

Public Realm and Placeshaping

Westminster has ambitious plans to transform its public realm during the City Plan period. The Council has adopted Place Plans for various areas to enhance the public realm, including Harrow Road, Paddington and Victoria. The council has adopted numerous supplementary planning documents to guide the design of the public realm and to place shape with communities in mind.

Planned Projects

Public Realm

Various public realm transformation projects are currently being planned, are underway, or have been delivered recently. These include schemes to create a diversely interactive and a better-quality public realm that prioritises pedestrians, enhances the visitor experience, and makes Westminster a safer and more attractive place to visit. In addition, developments to the north side of the Thames riverside are planned to reconnect the borough with its water boundary better.

Key public realm schemes include those at Queensway, Shepherd Market, St Martin's Lane, and many others.

In addition, Place Plan schemes have been identified for Harrow Road, Paddington and Victoria which aim to create safer and more welcoming environments for pedestrians and cyclists and support growth aspirations set out in the City Plan.

Public Realm	
Category	**Details**
Lead	Westminster City Council in collaboration with developers regarding specific public realm improvement and development projects and local stakeholders such as BIDs.
Current Provision	The City Plan states that public realm assets in Westminster include: 11,000 listed buildings and structures. 56 conservation areas covering 78% of the city's footprint. 23 Registered Historic Parks, including five Royal Parks. 85 London Squares Three scheduled monuments.
Known Planned Provision	Various transformation projects concerning public realm infrastructure needs are currently being planned and underway. Prior to the announcement of plans to designate a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for the area, the council was implementing a major programme for the Oxford Street District, where projects were creating a diverse mix of uses and a better-quality public realm that prioritises pedestrians, enhances the shopper's experience, and makes the area a more attractive place to visit. Plus, plans for 'The Future of Regent Street, Haymarket, and Piccadilly Circus Public Realm', working with the Crown Estate, to design and deliver a public realm project that connects St. James's Park to Regent's Park, to bring forwards a new green and active travel link through the heart of the West End, and alongside this to design a new heat network for the Regent Street area. The North Paddington Programme is a 'place-based' programme. This means all work is developed in partnership with local people, community groups and charities in the Harrow Road, Queen's Park and Westbourne wards. The programme aims to deliver a number of neighbourhood schemes which improve the physical environment for these communities.

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	An emerging place based programme for Pimlico is also emerging to make improvements to the area holistically, including intervention on Lupus Street. Through extensive consultation, the Council identified Place Plan schemes: for Harrow Road, Paddington , and Victoria.
Future Needs	Future development projects are driven by several key factors, including the need for high-quality infrastructure to accommodate the city's expanding population, enhanced accessibility, changing community needs, promoting economic growth, and prioritising environmental sustainability. Material shortages and increasing costs stemming from the pandemic and Brexit, complex land ownership arrangements, and ensuring that improvement projects align with carbon reduction objectives present key challenges for future growth planning and development. In particular, public realm projects offer opportunities to integrate new heat networks to supply low-carbon heat to surrounding buildings. Heat networks have been identified as a key tool to enable the transition to a net zero energy system within Westminster, and therefore opportunities to integrate network feasibility studies for the area should be explored at the early stages of public realm projects.
Funding	The Fairer Westminster Strategy outlines the council's expenditure of £2.8 billion on public realm, highways, and communities through its Capital Programme. In addition to CIL and S106 agreements, additional funding is required for maintaining existing and new public realm assets and infrastructure.

Schedule									
Prioritisation	Programme / Strategic project	Location/s	Description	Provider	Estimated WCC cost	Phasing (Start)	Phasing (End)	Timescale	Total Funding gap
Desirable	Ceremonial Streetscape projects	Various across City	Streetscape improvement projects	WCC	£10.4m	Various	Various	Various	Nil
Important	Queensway Streetscape Improvement Plan	W2 6LS	Improved streetscaped including widened and resurfaced footways, new trees, and resurfaced carriageway on Queensway, as well as improvements to the junction of Queensway and Porchester Garden	WCC	£3 million	2024	2025	Short	Nil
Important	St Martin's Lane	WC2N 4EA	Improved pedestrian and cycling access, increasing pedestrian footway, reduced motorised traffic, opportunity for greening, safer, more visible space with better lighting to reduce collisions and improve personal safety.	WCC	£4.7 million	TBC	TBC	Short	Up to £2 million (if private sector funding not materialised)

Important	Shepherd Market Public Realm	W1J 7QS	public realm improvement to Shepherd Market and vicinity including Shepherd Street, Carrington Street and White Horse Street. Includes a pedestrianised space around the historic market square, new paving throughout, improved walking routes through the district, widened footways to improve pedestrian space and mobility, and reduce vehicle dominance. New street lighting, benches and trees, and reduced parking on the key walking routes	WCC	£2.9 million	2021	2025	Medium	Nil
Essential	Arundel Court	WC2R 1DH	Scheme finishing this year	WCC	£2,600.00	2023	2024	Short	£-
Essential	Paddington Public Realm Strategy - Paddington Place Plan	W2	Paddington Public Realm Strategy sets out an urban framework and programme of public realm projects across either side of the Westway, from Royal Oak to Edgware Road stations. It seeks to transform Paddington's fragmented neighbourhoods into a vibrant, healthy, and inclusive area by rebalancing the environment to enable legible and safe pedestrian and cycle movement, and to create great public spaces. Priority projects have been defined to address the severing effect of the area in the short-term and more will follow on medium and long-term.		£12,669,000.00	2020	2025	Medium	£10,000,000.00

