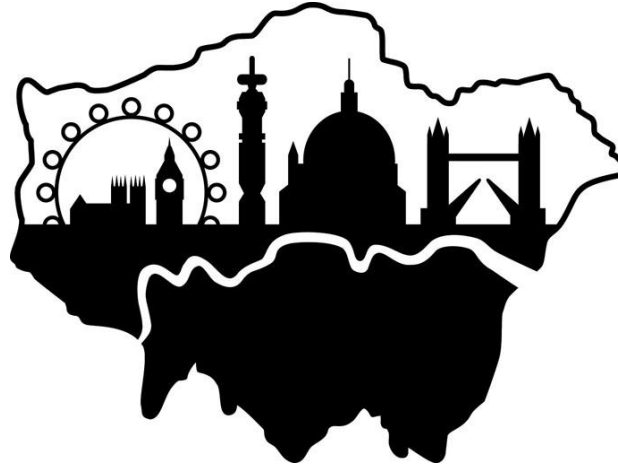


THE LONDON FORUM

of Amenity and Civic Societies

Founded 1988

Registered Charity Number 1093134



35th ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Constitution

The London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies (“London Forum” or “the Forum”) is an unincorporated association founded in 1988 and registered as a charity in 2002. It is governed by a constitution last revised in 2008. The Forum’s aim is to protect and improve the quality of life of people living, working in or visiting the area of Greater London. The objects of London Forum can be summarised as the promotion and encouragement of:

1. High standards of planning, design, infrastructure and transport;
2. Conservation and heritage protection;
3. Improvement to the built environment, open spaces, waterways and amenities;
4. Knowledge of, and interest in, the aims of the London Forum by members, Non-Government Organisations and others;
5. Civic pride and community involvement;
6. Sustainable development.

Activities of the London Forum are summarised on the final page of this report. The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit.

Organisation structure

The London Forum is managed by an Executive Committee of up to fifteen trustees, elected at the Annual General Meeting by the voting members which are amenity and civic societies in the Greater London area. Matters of detail are delegated to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee, or to the recently formed Member Services Committee, both of which report to the Executive Committee. All the work of London Forum, except for IT support from external contractors, is carried out by volunteers.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

Throughout the year the London Forum continued to monitor matters of relevance to its member societies and provide support and information to them. The trustees seek to keep the Mayor and the Greater London Assembly in no doubt of the central importance of the civic society movement and to bring the special position and needs of London to the notice of the Government and of Members of Parliament. This is achieved by discussions with politicians and officers and in writing including consultation responses.

Strategy Review

During the year, the Executive Committee tasked a group of trustees with leading a review of London Forum's strategy. Following a survey of member societies, interviews and a facilitated workshop, trustees concluded that the Forum should continue to focus primarily on planning matters, improve its effectiveness especially in engaging with member societies, and then consider strengthening capacity on heritage, environment and transport matters.

Following this strategy review the Executive Committee established a Member Services Committee, allowing the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee to focus on policy and advocacy.

The Executive Committee also completed a skills survey of trustees to help identify areas of possible risk exposure and the skills and experience to prioritise when seeking trustee nominations.

Committee and Officers

Following her appointment as London Forum Vice President, Nicky Gavron was co-opted to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee met six times during the year, as did the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee.

As always, London Forum welcomes nominations from member societies for trustee and officer roles, as experts for the Planning, Environment and Transport committee and as member representatives on the new Member Services Committee.

Government and Legislation

For London Forum the year has been dominated by a huge number of proposed planning policy changes by the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Michael Gove was Secretary of State for that department in July 2022 and in June 2023, but there were two other occupants of the post during the year and other changes. The new housing minister, Rachel Maclean KC, is the 15th in that post since 2010.

The Government released its 'Planning for the Future' White Paper with radical ideas for changes to the English planning system, but subsequently dropped its proposals for growth, renewal and protection zones where planning permission would be automatically granted in some zones. A Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) was introduced and London Forum had several objections, as described in *Insights* July 2022, to a new Infrastructure Levy and to the introduction of National Development Management Policies.

Our concerns about the Bill's policy changes were covered by several Labour and Tory amendments during the Commons Committee Stage, but they were ultimately not progressed owing to an overwhelming majority of whipped Conservative MPs opposing them.

Discussions with Theresa Villiers, the Conservative MP for Chipping Barnet, were useful and she supported our objections. However, her amendments for London Forum and for other MPs were withdrawn after she obtained a concession from Michael Gove on behalf of sixty Tory MP rebels that centrally determined housing targets would be just a "starting point". Councils would be able to propose building fewer homes if they faced "genuine constraints" or would have to approve development at a density that would "significantly change the character" of their area.

