

THE LONDON ARCHIVES (INCLUDING CULTURE TEAM)

2025/26 BUSINESS PLAN

About us: Our purpose, aims and impacts

We are London's archive service, collecting, preserving, sharing and celebrating the stories of London and Londoners, covering the greater London area, and with local, national and international audiences. We are the second largest archive in the UK with over 100km of extraordinary collections, providing services to researchers, school children, students, community groups and leisure audiences. We are part of the Deputy Town Clerk's Department, reporting to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, and provide information services to City Corporation departments and officers. We deliver the Guildhall Library service (which provides access to over 200,000 books on the history of London) and the City of London Records Management Service.

Our highlights from 2024/25 include a major programme to rename and rebrand our service, changing our name from London Metropolitan Archives to The London Archives (TLA), with a vibrant new brand and website. As part of our mission to grow and diversify our audiences, we launched a new programme for London's schools with an engaging set of primary and secondary sessions which aim to connect more children across the capital with the archives and history in the care of the City Corporation, and a new public events program. Our outdoor exhibition focussed on Victorian photography and engaged 37,000 visitors at Aldgate Square and St Paul's Churchyard, working with Destination City and Surveyors to contribute to a vibrant, thriving destination. At Guildhall Library our Whittington exhibition celebrated a key figure in the City Corporation's story. Our funded project to catalogue the archive of The Africa Centre concluded and work on the Whitechapel Bell Foundry was completed, making both collections available to researchers for the first time, and we reached agreement with the Institute of Race Relations to add their archive to the collections.

Culture Team Update

In May 2024, the Court of Common Council confirmed that a future Head of Profession for Culture would be appointed to progress the cultural strategy and be accountable to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee. In August 2024, Emma Markiewicz, Director of The London Archives, was appointed as the Senior Responsible Officer to lead as the Head of Profession for Culture. On 1 October 2023, operational handover for the Culture team (formally known as the Destination City team) took place.

Culture has been in a transition year, stemming from the "Destination City – Independent Review 2024" the team have maintained a strong programme of existing and new projects (whilst moving from IG to TC). Some highlights include: Open House, Beerfest, educational and family focused activity, seasonal events, Sculpture in the City, City Festival of Music Innovation and Knowledge, Thames Day, promotion via our website and social media channels, programme and promotional partnerships (e.g. Visit London, Lift the City and Fabric) and grant-funded delivery (e.g. Reimagining Londinium and The Big Picture) and continuing with the Anne Desmet exhibition in the Art Gallery including its educational activities and the acquisition of Anne's work 'Colosseum Kaleidoscope'. The team continued to operate key assets, including the Guildhall Art Gallery (and



City Corporation's artwork across its estate including Mansion House and Old Bailey), the Amphitheatre, the Roman Bathhouse and the City Information Centre. It led the City Corporation's work to 'Retain and Explain' the Beckford and Cass statues. Crucially, the development of a new Cultural Strategy is underway.

Our key objectives and priority workstreams and major projects

Our statutory duties to preserve and make accessible for research public records as a place of deposit designated by DCMS will be underpinned by review and development of our collections management work and research services, ensuring that a brilliant basics approach is in place to deliver a high-quality service.

We will continue our work to grow and diversify our audiences in 2025/26 as a key strategic aim, with a first full year for our new events programme at (embedded within our EEDI action plan) and schools programmes at TLA, leading on our commitment to open our services to a wider audience. The TLA volunteer programme will expand with a focus on engagement with young people. We will commission a review of our work with London's communities with the aim of transforming our programme with new objectives, strategy and delivery structure.

The London Archives Accommodation Project will be our major development programme this year as we progress towards a major decision point on the future location of the service.

Our work to transform the Guildhall Library service will continue, through consultation with key partners, service users and staff, with the aim of developing a vibrant, thriving destination which engages diverse communities in the heart of Guildhall.

We expect our partnership project with RIBA to launch in May 2025, bringing the RIBA library into The London Archives under a commercial arrangement which opens an innovative new channel of income and support our strategic aims to develop our spaces and grow our audiences.

