

ADEPT President's Awards 2025

Entry form

Main contact name Gwyn Richards

Email Gwyn.richards@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Phone Number (07872) 007972

Award category Shaping Places for People

Project Title A View for All: Putting the Public on Top (Free to visit elevated public areas in the City of London)

Local authority entrant City of London

Headline summary (150 characters max.)

The City's globally renowned free to visit elevated public areas deliver a more inclusive 7-day City, welcoming all communities, ages and backgrounds

Please note we need at least one supporting image per award submission. Upload your image/s below.



Video - please paste links to any video evidence here. (Leave blank if not relevant.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNt0WhqhQDM>

Shaping places for people: How was this project an innovative response to a significant concern? (150 words max.)

The City of London is focussed on transforming the City into a more inclusive and welcoming place for all communities. A key inclusivity initiative delivering free-to-visit public spaces in major developments inverts the historical hierarchy where the best City views were the exclusive demise of the affluent and instead to put the public on top, delivering a welcoming, equitable and inclusive City for all communities irrespective of their social and economic position.

In addition, these free to visit public spaces are conditioned to be open 7 days a week and diversify the economic base of the City, encouraging visitors and footfall supporting the food, beverage and leisure sectors with the "Wow" factor of spectacular views enjoyed by all backgrounds. The initiative also addresses the challenge of providing sufficient ground floor public realm in the high-density City through re-inventing public realm as a 3-dimensional concept, and escape from street level bustle.

Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the quality of outcomes obtained from the project (for example improved/more efficient services, increased inclusivity for residents, futureproofing the service). (150 words max.)

The free to visit elevated public areas have had a substantial impact on footfall in the evenings and

weekends. The Horizon22 and The Lookout public viewing galleries have increased weekend footfall in the immediate area by 30%, footfall that translates to spend at the food, beverage and attractions of the City. These areas are proving to be a major transformational catalyst to delivering a vibrant and resilient 7-day City.

However, the most enduring outcome is the transformation of the City as a welcoming and inclusive City for all communities, ages and backgrounds. The spectacular success of these public elevated areas, with over 18 million visits and all are free to visit, 7 days a week, a truly socially and economically inclusive transformation of a City which historically was seen as inward looking and exclusive. This represents the single most transformational social change in the City for the last 50 years.

Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the level of collaboration between place and people services (both within the council and with external partners/providers). (150 words max.)

The public spaces are negotiated to have education at their core to deliver an Inclusive City. Planning Officers worked with external parties such as charities, schools and education providers to scope operators to curate the spaces. In particular, the City approached the London Museum and their educational service to work with the developers to curate 1 Undershaft and 85 Gracechurch Street. On 1 Undershaft the London Museum will be managing a "Classrooms in the Sky" for state schools at over 300m high, the highest public space in western Europe. In addition, on 85 Gracechurch, an exhibition / education space is provided, celebrating the Roman Basilica and Forum on the site, curated by the London Museum

On 55 Bishopsgate, the London Centre will curate the public Skygarden and viewing deck at over 280m high with education at its core and education spaces are incorporated in 50 Fenchurch St, 60 Gracechurch Street

Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the level of buy-in to the project or its goals from members of the local community, health and social care and external organisations. (150 words max.)

The free to visit public elevated areas have been outstandingly popular with London residents, school groups, families and visitors over 18 million visitors and exceptionally positive feedback. The change in the demography of the City has been very significant with age groups, families and under-represented communities visiting the City to visit these areas.

The outstanding success of these areas have been warmly supported by the City's Business Improvement Districts, the City Property Association (CPA) and New London Architecture (NLA) as well as nearby residents and City workers. Local residents and schools have been invited as part of the operator's community engagement strategy.

The initiative won the Building London Planning Awards and international delegations are offered tours by City officers as the initiative is recognised as an international exemplar.

Shaping places for people: Please give evidence of the use or consideration of new sources of investment to fund projects. (150 words max.)

One of the radical elements of these elevated public spaces is the fact that their delivery, running costs falls to the developer as part of legal planning agreements, and not the public purse. The very significant increase in visitor footfall into the evenings and weekends as a result of the opening of these public elevated areas has demonstrably had a major catalyst effect on spend throughout the week for the food, beverage and leisure sectors of the City, which in turn attracts inward investment. This provides a richer, more resilient economic ecosystem to the City with a very significant increase in domestic and international visitors

These elevated public areas and the "Wow" factor of the world class views afforded has been cited as the reason new occupiers want to relocate into the City given its exciting and vibrant character merging work and play, contributing to the cycle of inward investment.

All categories: please add anything else that supports your award entry

The free to visit public elevated public areas the City of London's Planning Department have negotiated in new developments is an award-winning and internationally ground-breaking and acclaimed initiative. The City is committed to ensuring the best views are for all by putting the public on top and inverting the historical social and economic hierarchy where the best views were formerly the exclusive domain of the affluent and privileged. The initiative is key in delivering a more welcoming and inclusive City for all communities.

These elevated public areas are all unique and include public roof gardens, roof terraces, winter gardens and viewing galleries offering outstanding views over the City, its landmarks and the Thames. These public elevated spaces radically re-invent the concept of public realm as a three-dimensional concept, addressing the challenges of providing meaningful and high quality public realm at street level in a dense urban centre. These areas offer a tranquil escape from the street level bustle and are conditioned to be open 7 days a week and in to the evening, delivering a vibrant 7-day City. The recently opened Horizon22 and The Lookout have in a year and a half welcomed over 1 million visitors with the immediate area recording a 30% increase in weekend footfall and resultant spend. These public spaces have collectively welcomed over 15 million visitors and there are very many new ones under construction or in the planning pipeline.

Delivering a view for all communities and Putting the Public on Top.