The December 2022 *Insights* and News/Updates from July 2022 gave details of that and of several LURB changes made by the Government.

London Forum put its name to a letter by a group of civic societies addressed to Michael Gove objecting to a potential 35% uplift in the housing targets for all major cities, including London. The boroughs and GLA Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates that this would be impossible in the absence of capacity to build.

The Government issued in December 2022 two linked consultations about changes to the planning system arising from the LURB and regulations that the Secretary of State intends to produce. One consultation was on a draft version of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which included the introduction of National Development Management Policies that London Forum had opposed in the LURB because their application would effectively trump policies in Local Plans. Our response to the NPPF changes also included policies we want introduced on tall buildings and other topics.

London Forum contacted members of the House of Lords about the parts of the LURB to which we had objected in preparation for their consideration of the Bill from January 2023. Responses by Peers of all parties and Cross Bench ones were positive and a meeting was held with the Labour front bench team to explain the amendments sought. They were all covered by Peers' amendments.

Objections by Peers in the Lords to clauses in the LURB that were not clear or would allow the Government to introduce legislation after it becomes an Act of Parliament forced the Government to initiate more public consultations on its proposals in the Bill. These covered a new Infrastructure Levy, short-term lets, street votes, High Street Rental Auctions, Environmental Outcome Reports (to replace Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments) and planning fees. London Forum responded to them.

Peers raised LURB amendments for the Secretary of State to assess and report on the benefits and harms of existing Permitted Development Rights.

Progress in the Lords' Report Stage of the LURB was slow and will resume in September 2023 when it will begin to cover clauses of importance for London Forum and its members.

The Government responded to its compulsory purchase compensation reforms consultation on the proposals in LURB whereby it is introducing a means to restrict the payment of 'hope value' on the prospect of planning permission in certain types of schemes when powers of compulsory purchase are used.

The Government has removed the need for authorities to review their Green Belt boundaries, although this may make meeting the need for housing in some Boroughs impossible.

The Forum sought through some Conservative MPs a Third Party Right of Appeal and regrets the Government's refusal to see its merits.

The Forum has pressed constantly for meaningful and timely consultation with the community before a planning application is lodged. Clauses in the LURB seem to support this and Westminster City Council has introduced such rules.

The Retained EU Law Bill received royal assent on 29 June. This is considerably watered down since first introduced, especially in doing away with the sunset clause under which all EU laws would be revoked unless specifically earmarked for retention. This was confirmed by the Government in May after much needlessly prioritised work by the civil service. Last minute further concessions appear to include the greater use of affirmative resolution instead of negative resolution when EU laws are revoked. In theory this increases the amount of parliamentary scrutiny.

The Government has established the Office of Environmental Protection after leaving the enforcement mechanisms of the EU.

The Government has announced that small sites will not be required to meet new biodiversity net gain requirements introduced by the 2021 Environment Act until April 2024. This is five months after it will become mandatory under the Environmental Improvement Plan for larger sites and gives local planning authorities and developers more time to prepare for a "high volume of applications".

The Office of National Statistics is publishing the 2021 census results in phases with useful information being released from April 2023. It could be the end of 2023 before phase 3 provides meaningful data for planning purposes.

The Mayor and Assembly

The new London Plan was adopted in March 2021 but for most of 2022-23 the guidance needed for boroughs to implement it properly failed to appear, though there were several consultations in which the London Forum participated. Four guidance notes on *Characterisation and Growth*, *Small Site Design Codes*, *Optimising Site Capacity and Housing Design Standards* were finally promulgated in June 2023. It has been difficult for boroughs to bring their own local plans

up-to-date in the absence of this guidance, especially given the uncertainty around the direction of national policy.

London Forum advised the Mayor's office about our priorities for the next London Plan and workshops were planned and conducted by the GLA to collect recommendations for it as part of its 'Planning for London' programme. It is unlikely that any work will begin on the new plan until after the next Mayoral election in 2024, but the programme for its potential content is open for comments by London Forum and its members.

The Mayor's 'London Recovery' newsletter is of interest for its information on the future of high streets and on London's economy.

Several issues were discussed with the Assembly Planning and Regeneration Committee relating to: tall buildings, Mayoral call-in of developments, densification of the suburbs, the future of our town and local centres, housing targets for boroughs, Metropolitan Open Land and the monitoring of the impact and performance of London Plan policies.

The latter has become a serious problem because the Mayor has failed to publish Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) for the last two years of the 2016 London Plan version and for the first two years of the current version. That means there is no published assessment of the achievement or failure of the twenty-two Key Performance Indicators that should indicate policies that may need changing or action to be taken on their dependencies. On behalf of London Forum the Planning and Regeneration Committee is chasing the Mayor for the AMRs.