Our corporate records management service will continue to collaborate with City Corporation departments, ingesting and providing access to hardcopy departmental records, and providing advice and guidance on sustainable and responsible retention of information.

Our Strategic Objectives (2023/24 – 2028/29):

1. **Building and Spaces** - We will reimagine the public spaces, creating a welcoming and inspiring environment to open the archive to more people, and encourage new ways of using our collections. (Workstreams – a) Accommodation Project c) Research Services e) Guildhall Library Development Programme f) Commercial Development i) Buildings and Repositories
2. **Audiences** - We will develop innovative events, learning programs and exhibitions to engage existing, new and bigger audiences; We will expand our digital offer to open up our collections to a wider audience. (Workstreams – b) Audience Development d) Engagement Programme e) Guildhall Library Development Programme f) Commercial Development)



Live, Work, Learn, Explore



3. **Services** - We will develop better and more coherent strategies for promoting TLA to significantly raise our profile and increase engagement with our services and create a clear and engaging brand and identity. (Workstreams – b) Audience Development c) Research Services d) Engagement Programme g) Records Management)
4. **Collections** - We will diversify and expand collections, building an archive which reflects London today, rethinking how we catalogue and modernising our systems for digital and physical collections. (Workstreams – b) Audience Development d) Engagement Programme h) Collections Management and Care)
5. **Colleagues** - We will embrace cross team working to enhance skills development, grow our services collaboratively and encourage knowledge sharing. (Workstreams – d) Engagement Programme g) Records Management h) Collections Management and Care i) Buildings and Repositories)

Culture Team

Delivering the new Cultural Strategy will be a major directional project which will define how existing and new strands sit together and are to be delivered by the Culture team. The first three phases of strategy development (desk-based review, external audience analysis and stakeholder engagement) are due on 31 March 2025, after which the timetable for the co-creation of the Cultural Strategy would be established.

The Cultural Strategy may alter the areas of focus for the remainder of the year so priority workstream detail is not provided at this stage and this business plan will be updated on completion of the strategy. At this point, the plan is to continue where there are existing and established delivery commitments. This means that the Culture team would continue with:

6. **Always On Digital Marketing** – manage visitor facing promotion for the City Corporation via our website, enews, social media channels.
7. **Events Promotion and Seasonal Campaigns** – marketing and promotion for the Culture team owned programmes and supported partner activities including Guildhall Art Gallery exhibitions and activities, the learning and engagement programme, events programme and partnership activity.
8. **Visitor Services and Experience** – visitor facing services and cultural assets including tours and all year-round activity. This encompasses 7-day opening of the City Information Centre and the Guildhall Art Gallery and Shop, and 2-day a week opening of the Billingsgate Roman Bath House.
9. **Cultural Engagement Programme** – deliver a programme of cultural engagement events and activities (i) exhibitions, events and programmes at Guildhall Art Gallery (ii) learning and engagement programme including school and family programmes (iii) heritage tours and events promoting our cultural heritage assets (iv) seasonal cultural events (v) public art programmes.
10. **Partnership Programme and Engagement** – enable and facilitate external partners to deliver cultural programmes, events and activities across the Square Mile.



