

# Cool Streets and Greening

## Progress Report





Executive Summary:

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile, dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London. The Cool Streets and Greening (CSG) Programme is a flagship initiative of the City of London Corporation, approved in April 2021 to deliver on the ambitions of the Climate Action Strategy (CAS).

With a total investment of £7.8 million, the programme is transforming the Square Mile's streets and public spaces to address the growing risks of climate change, such as overheating, flooding, and biodiversity loss; while enhancing the quality and resilience of the urban environment.

The programme is delivering **50 projects** across five phases. To date completed projects have led to the enhancement of **17,110m² of public space**, equivalent to **66 tennis courts**, and the assessment of over **450 locations for tree planting**.

- £7.8 million invested across five phases
- A total of 50 projects
- 17,110m² of public space enhanced to date – equivalent to 66 tennis courts

These interventions include drought-tolerant planting, climate-resilient trees, rain gardens, and permeable paving, all contributing to cooler, greener, and more accessible public spaces.

The programme is underpinned by an interdisciplinary, collaborative, cross-departmental approach and supported by leading experts from a range of fields. The programme not only mitigates climate risks but embeds long-term resilience, sustainability, and inclusivity into the fabric of the Square Mile, ensuring it remains a thriving place for generations to come.



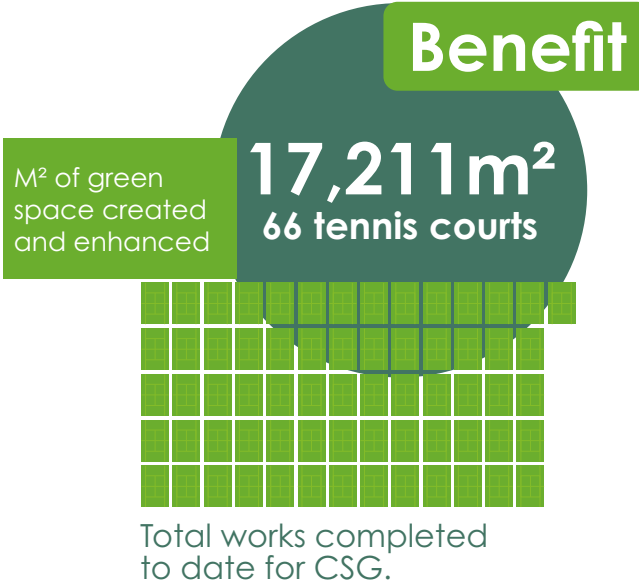
Key Statistics:

The CSG programme supports the City Corporation's ambition for **inclusive and sustainable growth**. In 2024 alone, **120 individuals** participated in related activities, contributing a total of **1,320 hours** through **biodiversity surveys, educational sessions, and guided walks**.

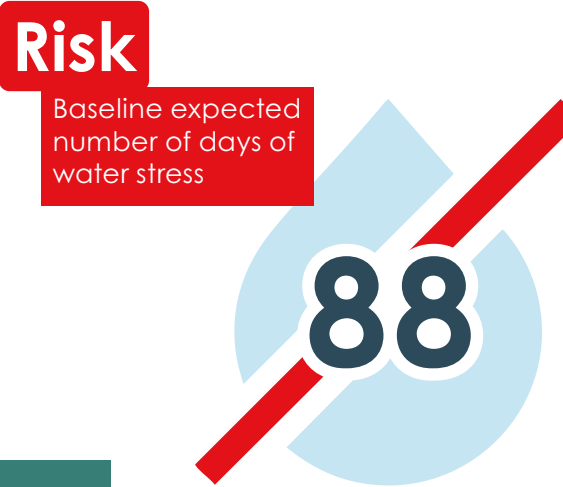
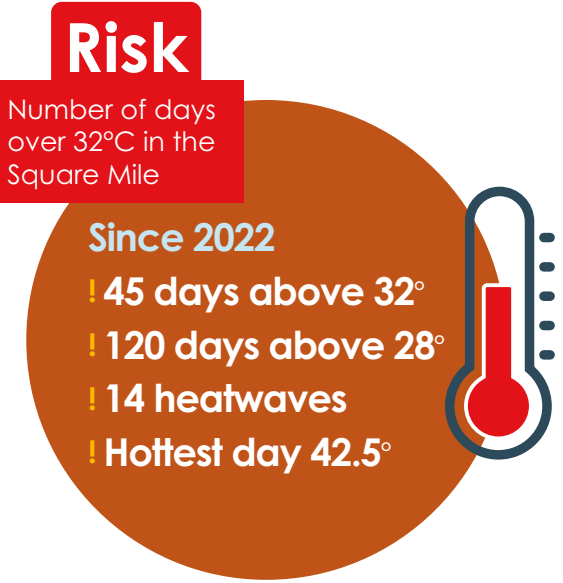


These efforts are helping to embed climate resilience into the City Corporation's operations and foster a sense of community ownership.