The Deputy Mayor for Planning confirmed in a response to the committee in November 2022 that, before the Mayor determines a called-in application, representatives of the applicant, the LPA and local community can provide their comments via the GLA website and at a representation hearing.

The Planning and Regeneration Committee proposed amendments to the LURB and to the London Plan, scrutinised whole life-cycle carbon and the circular economy in London's built environment, examined the work and progress of Mayoral Development Corporations and interviewed suppliers of affordable housing and community groups for increasing supply of social rented homes with consideration of compulsory purchase powers.

The Assembly Housing Committee met seven times this year. The main topic was the Mayor's Affordable Homes Programme; they also covered women and

housing, supported housing, new legislation concerning housing, consultation with tenants and access to home ownership for young Londoners.

In 2016 the Mayor was given £4.82 billion to contribute to the funding of a building programme running from 2016-2023 with a target of beginning the construction of 116,000 affordable homes. In May 2023 a total of 116,782 had been started with 58,936 completed. £1 billion was given to local authorities and building commenced on 23,000 new council homes. The fund has been used mainly for intermediate housing, especially shared ownership which is becoming prohibitively expensive because of London house prices. The second Affordable Homes Programme 2021-2026 therefore concentrates on housing for social rent. The Mayor's fund only provides 10-15% of the money needed to build these new homes and so it must be used strategically. The Deputy Mayor for housing put success down to a diversity of providers and a sophisticated programme management approach. A close relationship between all involved has seen problems resolved by working across agencies with a swift referral to top management when solutions could not be found at the lower level. A good understanding of providers' problems and being able to negotiate flexibilities have ensured the better use of funding.

A meeting on women and housing acknowledged that women were adversely affected by high housing costs because their average earnings are less than men and they were more likely to be single parents. Some affordable housing schemes, such as shared ownership, were too expensive for many women who really needed social housing.

The plight of women fleeing domestic violence in particular was also discussed. There are not enough places in women's refuges and migrant women, travelling on their husbands' visas, are particularly vulnerable because they have no recourse to public funds and cannot pay rents. They are therefore reliant on charity or family and friends.

Older women can become isolated and benefit from sheltered housing and the GLA could assist with advice on accessing funding.

There is insufficient data to estimate accurately the need for supported housing in London and this needs to be improved. However, the GLA has not been able to spend the money allocated to this type of housing because, although it can finance the building, it cannot provide revenue funding to cover the support costs.

LURB includes provisions that could require local authorities to register and licence all supported housing and give them powers of enforcement.

At another meeting the committee discussed proposed legislation. The Renters' Reform Bill requires the decent homes standard to be applied to the private rented sector which includes achieving net zero carbon emissions. The Social Housing Regulation Bill proposes a rent cap on social housing, which is not popular with providers as it will restrict their ability to build new homes. It also requires social landlords to consult with tenants.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry highlighted a problem with tenants' complaints not being taken seriously. The inquiry established that values, attitudes and behaviours needed to improve. Tenants were not treated with respect and not listened to, administrative systems were adhered to at the expense of tenants' needs and convenience.

The London Plan includes a requirement to engage tenants in discussion about standards and performance. 15% of council homes do not meet decent home standards mainly due to a lack of funding, but this limitation should not affect how housing providers interact with their tenants. Generally, tenants' rights were unclear and the GLA has a role in setting standards and using funding as an enforcement measure.

The Housing Committee is also concerned about home ownership and recognised that this is a particular problem for young people. Many cannot afford to buy in London because house prices and rents are so high that they cannot save for a deposit, even if they could afford a mortgage.

The two GLA schemes directed towards this problem are London Living Rent and Shared Ownership. London Living Rent requires tenants to pay no more than one third of their income in rent so that they can save for a deposit. They are given ten years to achieve this. With shared ownership, tenants part rent part buy their homes, working towards total ownership by increasing their payments over the years. This scheme is well established and popular, although there have been problems with short leases and unclear service charges which are reportedly being resolved. The cap on prospective tenants' earnings has been raised to £67,000. Home ownership provides security and stops the workforce moving out of London.

There is no easy solution to the high rents in the private sector. Rent controls, which are advocated by some, will probably have the effect of shrinking the

sector. The Government has various other schemes to help first time buyers, but these are not dealing with large numbers and are not without problems.

Borough Councils

London Forum continues to monitor the state of the impacts of the High Streets Task Force, Permitted Development (which we oppose where Councils and communities cannot control local changes) and Local Plan revision.

A report by Bidwells in October 2022 found that approximately half of all London boroughs had Local Plans adopted in the previous five years and ten had commenced new plans. There was an overall increase in the number of boroughs unable to demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land Supply.