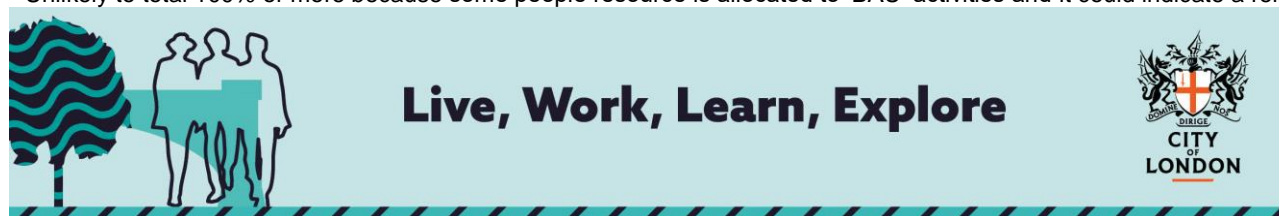
Live, Work, Learn, Explore



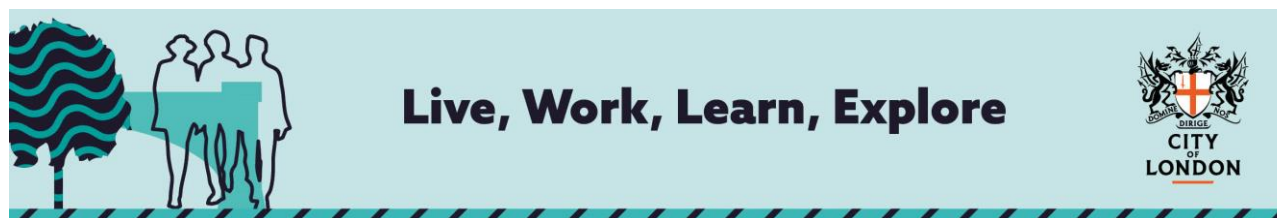
Priority workstream	Funding allocation %	People resource %	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
<i>Add the workstream name and list the key 2025/26 deliverables. Note activities and milestones and give the date these will be achieved. Note if these have a different duration to the FY (shorter or longer).</i>	<i>Estimate the % (of the total 100%) budget that will be allocated¹</i>	<i>Estimate the % (of the total workforce) that will work on this²</i>	<i>List all the CP outcomes this workstream contributes to</i>	<i>CP 2024-2029 Performance Measures should be shown in bold</i>	<i>State what will be different</i>
1. The London Archives Accommodation Project A major project to define the future location and business model of The London Archives ahead of lease expiry on the current site in 2035. 1. Complete gateway 3 options appraisal process. Confirmation of decision no later than Q4 2026.	1.3%	2%	Diverse Engaged Communities Leading Sustainable Environment Providing Excellent Services Vibrant Thriving Destination Flourishing Public Spaces	Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be provided in narrative: Progress reports to CHL Committee (dates TBC)	Decision on the G3 options appraisal will provide a clear direction for the next phase of the project.

¹ Does not total 100% because some departmental budget is allocated to 'BAU' activities and/or is unprogrammed for emerging or unexpected activities that arise in-year.

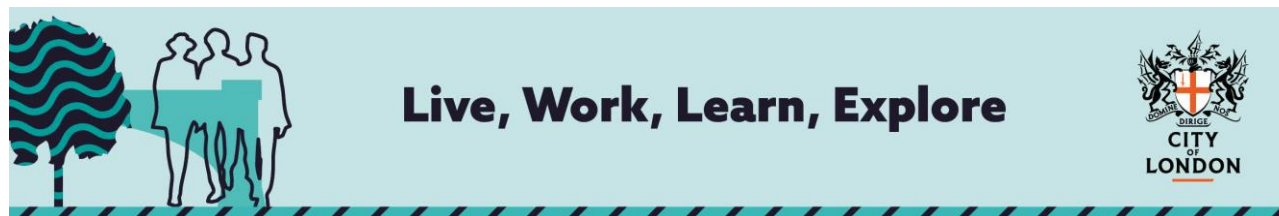
² Unlikely to total 100% or more because some people resource is allocated to 'BAU' activities and it could indicate a reliance on additional working time to deliver activities.



