Ideas with Impact
We are London’s think tank.
Our mission is to develop new solutions to London’s critical challenges and advocate for a fair and prosperous global city.

We are a politically independent charity.
We help national and London policymakers think beyond the next election and plan for the future.

We have ideas with impact.
Through research, analysis and events we generate bold and creative solutions that improve the city we share.

We believe in the power of collaboration.
We bring together people from different parts of the city - with a range of experience and expertise - to develop new ideas and implement them.

As a charity we rely on the support of our funders.
Our work is funded by a mixture of organisations and individuals who share our vision for a better London.
We want a fair and prosperous London: a city that offers everyone a great start in life and makes a positive contribution to both the UK and the wider world.
Director's introduction

It’s almost a decade since I first had the idea for a London think tank, and it’s been four years since we established Centre for London as an independent charity. Having worked in other think tanks, national government and a London borough, I had come to appreciate that London had unique challenges and opportunities. Yet there was no organisation providing independent, long-term and joined-up thinking for the capital.

The Centre began life as a one-page briefing, written at the kitchen table. It is now organisation with a staff of 18 and a busy research and events programme. We are extremely grateful to the many people and organisations who have supported us over this time.

However, the real test of our value was always going to be our impact. This, our first Annual Report, highlights some of the ways we have helped London.

Although we have published reports and held events on a wide range of issues, a few common themes run throughout our work. We want a fair and prosperous London: a city that offers everyone a great start in life and makes a positive contribution to both the UK and the wider world. We believe London should be given more power to govern itself, not just for the good of London but for the whole country.

Much of our work has concentrated on helping London accommodate its growing population, and we will continue to promote new thinking on boosting housing supply and infrastructure alongside the creation of successful and inclusive places. But we are also widening our focus with a new programme on skills and opportunity, in addition to more work on civil society, social capital and public services. The pages that follow provide more detail on our new strategic priorities.

We look forward to building on the achievements of the last few years, expanding our partnerships, and sharpening our influence as we grow.

Ben Rogers,
Director, Centre for London
A core belief lies at the heart of everything we do: London does best when different people from diverse parts of the city come together to solve the city’s challenges.
With Brexit negotiations beginning, London is entering a new chapter in its history. The need for a London-focused think tank has never been greater.

Since it was founded in 2011, Centre for London has come to play a unique and vital role in the capital. We are the only independent organisation taking a pan-London, cross-sector and long-term approach to solving the city’s challenges.

Our recommendations have been adopted by both the Conservative and Labour mayors of London and endorsed by national government. We have published 48 policy reports and hosted over 100 public events, five major hustings and six high-level conferences. And through this work we’ve engaged thousands of stakeholders across London.

This reflects a core belief which lies at the heart of everything we do: that London does best when different people from diverse parts of the city, come together to solve the city’s challenges. As you will see in this report, this collaborative approach produces results.

I’m delighted to have joined Centre for London as Chair of Trustees and I am proud of the exceptionally dedicated and able team who run the Centre day to day. Together, we will continue to provide the thinking that London needs to meet the changes ahead.

Liz Peace CBE,  
Chair of Trustees, Centre for London
We have led thinking on London since 2011.
Highlights of

2011
Founded in 2011, and registered as a charity in 2013.

2012
Identifying the growth of “Tech City”
We undertook the first independent in-depth analysis of east London’s digital economy. The report, Tale of Tech City, suggested ways to help it grow and thrive. We built on this with Wearedotdot skills, an employment initiative which helped local young people gain digital skills and connected them with employers.

2013
London and other European cities
In Europe’s Cities in a Global Economy, we collaborated with the Global Cities Initiative to analyse the position of European cities in a changing global context.

Making minimum wage policy work for London
We published two reports in partnership with Trust for London. The first argued that London could bear a higher minimum wage than the rest of the country and that authority to set a London minimum wage should be devolved to the Mayor. The second set out recommendations to strengthen the enforcement of minimum wage policy, many of which were adopted by government.
2014

Go East – Unlocking the potential of the Thames Estuary
We published a collection of papers, edited by Andrew Adonis, which looked at boosting development and regeneration in the Thames Estuary. Our suggestion that Ebbsfleet be made into a Development Corporation was adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Our recommendation that Stratford be changed into a Zone 2 station was adopted by the Mayor of London.

Hollow Promise – innovating for London’s Squeezed Middle?
We used quantitative and qualitative analysis to highlight the growing pressures on London’s modest earners. The report led to the establishment of our Commission on Intermediate Housing and our ongoing focus on London’s squeezed middle.

2015

London Council Services in Austerity
Ahead of the Autumn statement, we took a look at how London’s boroughs’ spending had changed and looked ahead to the potential impact of the next phase of cuts.