It is important that Councils have policies to take advantage of the delegation of responsibilities contained in the March 2021 London Plan. In particular policies around tall buildings, for Good Growth, Design Codes that determine the type and purpose of development allowed and for controlling densification of the suburbs. Without those, even Councils with recent plans will still be unable to refuse developments that fail to meet local needs and expectations.

The LURB requires that Local Planning Authorities have a new development plan within a fixed timescale to 2026. That may be assisted by the Government's proposed deletion of the test of soundness that requires plans to be justified. London Forum is concerned that Local Plans should continue to demonstrate that sufficient research has been done to justify their content and avoid challenges to them.

In March 2023, the Mayor produced an update report on his 'Place Shaping Capacity Survey' of boroughs, conducted every two years since 2014, including questions to understand skills and capacity issues specific to housebuilding.

London Forum supported a LURB clause for a new neighbourhood planning tool called a 'Neighbourhood Priorities Statement', providing communities with a "simpler and more accessible way to set out their key priorities and preferences for their local areas" and which should be considered for Local Plan content.

GLA information on residential completions by borough which showed that in 2022/23 18,874 units were approved, well down on the 78,761 units approved in 2018/19.

Centre for London put together key statistics in a case for 'Levelling up London' which showcased the different challenges in each of the capital's 32 boroughs and how they compare to each other. London Councils sought additional central funding for boroughs but failed.

The '2022 Healthy Streets Scorecard' for London's local authorities was published.

London Forum continues to monitor the community alliances that are working in some boroughs and offer support to them when requested.

We published details of an important appeal refusal in Barnet based on context and impact. Light to habitable rooms rules must be applied in borough decisions.

Transport

Last year saw the opening of the Elizabeth Line and what a difference a year makes! The line is already the most heavily used on Network Rail with one in six passenger rail journeys involving its use. The full service opened in May 2023 with through journeys possible between all but a few origins/destinations at the extremities.

One of the problems with mega schemes and their long periods of gestation is that circumstances alter significantly by the time they are built. In the case of Crossrail/Elizabeth line, the depot at Old Oak Common is in a place needed for other rail purposes, although the uncertainties around HS2 mean that a clear plan is still evolving.

Other major rail projects are on pause. This pause may prove beneficial in the case of Crossrail2 after the route was adjusted to address the perceived need to disperse passengers from HS2 at Euston. Since then the HS2 connection to Euston has been "rephased" and it might prove better to revert to the previous plans for Crossrail2 which addressed the needs of London at a better cost: benefit ratio.

Other schemes in discussion, but not actioned, include extensions to the Docklands Light Railway ("DLR") and to the Bakerloo line. Although an agreement was eventually forged with the Government for a financial settlement protecting existing Transport for London services, there is no funding available for major maintenance projects or new infrastructure. The Forum continues to advocate Piccadilly line resignalling as the most urgent project. It would enhance capacity

on the Piccadilly line which its new trains (purchased for delivery in 2025) were designed to achieve and cost far less than new lines.

The TfL funding agreement included a requirement to make further as yet unidentified savings. The first of these was TfL's participation in the travelcard scheme because TfL does not get the full value of a travelcard issued outside London. The proposal would force some passengers to pay more for the same journeys. The estimated £40m that this saves thus comes partly from passengers and partly from Train Operating Companies. The Forum does not support the proposal because of its adverse impact for some Londoners. Worse is to follow for rail passengers with plans announced to close ticket offices, but with the consultation extended to September 2023, that is a matter for the next annual report.

It was refreshing to hear that the Government now regards cities as key to the need for house building and its identification of the east end of London as a principal site. Moreover, they have acknowledged that such developments will require adequate public transport infrastructure, almost certainly to be provided through extensions to the DLR. If the Sunak administration is to be "proportionate and pragmatic" in its approach to net zero then a good start would be to fund the station at Beam Park where a major housing development approved by planners has stalled. New stations offer better value than new lines.

The Forum has consistently supported the need to address poor air quality and factors that contribute to climate change. We have welcomed the Mayor's plans for orbital limited stop bus routes around outer London that will improve public transport in the extended Ultra Low Emission Zone area, but cautioned against reducing bus frequencies on parallel stopping services, and highlighted the importance of attention to detail over the limited stop locations.

There has again been little progress towards expansion of Heathrow, or the promised creation of Great British Railways. While no news may be good news for our members in the former case, the void in running the railways is of concern. Members on the routes operated by Southeastern have faced severe reductions in service from some stations, or their choice of London termini from others, after the timetable was recast in December 2022. The operator argued that reducing conflicting movements across the flat junction north of Lewisham would improve reliability. While it may have made moving the trains easier, it did nothing for passengers.