To monitor the effectiveness of interventions, the City is using an **integrated climate sensor network**. This data is being used to model environmental impacts and inform future planning, ensuring that the programme remains adaptive and evidence-led.



- Integrated climate sensor network deployed
- 120 individuals engaged in 2024







**Cool Street and Greening Projects Map:** Selection of 20 of the 50 projects from the programme helping to create greener and more resilient Square Mile.

**KEY:**

- Area-wide Tree Planting
- 1. New Change Garden
- 2. St Mary Aldermanbury
- 3. Little Trinity Lane
- 4. Bevis Marks SuDS
- 5. Jubilee Gardens
- 6. Riverside beds
- 7. Fann Street
- 8. Knight rider Court
- 9. St Andrews Undershaff
- 10. Finsbury Circus and Western Arm
- 11. Temple Avenue
- 12. St Andrew's Hill
- 13. Bread Street
- 14. Ludgate Broadway
- 15. Bank
- 16. Moorgate London Wall
- 17. Vine Street
- 18. St Peter Westcheap
- 19. St Dunstan's in the East
- 20. Whittington Gardens

**Overview:**

Cool Streets and Greening aims to transform the Square Mile's streets and public spaces, making them resilient and attractive, and ensuring the future wellbeing of the City community.

Climate projections for the City of London indicate a future of hotter, drier summers, warmer, wetter winters, and more frequent extreme weather events, and sea level rise.

These changes present six key climate resilience risks. The programme is actively addressing these risks by implementing

measures that increase shading and cooling, support urban biodiversity, introduce drought-tolerant planting, and create flood-resilient infrastructure.

£7.8m is being invested into five phases of the programme, comprising a total of 50 projects. Each phase targets climate change impacts to reduce urban heat,

alleviating flood risk, and increase biodiversity; providing more resilient, greener and pleasant public spaces.

Acceleration of tree planting has grown the urban forest canopy for future generations and extensive mapping has enabled the prioritisation of opportunities to create cooler and greener pedestrian routes.

The aim is to connect the cooler routes to others beyond the borough boundary. Linking into wider frameworks such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and All London Green Grid.



**Figure 1: The climate resilience risks wheel shows the six different risks that could impact the City Corporation and Square Mile and how they could occur.**



**Tree Planting-Houndsditch:** Acceleration of tree planting was made possible through the Cubic Mile project, working in partnership with the British Geological Survey (BGS) enabled us to take a subsurface approach to planning new street trees, navigating below-ground constraints.





**New Change Garden:** Working together with Cheapside Business Alliance, Hoare Bank and Landsec, New Change was designed with circularity and resilience in mind, re-purposing felled plane trees and river wall granite into benches; enhancing the existing trees retaining shade and using permeable paving for surface water management.

**Design:** Scott Whitby Studio



## Progress to date:

Projects to date include greening and re-landscaping streets and public spaces, trialling “xeriscape” drought-resistant planting, introducing new species of climate and disease-resistant trees and plants, and the addition of rain gardens and permeable paving. These measures provide greener, shaded walking routes and an enhanced public realm, as well as adding seasonal interest and improving biodiversity.

To date, the programme has prioritised and investigated over 450 locations for tree planting and led to the enhancement and creation of 17,110m<sup>2</sup> of public space across the Square Mile, the equivalent of 66 tennis courts.

The projects have incorporated trials and pilots in order to test the best approach for greening and cooling the City. The aim is to use the outcomes and learning to transition to business as usual, ensuring best practice for future public space projects, including updated policy, design guides and toolkits.

A collaborative project team comprising of officers from the Transport & Public Realm, Highways, City Gardens, and Environmental Resilience ensures a joined-up approach to project delivery. These partnerships allow projects to access additional funding opportunities, provide multiple benefits, and enable shared learning from innovations.