Intermediate housing
We set up the Commission on Intermediate Housing to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of current housing policies. The Commission focused on those on middle incomes, and made recommendations as to how London can best meet the challenge of providing housing which this group can afford.

2016

Housing and inequality
In Housing and Inequality, we revealed how the housing crisis is changing the face of poverty and inequality in the capital, informing thinking on the issue ahead of the mayoral election.

Devolving London’s suburban railways
We showed how improving South London rail services could unlock homes and jobs, and recommended devolving control of South London’s suburban rail networks to the Mayor of London.

The rise of London’s innovation districts
In Spaces to Think, we assessed the development of new innovation districts and identified the role they could play in driving local inclusive growth.

Brexit
Following the vote to leave the EU, we undertook the first poll of Londoners’ expectations for the city’s future, and are researching what London needs to do to maintain and strengthen its position as a global city.
Giving a voice to young Londoners
Newham’s Young Mayor, speaking at our Rising in the East conference, July 2016
We published 14 policy reports including 5 on the housing crisis.

Our work was featured 125 times by the press. Thousands of people read about our research in national, London and trade media.

We produced 2 manifests in the lead-up to the mayoral elections to influence candidates.

We hosted 2 public hustings during the London mayoral elections.

We ran 2 major conferences to bring together high-level experts and city leaders.

We published 4 essay collections.

Our research team wrote over 30 comment pieces and spoke at over 40 external public events about our findings and recommendations.

We kept Londoners informed on key issues with our new website, which saw a 50% increase in users since we relaunched it.

We engaged young Londoners with our work through the #LeadLondon Campaign and at our conferences.

2,950 attendees at our events in 2016.

5 May 2016
Ideas with Impact: 2016 case studies
Collaborating

The value of Centre for London’s work lies in bringing together a wide range of experts, business leaders and policymakers to develop new solutions to London’s challenges.

Our approach to developing ideas

Engage partners from across London
We identify senior individuals from key sectors and involve them in our work.

Developing ideas
Research is debated, discussed and refined through roundtables, advisory groups, and events.

Centre for London research
Research is carried out by Centre for London’s experts and associates on London’s critical challenges.

New and bold policy ideas for London

Advocate for our ideas and advise policymakers
We work with our partners to ensure our work has impact.
with partners

Some highlights from 2016 included:

**Global Partnership on innovation**
We announced a new partnership with The Brookings Institution, The Transatlantic Innovation Districts Partnership, with work to commence in 2017.

**Research support**
We teamed up with London Youth to look at the changing needs of young Londoners. The report, Young People’s Capital of the World, was published in April 2017.

**Event partnership**
We joined forces with the Evening Standard to host a head-to-head debate between Sadiq Khan and Zac Goldsmith in the lead-up to the mayoral election.

**Providing a platform for new ideas**
We brought together academics, business leaders, social entrepreneurs and policymakers to debate the future of the city in three issues of London Essays. 46 contributors included Mirik Milan, Night Mayor of Amsterdam, and Rosie Boycott, Chair of the London Food Board and Mayoral Advisor on Food.

**Collaborative influencing**
Working in partnership with London First and with input from Bloomberg Associates, we continued to lobby the Mayor of London to appoint a Chief Digital Officer by publishing A Chief Digital Officer for all Londoners, which set out the main requirements for the role. The Mayor has since begun recruiting for this important role.

The essays written by the contributors to London Essays have been viewed 54,000 times by 20,500 users.
Campaigning during the Mayoral Election

On 5 May 2016, London voted for a new Mayor and Assembly. Centre for London was a key voice in the election campaign. We highlighted what we saw as the main challenges and opportunities facing London to the candidates, and championed bold policy solutions for addressing these.
Highlights of our work during the election period:

**Co-published a manifesto for London's tech sector**

The publication of *London's Digital Future: The Mayoral Technology Manifesto* with techUK and Tech London Advocates; this was followed by the Debate Tech Hustings, attended by over 2,000 people.

**Published Centre for London's own manifesto**

*Keeping the Promise: A Manifesto for London*; the manifesto was viewed 1,097 times on our website.

**Candidate engagement**

We held meetings with Sadiq Khan, Zac Goldsmith, Sian Berry and Caroline Pidgeon. Each incorporated a number of our recommendations into their manifestos, including devolving suburban rail services to TfL and creating a Chief Digital Officer for London.

**Hosted a head-to-head debate**

In partnership with The Evening Standard, Centre for London held an animated mayoral debate between the two top-polling candidates, chaired by *Newsnight’s Kirsty Wark* and in front of a sell-out crowd.

**Commentary and insights on election night** with social media updates and media interviews from City Hall.

**Media coverage**

Our work generated over 35 pieces of coverage in publications including the *Financial Times*, the *Evening Standard*, the *Guardian*, and the *Mail on Sunday*; and TV programming such as BBC London and BBC Sunday Politics.