Essential	Harrow Road Place Plan	W9	Improvement projects for the Maida Hill Market Place and its environment, delivery of the Canalside Enterprise Space and creating a safer and more welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists.	WCC	TBD			Medium	
Essential	Victoria Place Plan	SW1	Various projects in and around the Victoria Opportunity Area and surroundings to support growth aspirations set out in the City Plan.	WCC	TBD			Long	
Essential	Berkeley Square South Public Ream Scheme	W1	A public realm scheme to increase pedestrian footways and crossing points to the Square in keeping with improvements made to a north of the Square.	WCC	£0.00	2020	2024	Short	£
Essential	LEGIBLE LONDON Wayfinding Signage	Borough-wide	WCC has c500 Legible London signs to maintain, adapt and replace. The system enables a high level of pedestrian wayfinding, especially for visitors and commuters. This scheme enables the stock to be maintained	WCC	£50,000.00	17/18	26/27+	Long	£-
Essential	North Audley Street Highways and Public Realm Improvements	W1K 6ZA	Medium sized Highways and Public Realm developer scheme funded by Grosvenor, scheme looks to provide widened York Stone Paving footways, resurfaced carriageway, Street lighting improvements, new surface water drainage infrastructure, introduction of SuDS, and curbside control amendments.	WCC	£1,247,000.00	2024	2025	Short	£-

Essential	Street Trees – New Planting	Borough-wide	The ongoing programme of street planting and management supports the City Council's Fairer Westminster Strategy to create a healthier and greener City, by contributing to improving air quality, reducing heat island effect and responding to climate change. Tree planting also improves the appearance of the streets, enhances the quality of the townscape, contributes to the character and appearance of the city, and promotes biodiversity.	WCC	£54,000.00	Ongoing	/	Long	Fully funded for 2023/24. future funding subject to future capital bids
Essential	Warwick Way/Tachbrook Street retail cluster improvements	SW1	Pavement quality improvement and expansion, removing clutter, while enabling parking for deliveries and disabled customers. Adding addtional pedestrian space and hospitality space.	WCC		Phase 1 (Warwick Way and Churton Street) 2024; Phase 2 (Wilton Road) TBC	Phase 1 (Warwick Way and Churton Street) TBC; Phase 2 (Wilton Road) TBC	Short	
Essential	Bishop's Bridge improvements (public art and way finding)	W2	To improve the amenity, wayfinding and ambience for users of Bishop's Bridge.	The Paddington Partnership	£0.00	Apr-04	Jul-24	Short	£60,000
Essential	Regent Street (Permanent Scheme)	Regent Street	Implement a permanent scheme off the back of the success of the temporary scheme on Regent Street	WCC, Crown Estates, TfL	£0.00			Medium	£3,000,000
Important	Connaught Village Green	Hyde Park	Public realm improvements to the western end of Connaught Street and Kendal Street to create a	WCC	£25,000,000.00	2021	2024	Short	Westminster funding of £1.271,000, NCIL

			greener Connaught Village with biodiverse planting and SUDs, providing a place for residents to meet, sit and have access to free drinking water, improve road safety by enhancing crossings, encouraging pedestrian/cycle travel to reduce emissions and improve air quality.						funding of £385k and 3rd Party Funding from Church Commissioners of £200k
	General Developer Schemes (i.e. those funded by developers / secured through legal agreement)	Various across City	Developer funded via Section 106 and Section 278 legal agreements. We are legally obligated to deliver these works to mitigate the impact of developments.	WCC and private developers	£30m	Various	Various	Various	Nil
	Security / Protective Measures (includes Hostile Vehicle Mitigation)	Various across City	Safety and Security to directly mitigate national threat of hostile vehicles - addressing security threats	WCC	£7.5m	Various	Various	Various	£7.5m

	Wayfinding / Signs / Pedestrian Traffic Signals	Various across City	Wayfinding encouraging active travel	WCC		Various	Various	Various	

Public Conveniences

Westminster has 15 standard, four automatic and 12 temporary public toilets. The Council is exploring collaborations with developers and landowners to improve access to toilet facilities and reduce associated maintenance costs. There is an emphasis on including toilets in new developments.

The Soho Neighbourhood Forum has proposed scheme to provide additional public conveniences in the neighbourhood, including facilities for the disabled and families. This scheme would ensure adequate provision of public toilet provision based on the number of visitors and licensed premises in Soho.

Public Conveniences	
Category	**Details**
Lead	Westminster City Council
Current Provision	Westminster has 15 standard, four automatic and 12 temporary public toilets.
Known Planned Provision	The council is exploring collaborations with developers and landowners to improve access to toilet facilities and reduce associated maintenance costs. There is an emphasis on including toilets in new developments.
Future Needs	Future provision must address various issues, including the need for evidence-based demand, high infrastructure and asset costs, concerns about anti-social behaviour, accessibility, and gender neutrality. Addressing these challenges will require improving data collection methods, collaboration with stakeholders, and exploring approaches prioritising universal accessibility and gender neutrality
Funding	Public conveniences are not deemed essential infrastructure, leading to limited investment priority. Rather than requesting dedicated funding for toilets, the Council should prioritise their integration into new development projects and collaborate with developers and landowners to improve toilet facilities.

Below is the planned infrastructure provision for public conveniences.

Schedule									
Prioritisation	**Programme / Strategic project**	**Location/s**	**Description**	**Provider**	**Estimated WCC cost**	**Phasing (Start)**	**Phasing (End)**	**Timescale**	**Total Funding gap**

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Essential	Automatic Public Conveniences and Urinals	Borough-wide	The project would have several elements to it. Replacing 4 Automatic Public Conveniences Replacing 2 permanent standing urinals. Removing and reinstating our Uriflifts on Cambridge Circus and Villiers Street. Removing APCs and reinstating the pavement on Mayfair Place.		£0.00	TBC	TBC		£1,800,000.00