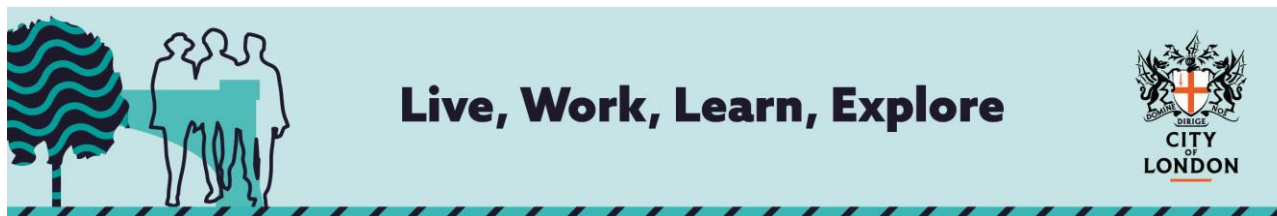
<p>2. Audience Development Growth and diversification of our audiences, through services provided to visitors to The London Archives, Guildhall Library, users of our digital services and our touring and offsite exhibitions. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We attract visitors to our sites at The London Archives and Guildhall Library to engage with the City's excellent services and collections. 2. We engage visitors on City streets and in other locations, raising the profile of our services (e.g. outdoor exhibition) 3. We engage with digital service users, locally and internationally, raising our profile through our websites, and widening access and generating income through digital content we have published to commercial and non-commercial websites. 4. Growing and diversifying our audience through social media engagement, publishing content across our channels. 	15%	22%	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p> <p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p>	<p>1. Number of onsite visitors - % above/below previous Q (target 7000 per Q)</p> <p>2. Number of offsite visitors - % above/below previous year (annual) (target 20,000)</p> <p>3. Number of digital service users - % above/below previous year (target 11 million, annual)</p> <p>4. Social media engagement – number of engagements - %</p>	<p>Audience numbers will increase on site and online, and we will continue to improve the quality of our offer.</p>
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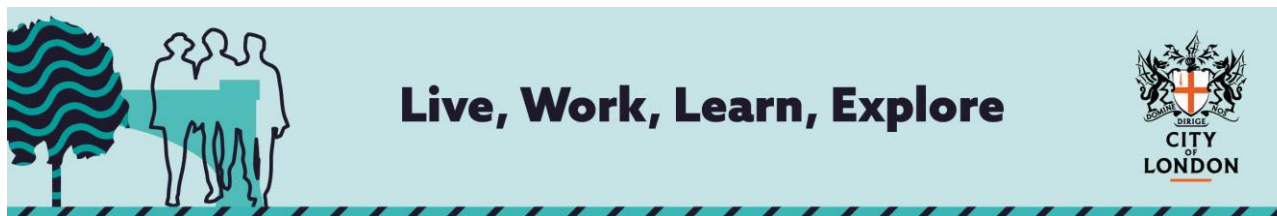
5. Checking our progress, overall satisfaction rating received from annual survey of visitors.				above/below previous Q (target 300,000 per Q)	
				5. Visitor Survey - % satisfied with service received (90% target)	
3. Research Services Services provided to research visitors at The London Archives and Guildhall Library, providing manuscripts, photos, books maps etc from the repositories and responding to research enquiries received. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archive documents and reference books requested by researchers, to use in our research rooms. 2. Enquiries received from City officers, researchers and members of the public concerning items in our collections on a wide range of themes including City precedents and history, family and community history, academic research, adoption enquiries, planning and inquiries. 	14.5%	18%	Providing Excellent Services Vibrant Thriving Destination	1.Items provided to researchers - % provided within KPI (1 hour / 24 hours / 48 hours) 2.Research enquiries - % answered within KPI (10 days / 20 days)	New and returning researchers will receive ongoing high-quality support and they use our services