“*Keeping the Promise: A Manifesto for London* was hailed as ‘a landmark report’ in The Evening Standard.”

Our social media account saw a 112% increase in tweet impressions over the election period.

Media coverage of our work generated a combined circulation of 3.5 million.
As the capital’s population continues to grow, a key priority for us is to identify new ways we can deliver the housing and infrastructure that London needs, while enhancing affordability, sustainability and urban quality.
**Project in focus**

*Turning South London Orange*

This transport report set out an ambitious reform agenda to transform South London’s railway network into a trusted, high-frequency urban rail network.

**Media coverage**

Exclusives in The Financial Times and the Evening Standard, alongside 27 additional media mentions with a combined print circulation of 3,010,673.

**Working with the Greater London Authority**

In early 2016, Isabel Dedring, Deputy Mayor for Transport spoke at the launch event, which brought together 115 attendees from organisations including the Department for Transport, Network Rail, AECOM, Savills, Thales and Surrey County Council.

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**Project in focus**

*Another Storey: Understanding the Real Potential for Estate Densification*

This report sought to understand the potential for estate densification to meet London’s housing needs. The analysis showed that the capacity for densification is often overstated, and called for fair treatment of residents.

**Bringing together leaders to debate the issues**

Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham and Kate Webb, Head of Policy, Shelter were among speakers at the launch event.

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**Recommendation adopted**

The London Assembly and mayor Boris Johnson endorsed our recommendation to devolve suburban rail services to TfL from our report *Turning South London Orange*. The government initially supported the calls, but has since backtracked.

**Parliamentary support**

Chuka Umunna MP referenced our report in the House of Commons as evidence when discussing the Southern Rail crisis.

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DCLG is grateful to Centre for London for this significant contribution to the dialogue about the delivery of higher density estate regeneration across London.

*Department for Communities and Local Government*
Responding to Brexit

In a year of dramatic political change, our research and events looked at how we can maintain London’s resilience as a leading global city, for the benefit of the whole of the UK.

Ahead of the EU Referendum we published Continental Capital - a short paper setting out London’s social, economic and physical links with mainland Europe - but reacted quickly to the UK’s vote to leave, and set about identifying the challenges and opportunities which Brexit presents London.

We believe that if London is going to maintain its competitiveness after Brexit, it will need continued access to international talent, a trade deal that reflects the importance of service sector exports, and new powers that will ready its citizens and infrastructure to meet the challenges of the 21st century.
Project in focus

**Brexit response**
Here are just a few of the ways we have helped make sure London’s voice is heard in the Brexit negotiations.

**Joint research project**
We announced a joint research project with the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Bath.

**A better deal for London**
We continued to make the case for a devolution deal for Londoners and the capital, as part of the mayor’s London Finance Commission.

**Polls of Londoners’ expectations**
We carried out the first poll of Londoners’ expectations post-Brexit and found that \( \frac{3}{4} \) think London should be given **more powers and control over its finances** to ensure the city’s continuing success after Brexit.

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Project in focus

**The London Conference**
The debate around the future of the capital post-Brexit continued at The London Conference in November. Examining London’s place in the world, the conference explored how the capital can remain prosperous and well connected while keeping growth inclusive.

**Over 40 high-profile speakers**
Speakers included **David Miliband** (President and CEO, International Rescue Committee), who spoke about how cities should respond to the global refugee crisis; **Alicia Glen** (New York’s Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development), who discussed planning for regeneration in a global city; and cities expert **Benjamin Barber**, who spoke about the Global Parliament of Mayors Project.

**Record number of delegates**
**430 delegates** throughout the day – the highest number of delegates at the conference since it was established six years ago.

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**Roundtable** We brought together 15 key London stakeholders in the week following the vote to leave to discuss London’s response to Brexit.

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#LonConf16 was trending in the **top 5 hashtags** throughout the day, both in London and across the UK.

It generated over **150,600 impressions** and Centre for London was re-tweeted more than **300 times**.
Our new strategic priorities
Centre for London is refocusing on four strategic priorities
By most measures, London is a success – one of the few truly global cities, with a growing population and economy. It is a leader in financial services, creative industries, tech and higher education. But London’s growth is putting a strain on infrastructure and intensifying an affordability crisis that locks many people out of the success story. Brexit, global economic rebalancing and a wider reaction against globalisation intensify London’s challenges and add new ones.

Centre for London is refocusing on four strategic priorities to find solutions to London’s critical challenges, to maintain the city’s prosperity and enhance fairness.

**Global Capital**
How should London maintain its global prominence, and the soft power that underpins this, in the face of Brexit and other challenges? How can this global role be balanced with better relationships with other cities and regions within the UK?

**Accommodating Growth**
London’s population has passed its historic high point, and is continuing to rise. How can the city’s infrastructure – from transport to housing – accommodate this growth, while improving affordability and quality of life for all?

