ◆ Having accredited the GLA as a Living Hours employer, accredit all functional bodies in the GLA Group by 2028
 - ◆ Partner with us to double the number of Living Hours accredited employers in London year on year through to 2028



3. Set a clear vision that all Mayoral planning powers, asset management and procurement plans require the real Living Wage and Living Hours

- The Mayor has an important role in setting a vision for planning and procurement – the real Living Wage and Living Hours should be at its heart
- In certain places, such as Mayoral Development Corporations and Opportunity Areas, the Mayor has power to set the strategic direction for developments, agree policies and monitor standards. We want the Mayor to make it a requirement that real Living Wage and Living Hours are embedded in policies and contracts in these places so that workers have wages and hours to meet everyday needs
- Where the Mayor's functional bodies own assets such as land and buildings, ensure that real Living Wage and Living Hours are embedded in jobs in these places and spaces
- Ensure real Living Wage and Living Hours are embedded in the GLA's new Procurement Strategy

We will:

- Continue **training workers and leaders in our member institutions** to lead the campaign in London for more Living Wage and Living Hours accreditations
- Organise our communities to **secure Living Wage and Living Hours accreditations from London's most iconic employers**, working closely with the GLA
- **Bring together communities in places where the Mayor has planning, asset management and procurement powers** to organise for Living Wage and Living Hours, harnessing local power to secure your vision

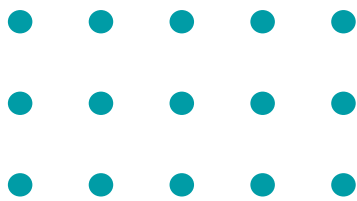
49,000

**PAYRISES WON SINCE
SEPTEMBER 2021**

MIGRATION AND REFUGEES

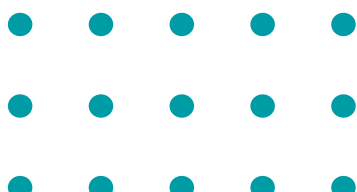
London is one of the greatest cities on Earth - but it will only become a place where people, regardless of background, have equal opportunities to succeed if we build it that way.

From those seeking sanctuary to learners of English, and those on their journey to citizenship, together, we can ensure that London is a city for all Londoners - a city in which everyone can be safe, stable, prosperous, and thrive.



My health makes it difficult to walk. But I need to take my children to primary school every day. The youngest is only 5 years old. The school run is 15 minutes by bus, but because I only receive £8.86 a week, I force myself to walk 45 minutes each way. It's tiring and I have to keep stopping and take breaks, but my children need to go to school. I need to visit the GP a lot, but it's a 30-minute walk. After taking the kids to school, there's no money left for me to take the bus to see the GP. More often, I cancel my appointments. My health is suffering. What can I do?

FATMA, A MOTHER CLAIMING ASYLUM IN NORTH LONDON



OUR TRACK RECORD

- ◆ In 2010, the Strangers into Citizens Campaign culminated in 10,000 people in Trafalgar Square and led to over 150,000 people getting their immigration status
- ◆ In 2016, London Citizens successfully campaigned for a Deputy Mayor of Citizenship and Integration to champion these issues and the Londoners impacted by them
- ◆ London Citizens was at the forefront of the Refugees Welcome movement, supporting dozens of community groups to resettle refugees
- ◆ London Citizens successfully pushed to make ESOL more accessible and inclusive in London, working closely with GLA

WE ASK THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON TO:

1. Co-produce a campaign to promote ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) including hosting an annual ESOL day with the Deputy Mayor for Skills and the ESOL community
- ◆ Co-produce a campaign to promote ESOL utilising Transport for London and other GLA assets
 - ◆ Host an annual ESOL Day at City Hall, led jointly by the Deputy Mayor for Skills and the ESOL community
 - ◆ Champion ESOL and advocate to National Government for its critical role in societal integration and development through increased funding



2. Provide access to free London bus travel for asylum seekers

- ◆ Commission a feasibility study, including Scotland's scheme as a case study, and carry out an impact assessment pilot alongside civil society, health and education partners
- ◆ Create a bus travel scheme for asylum seeker parents doing the school run for primary school children
- ◆ Allocate funding from the GLA skill budget for asylum seekers to travel to ESOL classes

3. Advocate for pathways to citizenship that are fairer, quicker and more affordable

- ◆ Call on national government for improved pathways to citizenship for the many who call the UK their home
- ◆ Introduce us to MPs and candidates in London who might be supportive
- ◆ Maintain support and funding for the GLA's Migration Team

We will:

- ◆ Campaign for national government to increase ESOL funding and make pathways to citizenship fairer, quicker and more affordable
- ◆ Organise English learners so that they can participate in creating ESOL policy



HOUSING AND REPAIRS

London risks becoming a city for the wealthy, while too many Londoners face a housing crisis. Our homes are mouldy, damp and overcrowded. We pay rents that are too high for housing that is of poor quality. We want to ensure that everyone, regardless of income or background, has an affordable, safe, warm, sustainable home to live in. Better homes will make us healthier, help tackle mental health challenges and put money back into the pockets of the poorest people. By upgrading our homes, we will use less energy, making them cheaper to heat and more environmentally friendly.