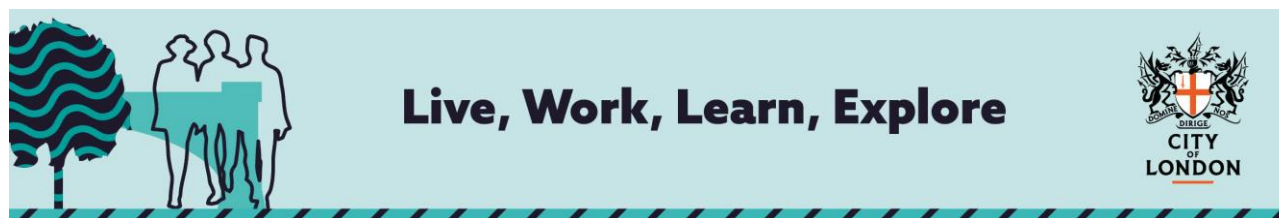
<p>4. Engagement Programme</p> <p>Our public programmes offer a range of events and activities linked to our collections, supporting the growth and diversification of our audiences. Our new schools programme at The London Archives will focus on sharing the City's collections with London school children on site. We will review and redevelop our community work, supporting our aim to reach bigger, diverse audiences across London and to develop a service that reflects the diversity of London today. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly, or target noted.</p> <p>1. Delivering a busy agenda of engagement events at The London Archives, Guildhall Library and third-party venues through our adult programmes.</p>	15%	18%	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p> <p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p>	<p>1. Number of people attending - % above / below target for Q.</p> <p>2. Number of children attending - % above / below target for Q.</p> <p>3. % satisfied with service received (90% target)</p> <p>6. Onsite and digital volunteer hours contributed, - % above / below target for Q.</p>	<p>New visitors and service users engage with us, diversifying and growing our audiences.</p> <p>We will increase the number of onsite visitors, putting educational activity at the heart of our research spaces.</p>



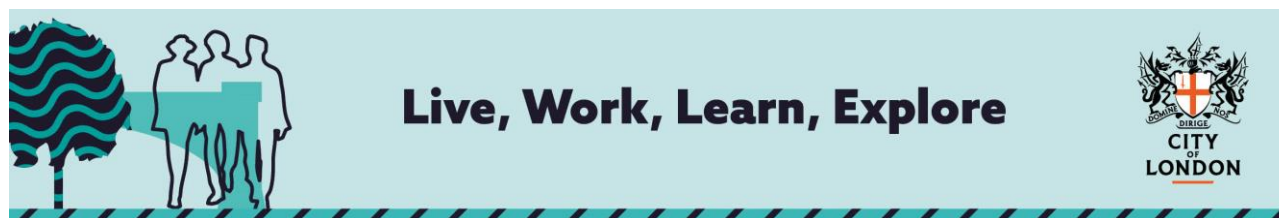
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging London's primary and secondary school children with the City's collections and history, through on-site school learning sessions. Checking progress of the new schools programme through evaluation. Developing our community programme, starting with a benchmarking review and consultation. Creating a new community programme strategy and targets. Providing a range of opportunities to volunteers who give up their time to support our services, both on-site and on-line. Creating a new a youth volunteering project to increase the number of young people engaging with our services, diversifying our audience. 				<p>Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be provided in narrative:</p> <p>4. Review complete, Dec 2025</p> <p>5. Strategy complete, Mar 2026</p> <p>7. Project launched, Mar 2026</p>	<p>New vibrant community and volunteer programmes will bring new visitors and service users, diversifying our audience.</p>
<p>5. Guildhall Library Development Programme</p> <p>The development programme aims to develop Guildhall Library as a service and destination, engaging with delivery partners to celebrate the</p>	1.3%	2%	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<p>Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be provided in narrative:</p>	<p>The framework will provide a clear pathway for the development programme</p>



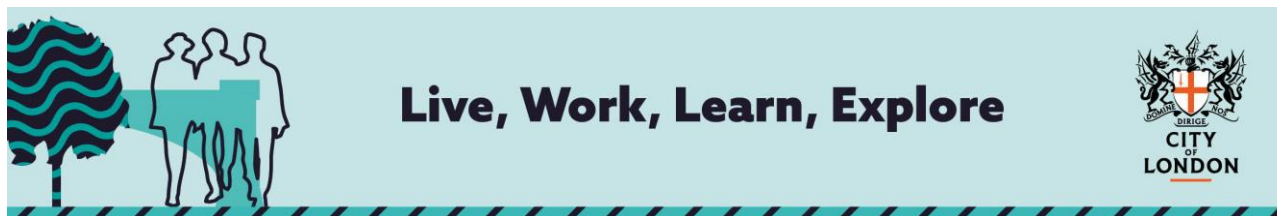
<p>City's story and growing and diversifying our audiences. This phase complete by Mar 2026.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and consult on development vision. 2. Research partnerships and funding models for development work. 			<p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p>	<p>1. Vision complete, Dec 2025</p> <p>2. Research complete, Mar 2026</p>	<p>and the research piece will inform the next steps.</p>
<p>6. Commercial Development</p> <p>Generating new income streams to support the sustainability and development of the services. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly / RIBA to Aug 2028</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Image sales – increasing income from the London Picture Archive and on site. 2. Conservation product sales – developing new products for sale via website. 3. Room hire – at Guildhall Library. 4. RIBA service delivery partnership – a key onsite partnership at The London Archives with income streams. 	2%	3%	<p>Providing Excellent Services</p> <p>Dynamic Economic Growth</p>	<p>1. Income total and performance against quarterly target</p> <p>2. Income total and performance against quarterly target</p> <p>3. Income total and performance against quarterly target</p> <p>Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be</p>	<p>Commercial income targets and partnerships support attainment of income and visitor targets.</p>