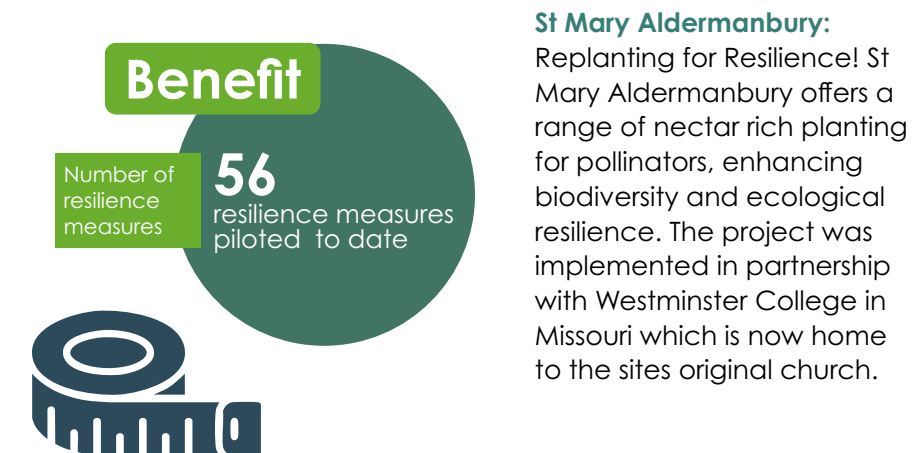


Wider benefits include more opportunities for active travel and improving accessibility in the public realm.

Each project is designed to take account of site context and constraints, including movement, sunlight, depth, utilities and townscape. The project team have appointed innovative architecture, urban design and landscape experts to design the spaces. These include Studio Weave architects, Tom Massey, Scott Whitby Studio, Growth Industry, Project Centre and LDA. This ensures the highest quality outcomes for the public spaces.



**Jubilee Gardens:** A hidden oasis in the heart of the City. Planting uses a reclaimed crushed brick mulch to improve moisture retention.





# Completed projects



**Finsbury Circus Gardens:** Cool Streets and Greening provided match funding to enhance the resilience of the Finsbury Circus project, the City's largest public park and garden.