The lack of significant progress towards Great British Railways leaves a void with the Southeastern timetable issues being only a part. Post-Covid, the train operators assume no risk and fare income goes to the Treasury. The Department for Transport takes the strategic decisions but is uninterested in the consequences of its decisions because it receives none of the money. Many of the Train Operating Companies have been renationalised into the Operator of last resort, and it is with these that the long running industrial disputes exist.

London Bridge cannot safely accommodate the numbers of people arriving or changing trains when there are unplanned service delays, despite the fact that it has recently been modernised to take an increased footfall. Footfall in the station could be reduced if passengers did not have to walk quite so far from one platform to another.

Growth in footfall at major stations has led to a controversial plan for Liverpool Street. Re-ordered 40 years ago, in a manner generally welcomed by users and conservationists alike, the station is over-crowded again. Although the Elizabeth line has obviated the need for some people to change trains at Liverpool Street, faster journey times mean more people want to join the Elizabeth line there. Improvements require private sector funding which will mean another tall office block and demolition of the unlisted but attractive buildings on Liverpool Street. Perhaps more serious is the detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the Great Eastern Hotel, which **is** listed.

Last year we were facing the threat of extensive cuts to bus services in central London. Following the financial settlement with the Government, the Mayor announced that most of the routes which could have been axed would be spared. The last remaining Red Arrow routes went - their patronage had been significantly reduced by Work From Home - and the 16 was another casualty, though its number is now taken by the former 332. In the general expressions of relief few people noticed that some significant alterations were still being made. These included routes popular with tourists, notably the 11, and also the 3, 6, 23 and 26, while the 59 and 133 were diverted to cover the bits of the Red Arrow routes that needed a bus service. Unfortunately, cuts in the backroom services meant that information at bus stops was poor. Route numbers were changed more than a week ahead of the event, and timetables for defunct routes went unreplaced for several weeks.

The Forum will continue to challenge the idea that everyone has a portable telephone, and that those who do can relate what they see on their screen to the bus stops along the road where they stand.

Member Societies

During the year the St John's Society (Lewisham) and Shad Thames Residents Association applied to join the Forum and the Teddington Society rejoined after a gap of several years. We welcome all three as members.

The London Forum communicates regularly with its members by email bulletins, our email newsletter London Forum *Insights* and the Twitter feed. Our website is continually updated with information and comment about matters of London-wide significance in the News/Updates section (a revamp of the website is imminent).

Five issues of *Insights* were produced during the year. We are never short of articles; indeed the issue is usually what to leave out. The newsletter has carried a number of articles by officers of member societies and external contributors, and we will try to find space for these wherever possible. We urge members to ensure that *Insights* reaches all those in their organisations who need to know about the latest developments in planning, transport and related matters. We also encourage the forwarding of articles by Ben Derbyshire and relevant publications by other organisations to which London Forum has subscribed, such as those of the London Planning and Development Forum.

During 2022/23 we held three well attended in-person open meetings for members and a networking event in August all at Cowcross Street.

The November 2022 meeting on **High Streets** heard from Professor Matthew Carmona, Alice Lester of Brent Council and Jeremy Leach, Chair of the Walworth Society.

The January 2023 meeting on **Early Community Engagement** featured Deirdra Armsby and Oliver Gibson of Westminster Council, John Ricketts of the Kew Society and JTP's Charles Campion as well as Michael Bach, Chair of London Forum's Planning, Environment & Transport Committee.

Leading academic, Duncan Bowie and a GLA team led by John Wachter and Mikayla Smith gave presentations at the **Affordable Housing** event in June 2023.

All of these meetings were reported in detail in the immediately following issue of *Insights*.

Collaboration

Forum officers have done what they can to keep in active touch with senior officials in the Chief Planner's department, and have attended meetings of All-Party Parliamentary Groups of MPs (APPGs), Select Committees and Committees of the Greater London Assembly.

The Forum has endeavoured to liaise with a wide range of national and London-based organisations, including Heritage Alliance; Historic England; Town and Country Planning Association; Travelwatch; CPRE (London); the Royal Town Planning Institute; the London Society; Business LDN; Centre for London; Policy Forum for London; London Planning and Development Forum; National Planning Forum; New London Architecture; Just Space Network; London Tenants Federation; London Councils; Generation Rent; Urban Design London; Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors; London Friends of Green Spaces Network; London Living Streets; West London River Group and many of London's academics from LSE, UCL and elsewhere.

London Forum assigns committee members to work with collaborators but welcomes participation by people in member societies who have been associated with those organisations or with a strong interest in their work.