				provided in narrative: 4. Partnership agreement complete, service opens at TLA	
7. Records Management Services provided to City departments to manage hardcopy business records in accordance with business requirements and data regulations. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of departmental files removed from office storage and ingested into system. 2. Number of files requested by departmental users for retrieval. 	2.6%	4%	Providing Excellent Services Leading Sustainable Environment	1. Files processed - % within KPI target (10 days) 2. Files retrieved - % within KPI target (Same Day/Next Day)	Hardcopy departmental business records no longer required day to day are stored economically and sustainably, and returned to offices for use quickly and efficiently.
8. Collections Management and Care Core development work to support our business model, managing collections and assessing current practice, processes and systems.	9.3%	16%	Providing Excellent Services	Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be provided in narrative:	Customer experience will improve and valuable collection and data assets will



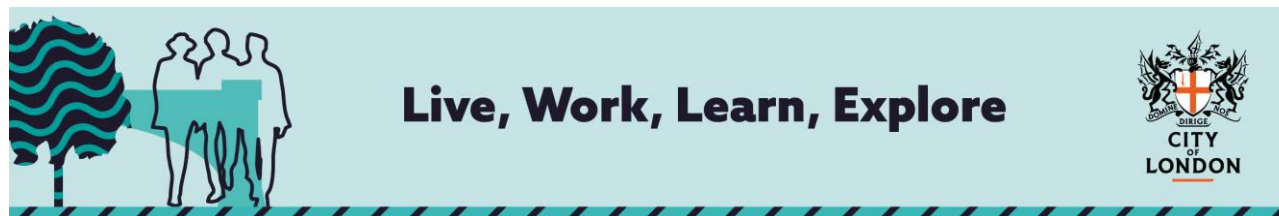
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management software replacement project – review of products, procurement and implementation of new system. 2. Assessment of deposited collections and benchmarking complete for future deposited collections management model. 3. Acquisitions Strategy and Policy – Review and diversify our collection policy and develop a new collecting strategy. 4. Preserving and caring for our collections, through active preservation and conservation treatment programmes. 				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. System is procured and operational, staff are trained and supported, Mar 2026 2. Assessment and benchmarking complete, Dec 2025 3. Policy and strategy complete, Mar 2026 4. Annual report on programmes, Mar 2026 	<p>be safeguarded. We will achieve efficiencies in our ways of working and open a new income channel, and support our work to grow and diversify audiences.</p>
<p>9. Buildings and Repositories The ongoing management of our buildings and repositories, working in collaboration with City Surveyor's department. Ongoing work, reviewed quarterly, with project dates below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Light touch refurbishment of office spaces 	<p>37.6%</p> <p>Note – includes central risk and TLA site costs</p>	<p>8%</p>	<p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<p>Evidence base will be the following milestones, updates to be provided in narrative:</p>	<p>Conditions in our repositories and buildings will improve, protecting and preserving the</p>