For years, I have struggled with unrepaired housing that is affecting my house with mould, causing me mental and emotional breakdowns. There was a time that that the air was so full of mould that it affected my little son's health and I thought I was going to lose him.

**SHARON,
PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES
TOGETHER, SOUTHWARK**



OUR TRACK RECORD

- ◆ Pioneered genuinely and permanently affordable housing through Community Land Trusts, setting up St Clements and Citizens House in London
 - ◆ Successfully campaigned for local authorities to develop landlord licensing schemes to help tackle rogue landlords
 - ◆ Successfully campaigned for the Good Development Standard, doubling the percentage of affordable housing in new developments across London
- 2. Tackle bad landlords**
 - ◆ Standardise Mayoral guidance for Local Authorities on best practice for landlord licensing schemes to improve consistency and enable a London-wide approach
 - 3. Repair and retrofit social homes**
 - ◆ Work with local authorities and housing associations over the next four years to identify and start a pilot retrofit and upgrade site in every borough.

WE ASK THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON TO:

1. Back our Community Land Trust Homes - Community Land Trusts homes are homes where the price of the home is connected to the median income of that area.

- ◆ We want the next Mayor to agree to back Community Land Trust homes sites in Shadwell, Greenwich and Ealing
 - ◆ Bring forward one new site per borough for community led affordable housing over the next 4 years, with a land deal agreed within 12 months.
- We will:
- ◆ Support the building of community land trust homes at borough level by helping to engage the community and encourage them to support local sites.
 - ◆ Educate renters about their rights and support them to hold landlords to account
 - ◆ Encourage people living in social rent homes to work with councils and housing associations to co-design and implement repair and retrofit schemes.

EMERGING ISSUE CLIMATE

Climate change is affecting the lives of Londoners now. We want to see a transition to a net zero world which is fair and reduces inequality. We want to live in a city where nature and people flourish together. Where people connect and build communities in our parks and green

spaces. Where homes are energy-efficient and sustainable.

We're doing our part; campaigning to create butterfly corridors, reducing damp and mold in social housing, increasing play provision in local parks.



What keeps me awake at night is that young people are having our futures stolen by decision-makers who talk about the climate crisis like it's something way off into the future - as if the destruction of our only home is a distant inconvenience. But what fills me with hope is US because WE are taking this opportunity to make change.

**MAIA JARVIS,
WEST LONDON ZONE**

OUR TRACK RECORD

- ◆ Won £200,000 investment in Wormwood Scrubs park including new play equipment and more accessible pathways.
- ◆ Published a report with the University of Westminster investigating the number of retrofitted homes in London in the last mayoral term and demanding more.
- ◆ Challenged the Mayor of London to create 60,000 good, green jobs.
- ◆ Increasing green spaces which allow nature and people to thrive together.
- ◆ Working with more councils to agree a Climate Charter which strives for local environmental improvements such as rerouting bus services, improving waste management and rewilding.

During the course of the next mayoralty we will develop these ideas into proposals and seek to work with the Mayor and the GLA to turn our ideas into a reality. We look forward to working together to create change for our beautiful city and the people who call it home.

Developing ideas:

- ◆ Improving public transport to make it accessible and affordable for all, particularly in London's outer boroughs



RELATIONSHIP WITH US

Broad based community organising is about putting people before programme. We know that these issues hurting us may change, but the need for our organisations to be working together and building collective power is ongoing. More important than any individual issue or ask is that we build a relationship with decision-makers, so that our communities have a seat at the table.



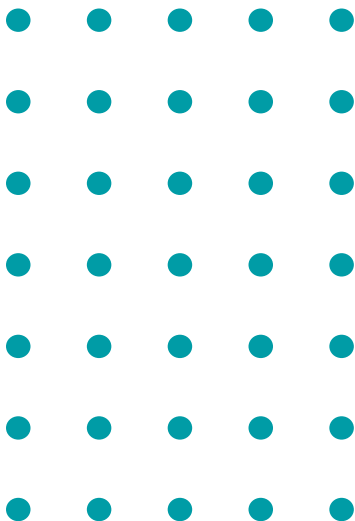
**IF YOU'RE
NOT AT
THE TABLE
THEN YOU
ARE ON THE
MENU**

WE ASK THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON TO:

- 1.** Update us about the progress they are making on our manifesto
 - ◆ We want the next Mayor to attend a London Citizens assembly in October 2025. This will be an opportunity to share the progress made on the issues we have agreed to work together on
 - ◆ Commit to finding opportunities to work with London Citizens for the common good of Londoners
- 2.** Commit the relevant Deputy Mayors and officers to meet with us at least 3 times a year to work together on the issues we have agreed to prioritise.

We will:

- ◆ Work together with the next Mayor of London to support them in areas of common interest
- ◆ Update the Mayor and their teams on the progress we are making on the commitments we have made
- ◆ Share stories and insights from our ongoing Listening with Londoners about their experience in the capital city
- ◆ Work with the Deputy Mayors and officers to make our manifesto a reality
- ◆ Find ways to celebrate the Mayor and their team when action is taken on our manifesto asks





BRINGING
COMMUNITIES

together



citizensUK

JACQUARD POINT
1 AND 3 TAPESTRY WAY
LONDON E1 2FJ
020 7043 9881
INFO@CITIZENSUK.ORG
WWW.CITIZENSUK.ORG

Find out more about our work