The London Forum believes that there should be a national organisation representing civic and amenity societies and took an active part in the creation of Civic Voice in 2009. In March 2023 the Forum donated £1,000 to Civic Voice to help it overcome a temporary financial difficulty arising from a fraud and in the expectation that it would once more become a force to be reckoned with. To date Civic Voice has effectively remained silent and not held an APPG meeting for civic societies since March 2023.

Appreciation for Alan Baxter

The Forum warmly thanks Alan Baxter Cowcross for their continuing support in generously donating office and meeting space and facilities; the opportunity to network with other organisations; and for continuing to take a close interest in the Forum's work and wellbeing.

FINANCES FOR YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2023

In preparing the annual report and accounts the Forum's trustees have applied the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102), together with Update Bulletins 1 and 2 (collectively the "SORP") with certain exemptions permitted for smaller charities.

Income

Gross income for the year was £9,314 (2022 £8,512) with £4,300 of this sum arising from the imputed donation the Forum received through a waiver of rent.

Subscription income was £4,202 (2022 £4,204) with new member subscriptions essentially offsetting the loss of income from member resignations. Donations from society and individual members are higher than in 2022 and much appreciated.

Expenses

Total expenses for the year, including the value of the rent waiver, were £15,333 (2022 £5,411) with a substantial part represented by a provision of £5,515 for work done rebuilding the Forum's website. This work was essentially complete at year end and trustees considered it prudent to provide for the balance of the original quote although the site remained subject to testing and sign off at the year end. Trustees anticipate incurring further costs in 2023-24 for additional work plus charges for ongoing maintenance and improvements.

During the year the trustees resolved to provide financial assistance to Civic Voice, the national representative body for the civic movement, with a one-off donation of £1,000 (see "Collaboration" for more).

To help refine the Forum's strategic development plans the trustees engaged a consultant at a cost of £1,750 (see "Strategy Review" for more information).

Face to face member meetings have returned to usual following the pandemic but, including expenses arising from the member networking event, incurred a net cost of £279. The Forum's other operating expenses are broadly in line with the prior year.

Financial Outcome

The net outcome for the year resulted in a deficit of £6,019 (2022 surplus £3,101) and this has been deducted from the Forum's unrestricted fund.

The balance sheet of the London Forum at 30 June 2023 shows total net assets amounting to £36,056 (2022 £42,075) held entirely in cash and/or interest bearing bank deposits.

Risk Management

The major risks to which the Society is exposed, as identified by the trustees, are regularly reviewed and the trustees are satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to manage those risks.

Statement of the Executive Committee's Responsibilities for Financial Statements

Charity law requires the Executive Committee to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Forum and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended. In preparing those financial statements, the Executive Committee is required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently, make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Forum will continue in business. The Executive Committee has responsibility for maintaining proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Forum and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity regulations. It also has responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the Forum and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Executive Committee.

Peter Eversden, Chair
22nd August 2023

The London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies
Charity Registration Number 1093134

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended June 30

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Income from			
Donations:			
Membership subscriptions		4,202	4,204
Member meetings		459	-
Other donations		4,509	4,275
Investments		144	33
Total income		9,314	8,512
Expenditure on			
Charitable activities:			
Member meetings		738	134
Professional services		1,750	-
Support costs	2	11,845	5,277
Donations:		1,000	-
Total expenditure		15,333	5,411
Net surplus (deficit) for the year		(6,019)	3,101
Reconciliation of funds			
Unrestricted fund brought forward		42,075	38,974
Unrestricted fund carried forward		36,056	42,075

Balance Sheet as at June 30

		2023	2022
	Note	£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	-	-
Current assets			
Investments		36,996	36,860
Cash at bank and in hand		4,542	5,215
Prepayments		33	-
Total Current assets		<u>41,571</u>	<u>42,075</u>
Total assets		<u>41,571</u>	<u>42,075</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		-	-
Provision for liabilities		5,515	-
Net current assets less current liabilities		<u>36,056</u>	<u>42,075</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>36,056</u>	<u>42,075</u>
Represented by			
Unrestricted Fund		<u>36,056</u>	<u>42,075</u>

Approved by the trustees on 22nd August 2023
and signed on their behalf by:
P. Eversden - Chair
S. Speak - Hon. Treasurer

1. Accounting policies

a. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention as a going concern and in accordance with FRS102. The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102), together with Update Bulletins 1 and 2 (collectively the 'SORP') has been applied with exemptions as permitted for smaller charities.

b. Income and expenditure

Income is recognised when received, or when there is certainty of receipt. Income received in advance is carried forward and expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

The SORP expects costs to be allocated between meeting charitable objectives and fund raising activities, together with their respective management and administration. Where the direct attribution of costs is not possible, apportionment is applied based on the estimated effort accorded to each activity.

c. Services provided

The Forum has regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. It represents the interests of its member societies and communicates with them on relevant matters using a variety of media and through workshops and meetings.