**Skills and Opportunity**
How can London’s labour market adapt to rapid and disruptive technological, economic and political change? How can London ensure labour market access and social mobility, fulfilling its promise as a place where hardworking people can build a decent life?

**Community and Public Services**
London is a diverse, complex and sometimes tough city. How is it held together? Is it public spaces, public services, social networks, neighbourhood meetings or just people’s ideas of London that keep it going?

As this report has shown, our previous research provides a solid foundation for this new programme of work to build upon.

*Richard Brown,*  
*Research Director, Centre for London*
Research programme 2017 and beyond
In the first quarter of 2017 we have published *Strength in Numbers*, which looked at how boroughs could collaborate better to build more affordable housing, and *Making Good*, a collection of essays on what makes great places, as well as collaborating with London Youth on a survey of the needs of young people in London.

**Forthcoming projects include:**

**Open City** – an agenda for devolution and local action to help London make the best of Brexit

**London and Neighbours** – a short project researching London’s relationships with neighbouring authorities, and how joint working could be enhanced

**Over Station Development** – a study on the feasibility of and barriers to building over and around stations, to support more intense development, and deliver upgrades for London’s infrastructure

**Roads and Streets** – the report of our commission on the stresses affecting London’s roads and the competition for their use, examining which new policy instruments could help meet a range of objectives

**Giving in London** – research into the patterns of giving and social enterprise in London, into how we can grow the extent and impact of these

**Innovation and the Public Realm** – research and discussion on the role that public space plays in creating innovation districts, and an innovation city

**The London Intelligence** – a new quarterly bulletin bringing together economic, social and environmental data and analysis to track London’s development

**The London Conference** - the event returns in November and will explore the practical implications for inclusive growth in London.

We are also developing and fundraising for projects on local authority house building, modern housing manufacture, London’s future workforce, pathways to work, London identities, and fairer taxes.
Overview of finances & funders
Centre for London is a registered charity and we rely on the ongoing support of organisations and individuals to fund our work. Without their belief in the power of ideas to change the city, we could not have achieved the impact we’ve had to date.

Our funding partners come from a wide range of backgrounds and sectors, reflecting our belief in partnership across different sectors. We are committed to being transparent about our funding. Every year we publish a full list of our funders online; previous funding reports can be found on our website.

Funders by sector, 2016

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<th>Sector</th>
<th>45%</th>
<th>31%</th>
<th>12%</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<td>Private</td>
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<td>Public</td>
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<td>Centre for London Trading Limited</td>
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Who funded our work in 2016

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<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>£1,000-£10,000</td>
<td>Beth and David Blood, City and Westminster Property Associations, City of Westminster, Farrells, Future Cities Catapult, Gatwick Airport, Google, London Borough of Ealing, London Borough of Lewisham, London Borough of Southwark</td>
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<tr>
<td>£10,001-£20,000</td>
<td>British Land, Canary Wharf Group, City Bridge Trust, Grosvenor Britain &amp; Ireland, JLL, Khazanah Europe Investment, a subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates</td>
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<td>£20,001-£30,000</td>
<td>Barratt London, City of London Corporation, The Richard Rogers Charitable Settlement</td>
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<tr>
<td>£30,001-£40,000</td>
<td>McKinsey &amp; Company, Peabody</td>
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<td>£40,001-£50,000</td>
<td>Lendlease, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>£50,001+</td>
<td>Capital &amp; Counties Properties PLC, Centre for London Trading Limited**, Chris Rokos, Innova Investment Partnership</td>
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* We are currently not listing donations below £1,000

**From time to time Centre for London undertakes projects on a commercial basis, through our trading company, when these are complementary to our mission. All the profits of Centre for London Trading Limited are donated to Centre for London. Clients in 2016 were: Allies and Morrison, London Youth, and Solum Developments Limited.
Centre for London is led by Director Ben Rogers and Chair Liz Peace, who are supported by a small core team, a network of Associates and a Board of Trustees.

Our Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the charity. They oversee the Centre’s development and ensure it is achieving its charitable objectives.

The Board of Trustees

Professor Michael Arthur, President & Provost, University College London

Liz Peace, CBE Chair of Trustees

Sir Mark Boleat, Deputy Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, City of London Corporation

Andrew Travers, Consultant, Halliford Associates Limited

Sonal Shah, former Chief Executive, London Community Foundation

Stephen Bediako, Executive Chair, The Social Innovation Partnership

Tim Collerton, Partner, Wilkins Kennedy LLP

Rosie Ferguson, Chief Executive, Gingerbread

Ben Page, Chief Executive, IPSOS Mori

Paul King, Managing Director, Sustainability and External Affairs, Lendlease

David Slater, Director of International Trade & Investment and member of the Executive Board, London & Partners