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Repository management and moves, rationalising storage. 3. The London Archives buildings management and maintenance (local and capital budget). 4. Managing risks associated with archival storage including security, pests, fire, flood and changing environmental conditions. 5. Review of public facilities and implementation of improvements to ensure that accessibility standards are met and best practice achieved wherever possible, creating public spaces which are welcoming and open to everyone. 6. Site works including replacement of environmental control chillers and improvement of heating, lighting and sprinkler systems. 			<p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p> <p>Leading Sustainable Environment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete by Dec 2025 2. Complete by Dec 2025 3. Quarterly buildings review 4. Quarterly risk management review 5. Complete by Mar 2026 6. Complete by Mar 2026 (subject to agreement and budget) 	<p>City's assets and cultural heritage. Visitors facilities, access and staff spaces will all improve, creating a welcoming and sustainable environment.</p>
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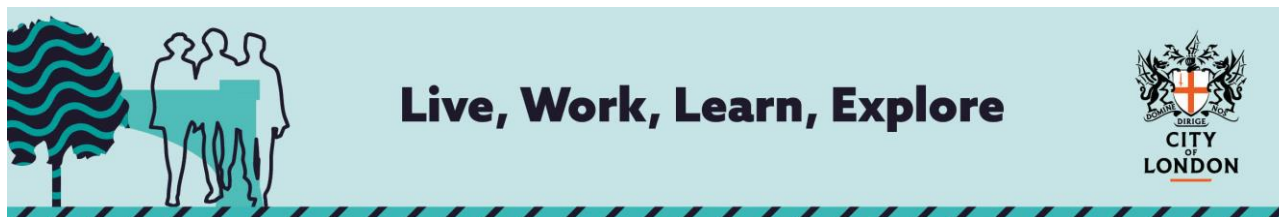
Our timeline
planner of priority workstream activities and milestones

	Key													
	Duration of activity												Milestone	
	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Beyond 2025/26	
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026/ 2027	2027/ 2028
Workstream a : The London Archives Accommodation Project														
Workstream b : Audience Development														



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Workstream c : Research Services														
Workstream d : Events Programme														
Workstream e : Guildhall Library Development Programme														
Workstream f : Commercial Development														
Workstream g : Records Management														
Workstream h : Collections Management														
Workstream i : Buildings and Repositories														



Enablers

The London Archives	
<p>People</p> <p>At 30/09/2024 (source: HR Dashboard, data accuracy unconfirmed)</p> <p>Headcount – 76 FTE – 71 Joiners RYTD – 11 Leavers RYTD – 6 FTE Expire 3 Months – 3</p> <p>Average age – 47 years Average LOS – 15 years</p> <p>Gender Male 46.1%, Female 53.9%</p> <p>Diversity 13.2% Ethnic Minority, 11.8% Disability, 11.8% LGBTQ+</p> <p>Staff Survey Score – 61%</p> <p>Departmental Actions - Department: Town Clerk's Department (DTC Functions)</p> <p>Learning & Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve the way in which we communicate opportunities and prioritise time for learning. To empower individuals to seek out opportunities and build their own plan (in consultation with managers) <p>Workplace attendance - review and introduce measures to improve physical environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work and meeting spaces. Fixtures and fittings to improve office décor. Departmental get togethers to interact/meet and liaise with work colleagues. Cross working at Deputy Town Clerk sites 	<p>Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-examining Collecting Policies to preserve the diversity of London's archives 2. Educating ourselves and staying relevant 3. Developing a workforce and audience that reflects London's diversity <p>Our local EEDI Action Plan includes the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Events Programme – reviewing and refreshing our LGBTQ and disability history programmes, opening 'hidden' parts of the collections to new audiences, reviewing events accessibility. 2. Exhibitions – making a commitment to present content that reflects Londoners today and supporting onsite community exhibitions. 3. Collections – Identifying gaps around underrepresented histories, publishing community content to our digital platforms, addressing offensive or harmful language in the collections, acknowledging legacies of discrimination and colonialism in the collections. 4. Digital – Reflecting London's diverse heritage and communities on the London Picture Archive platform. 5. Projects and Partnerships – Friends of the Huntley Archive, National HIV Story Trust, The Africa Centre, University of London, Conservation for Wellbeing. 6. Public Facilities – Undertaking an access review, providing period care products, augmenting site access information on our website. 7. Training – Internal and external training for all staff supporting understanding of EEDI in relation to our roles, new strategies for internal sharing of EEDI work, developing trauma informed guidelines to support staff and visitors.
The Culture team	
<p>People</p> <p>At 30/09/2024 (source: HR Dashboard, data accuracy unconfirmed)</p>	<p>Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure EEDI informs our cultural programme and is embedded in the way we run and proactively manage our activities.