In pursuing its charitable objectives, the Forum benefits from various skills and services provided without charge by committee members and friends of the London Forum. The benefit received from general volunteers is not recorded in the accounts because it is not practical to estimate its value.

d. Cash and investments

Cash consists of petty cash and funds held at banks and at PayPal in non-interest bearing accounts in the name of the Forum. Investments are deposits held specifically to generate an income return.

e. Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Fixed assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over 4 years, but the Forum does not currently have any fixed assets to report.

2. Resources expended

The Forum does not employ any staff nor pay any employee benefits. The Independent Examiner does not charge a fee for examination of the accounts.

The Forum's support costs in furtherance of its charitable objectives are as follows:

	2023	2022
Shared Office	4,300	4,100
Printing & Communication	337	286
IT expenses	6,497	298
Insurance	244	201
Memberships & Subscriptions	289	294
Other	178	98
Total	£11,845	£5,277

The Shared Office expense represents the value of facilities provided to the Forum by Alan Baxter Cowcross (2022 Alan Baxter & Coombs).

3. Transactions with Trustees

No trustee or related party received any remuneration for services as a trustee or in any management capacity during the year. Some trustees have been reimbursed for their out of pocket expenses with the value and number of trustees involved as follows:

Expense type	2023		2022	
	Amount Reimbursed	Number of Trustees	Amount Reimbursed	Number of Trustees
Event provisions	£838	3	£134	1
Telephone	£36	1	£36	1

There were no transactions between the Forum and a related party.

4. Fixed assets

The Forum does not have any fixed assets to report.

5. Provisions

The redevelopment of the Forum's website was essentially complete as at the year-end but the developer had not raised their invoice. Trustees resolved to expense the amount of the original quote to reflect the work done and expectation of payment.

6. Reserves

The reserves consist solely of an unrestricted fund with a portion designated by the Executive Committee for improving the information technology systems. The remaining balance of the originally designated amount was fully utilised in the year.

Unrestricted fund	Designated	Undesignated	Total
Balance brought forward at 1 July 2022	£3,977	£38,098	£42,075
Net change in resources for the year	£(3,977)	£(2,042)	£(6,019)
Transfers	-	-	-
Balance carried forward at 30 June 2023	£0	£36,056	£36,056

London Forum retains reserves to protect it from short term financial pressures and other risks, and to enable it to invest for strategic and operational purposes.

The trustees expect to use some of the reserves to: continue improving the website and databases; subsidise member workshops; fund studies into matters of common concern; and actively publicise the work of London's civic groups.

The trustees recognise that loss of the office, storage and event space currently provided by Alan Baxter Cowcross would require use of the reserves to fund this need.

In the opinion of the trustees, the current level of reserves is appropriate.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies ('the Trust') for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Miles Storey

Retired Banker

2 Westcombe Park Road
London
SE3 7RB

Date: 1 August 2023

London Forum Committees and Patrons

Patrons

Alan Baxter CBE
Professor Tony Travers

President

Ben Derbyshire PPRIBA FRSA
HonAIA

Vice-President

Nicky Gavron

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Trustees

Peter Eversden MBE • Chair
Bedford Park Society

Andrew Bosi
Islington Society

Paul Thornton • Vice-Chair and
Membership Secretary
Amwell Society

Michael Hammerson
Highgate Society

Stephen Speak • Honorary Treasurer
Kew Society

Mary Hogben
Finchley Society

Clare Birks • Secretary
BermondseyStreet.London

Michael Jubb
Battersea Society

Michael Bach • Chair Planning
Environment & Transport Committee
Kensington Society

John Myers
Camden Civic Society

Darian Mitchell • Minutes Secretary
Amwell Society

Peter Pickering
Finchley Society

Helen Warner
Westcombe Society

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Michael Bach (Chair)
John Allan
Clare Birks
Andrew Bosi
Michael Coupe
Peter Eversden
Michael Hammerson

Daniel Instone
Michael Jubb
David Kaner
Darian Mitchell
Peter Pickering
Paul Thornton
Helen Warner