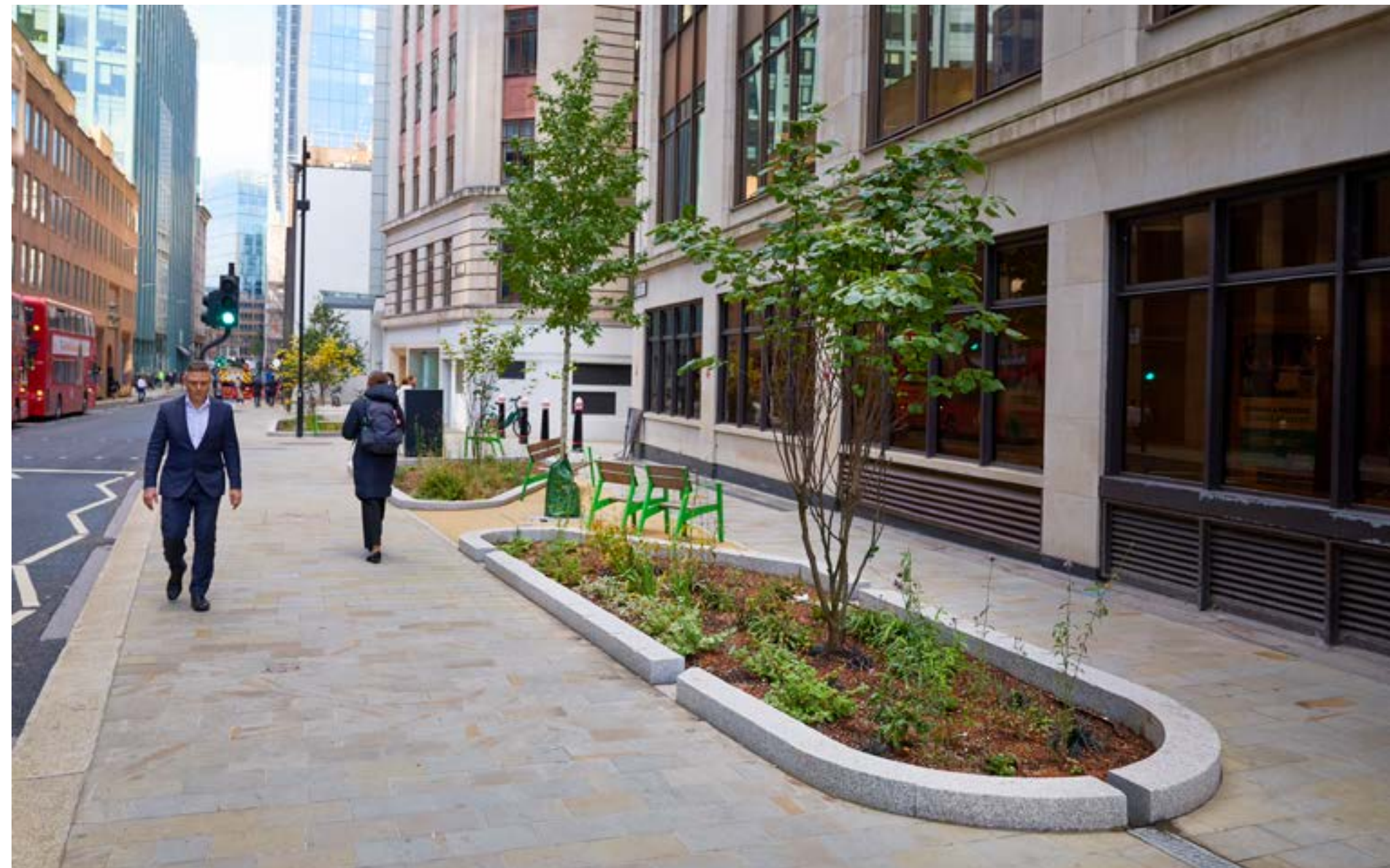
Design Studio Weave





**Little Trinity Lane:** Flood resilience at Little Trinity Lane, which captures surface water running down Garlick Hill storing it in the beds to irrigate plants.

**Design:** Growth Industry



**Bevis Marks SuDS:** Future proofing our streets to flooding. Rain gardens in the east of the City capture and store surface water, interconnected with permeable paving and featuring ZINCO, a medium used for its lightweight and hydraulic efficiencies.

**Design** City of London Corporation





**Jubilee Gardens:** Offering respite from heatwaves and access to nature, Jubilee Gardens has been completely re-landscaped to maximise trees and plants for biodiversity.

**Design:** Studio Weave and Tom Massey



**Riverside beds:** An innovative approach to planting design the riverside beds were re-designed with future climate in mind. Utilising 'xeriscape' principles drought tolerant species were planted into a range of soils and mulches including sand and crushed brick. The project was delivered in partnership with local schools, who also assist with ongoing monitoring.

**Design** City of London Corporation





**Bank Junction Junction:** Rain gardens designed to capture surface water from the footway and the carriageway installed along Queen Victoria Street.

**Design:** City of London Corporation



**Finsbury Circus Western Arm:** A new series of beds created on what was previously a road creating a green link into Finsbury Circus Garden and a new area of public realm.

**Design:** Studio Weave and Tom Massey





**London Wall Moorgate:** A redesign of existing public space which enhances biodiversity, creating a new and inviting public realm outside of Moorgate station.

**Design:** LDA



**New Change Garden:** A redesign of the landscape surrounding mature beech trees in the shadow of St Pauls along the City's retail district, the garden uses permeable paving to manage surface water promoting sustainability and resilience.

**Design:** Scott Whitby Studio



# Future projects



**Fann Street:** Bringing nature closer to people is at the core of the Fann Street project, which has engaged the local community to co-design the scheme and leverage support for its implementation, with the aim of creating steppingstones to enhance biodiversity and connectivity.

Design: Scott Whitby Studio





**Knightrider Court:** Innovating SuDS in the City using Hydorock systems to help store more surface water, whilst offering new public realm with access to cafés in the shadow of St Paul's.

**Design:** City of London Corporation



**St Andrew Undershaft Churchyard:** Integrating future-proof design with historic architecture, St Andrews Undershaft churchyard captures rainwater from the church's roof to store it in new planting beds. The scheme features permeable paving, more greenery, increased seating and offers a revitalised space for public enjoyment and biodiversity.

**Design:** Growth Industry



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