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<p>Headcount – 22 FTE – 20 Joiners RYTD – 4 Leavers RYTD – 6 FTE Expire 3 Months – n/a</p> <p>Average age – 40 years Average LOS – 16 years</p> <p>Gender Male 0%, Female 100% Diversity 11.1% Ethnic Minority, 0% Disability, 13.6% LGBTQ+</p> <p>Staff Survey Score – 55%</p>	<p>2. Develop better awareness on EEDI and audience informed decision making. 3. Improve knowledge and stay relevant on current topics. Ensure staff receive training on EEDI issues.</p> <p>Because of the transition, the Culture team have not had the opportunity to develop on EEDI Action Plan. In the following year, an integrated plan adding to TLA's workstreams will be developed.</p>
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Finance

The London Archives

- Local Risk = £3,850,000
- Central Risk = £717,000

Total = £4,567,000

Income Target = £391,000

Estimated forecast spend in respect of the priority workstreams.

Estimated budget allocation to workstreams (Total estimated budget £4.57M, local and central, ex income target)



Note – spend estimate outlined here has been calculated on rough estimates of staff time allocated to the 12 workstreams above (usually part of their time). Spend on anything other than staff time is dependent on income.

For Culture team the budget is from City's Estate, split into two areas:

Visitor Services and City Information Centre

- Local Risk = £1,954,000
- Income Target = £350,000
- Total = £1,604,000**

Guildhall Art Gallery

- Local Risk = £341,000
- Income Target = £32,000
- Total = £309,000**

What Medium Term action is required? (e.g. New legislation, services, projects, automation)

When?
2026/27

When?
2027/28

Is this Funded
or Unfunded?



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Accommodation Project – confirming and configuring future accommodation for service	✓	✓	Initial scoping work is funded -but substantial project is currently unfunded
Working Space Refurbishment – light touch refurbishments to improve working areas	✓		Funded, although partly dependant on success against income targets.
Collections Management Model Development – implementing new ways of working with depositors including commercial terms	✓		Funded locally, although partly dependant on success against income targets.

Priorities and plans being considered in the medium term

Risks

We do not manage Corporate Risks but have eight risks registered on the corporate risk management platform. The most significant in terms of score (12) is the risk of not confirming future accommodation for the service in the next 2 to 3 years at the latest. The risk of damage or loss to the unique collections we manage has the next highest score and this is subject to expected risks in our context such as fire, flood and pests, but also risks such as contractors working on site and not following site rules. Risks associated with our ability to operate the service, providing access to collections and generating income for example would have a significant impact on our business functions. The remaining registered risks, which score 4 or less relate to people and practice on site, including staff health and safety, work with school groups and building security.

For Culture, there is one key departmental risk: IG-DC-01 - Major Incident at a programme (e.g. terrorist, vandalism, economic incident). Note that this risk will be renamed when the system is updated as Culture no longer sits in IG. The risk score is 12.

Health & Safety

1. Managing risk of fire, theft, pests and flood
2. Managing and making accessible a large public building, including school visits on site
3. Managing our staff accommodation and wellbeing, including off site and drivers

For Culture, an initial Health & Safety survey was completed. However, given the broad variety of services delivered, a separate survey is needed for each asset branch. Priorities will be established once the second set of surveys are complete.

Operational Property

All operational properties have been assessed as utilised, part utilised, or not utilised, and confirmation has been provided to the City Surveyor's Department. **Yes**



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