London Forum Members at June 30

Amwell Society
Angel Association
Balham Society
Barnet Residents Association
Barnet Society
Battersea Society
Bayswater Residents Association
Bedford Park Society
Belgravia Residents Association
Bermondsey Street London
Bexley Civic Society
Blackheath Society
Bloomsbury Residents Action Group
Brentford Voice
Brixton Society
Brockley Society
Bromley Civic Society
Brompton Association
Camden Civic Society
Carshalton Society
Charlton Society
Chelsea Society
Chislehurst Society
City Heritage Society
Clapham Society
Covent Garden Community
Association
Culverley Green Residents
Association
Dulwich Society
Ealing Civic Society
Ealing Fields Residents Association
Earls Court Society
East Greenwich Residents
Association
Enfield Society
Fentiman Road and Richborne
Terrace Residents Association
Finchley Society
Forest Hill Society
Friends of Battersea Park
Friends of Greenwich Park
Friends of Jubilee Gardens
Friends of St Georges Gardens
Fulham Society
Gidea Park and District Civic Society
Greenwich Society
Hackney Society
Hadley Wood Neighbourhood
Planning Forum
Ham and Petersham Association
Hammersmith and Fulham Historic
Buildings Group
Hammersmith Society
Hampstead Garden Suburb
Residents Association
Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum
Harrow Heritage Trust
Heath and Hampstead Society
Herne Hill Society
Highbury Community Association
Highbury Fields Association
Highgate Society
Hillgate Village Residents Association
Isleworth Society
Islington Society
John Innes Society
Kensington Society
Kew Society
Kingston-upon-Thames Society
Knightsbridge Association
Ladbroke Association
Ladywell Society
Lee Manor Society
Lodge Lane N12 Residents
Association
Mapesbury Residents Association
Marylebone Association

London Forum Members at June 30

Metropolitan Public Gardens
Association

Mill Hill Preservation Society

Mortlake with East Sheen Society

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green
Association

Netherhall Neighbourhood
Association

New Barnet Community Association

Northwood Residents Association

Norwood Society

Old Chiswick Protection Society

Osterley & Wyke Green Residents
Association

Paddington Residents Active
Concern on Transport

Paddington Waterways and Maida
Vale Society

Peckham Society

Peckham Vision

Pembridge Association

Penge Forum

Pinner Association

Positive Plumstead

Putney Society

Queen Annes Gate Residents
Association

Richmond Society

Romford Civic Society

Seven Dials Trust

South East Bayswater Residents
Association

South Woodford Society

Southgate District Civic Trust

St Johns Wood Society

St Marylebone Society

Stamford Brook Residents
Association

Stanmore Society

Strawberry Hill Residents
Association

Streatham Society

Sutton Civic Society

Sydenham Society

Teddington Society

Telegraph Hill Society

Tewkesbury Lodge Residents
Association

Thorney Island Society

Tottenham Civic Society

Victoria Drive Conservation Area
Residents Association

Waltham Forest Civic Society

Wandsworth Society

West Chiswick and Gunnersbury
Society

West Hampstead Amenity and
Transport Society

West Hampstead Gardens and
Residents Association

Westcombe Society

Westminster Society

Wimbledon Society

Woolwich and District Antiquarian
Society

York House Society

About the London Forum

THE LONDON FORUM represents and engages with civic and amenity societies and like-minded individuals concerned with protecting and improving the quality of life in London. Since its foundation in 1988, the Forum has grown in strength and influence, and now has over a hundred and twenty member societies representing tens of thousands of Londoners. The Forum's core activities include:

Representing members on national and London-wide issues to influence policies on planning, environment, transport and infrastructure

Regularly surveying our members to ensure that we know their views and concerns

Responding on behalf of members to key consultations, draft strategies and policy documents which affect London and Londoners

Publishing London Forum Insights, a regular online newsletter which informs members and provides a platform for their views

Organising open meetings on topics of importance to members, addressed by leading guest speakers

Informing members about legislation and policy developments via our website, email and Twitter

The Forum aims to:

- Influence planning policy;
- Give local issues a bigger voice;
- Provide expert information;
- Give members a London-wide perspective;
- Play a proactive role with Government, the Mayor and GLA Assembly Committees.

Priority concerns include:

- Safeguarding heritage assets;
- Suburban housing densification;
- Protection of green spaces;
- Resisting tall buildings in the wrong places.

The Forum has responded on behalf of members to the following:

- The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill;
- Consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework;
- Infrastructure Levy, short-term lets, street votes, High Street Rental Auctions and planning fees;
- Additional Permitted Development Rights.

The Forum's Open Meetings addressed:

- London's High Streets;
- Early engagement in Planning consultation;
- Affordable housing.

LONDON FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Full membership is open to amenity and civic societies within Greater London. Full members have voting rights to nominate and elect trustees to the London Forum Executive Committee, and to decide the direction of its policies and activities. Individuals who support the Forum's goals are welcome to apply for **individual membership**.

The London Forum welcomes enquiries from organisations (including businesses) that share our goals but are not eligible for full membership, and would like to explore an **Associate** relationship with us.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Twitter: twitter.com/London_Forum
Website: www.londonforum.org.uk

Together we can make a better London