**OUR VISION IS TO MAKE LONDON A CITY WHERE PEOPLE, PLACES AND NATURE ARE BETTER CONNECTED.**

Let's make a National Park City that is rich with nature and where everyone benefits from exploring, playing and learning outdoors. A city where we all enjoy high quality public and green spaces, where the air is clean to breathe and it's a pleasure to swim in its waters. Together we can make London a greener, healthier, wilder, fairer and more harmonious place to live. *Why not?*

The London National Park City is a shared vision and journey for a better life. *Everyone can benefit and contribute every day.*

It is a large-scale and long-term vision that is achievable through many actions. Lots of these things are already happening in London, but by working, learning, sharing and acting together, we can achieve even more.

# Charter of the

# LONDON NATIONAL PARK CITY*

July 2019

**WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER:**

1. LIVES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING
2. WILDLIFE, TREES AND FLOWERS
3. PLACES, HABITATS, AIR, WATER, SEA & LAND
4. TIME OUTDOORS, CULTURE, ART, PLAYING, WALKING, CYCLING AND EATING
5. LOCALLY GROWN FOOD AND RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
6. DECISIONS, SHARING, LEARNING AND WORKING TOGETHER
7. RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATURE & EACH OTHER

**THIS CHARTER CONFIRMS THAT WE COLLECTIVELY SHARE THE AMBITION, RESPONSIBILITY AND POWER TO DELIVER THESE THINGS AND MORE.**

## SIGNATURES

*By signing this document, I/we pledge to play an active role in making the London National Park City a success.*

## WHAT IS A NATIONAL PARK CITY?

It's a place, a vision and a city-wide community that is acting together to make life better for people, wildlife and nature. A defining feature is the widespread commitment to act so people, culture and nature work together to provide a better foundation for life.

It is a timely cultural choice, a commitment to a sense of place and way of life that sustains people and nature in London and beyond.

This London Charter draws from the principles and aspirations of the Universal Charter for National Park Cities which aims to inspire others to follow London's lead. The National Park City Foundation will work with others to publish a regular State of the National Park City report to highlight actions and progress being made to support the National Park City vision.

**What if we restored nature wherever we can? * What if everybody could lose themselves in nature without leaving London? * What if we shared more knowledge, ideas, tools and experiences? * What if there were more beautiful sights, smells, sounds and colours in the city? * What if we thought more about those who will be living in the city seven generations from now? * What if there was more celebration and spontaneity? * What if we did more things to care for the people, places and nature we are interdependent with? * What if there was more space for reconciliation? * What if we had more balance and harmony within ourselves, our city and globe?*

## 5 NATIONAL PARK CITY COMMITMENTS FOR THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON

London leads the world by being the world's first National Park City.

The Mayor of London has a lead role in championing, supporting and enhancing our London National Park City. The National Park City Foundation asks the next Mayor of London to support London National Park City in five ways.

The commitments reflect ideas gathered from Londoners and some of the 250 groups and organisations in the London National Park City Network.

1. **SIGN, SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE LONDON NATIONAL PARK CITY CHARTER**

2. **DEVISE A LONDON NATIONAL PARK CITY STRATEGY**
INVOLVING ALL PARTS OF THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY – FROM TRANSPORT, HEALTH, EDUCATION, SKILLS AND BUSINESS TO CULTURE, SPORT, HERITAGE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY.

3. **PROMOTE LONDON'S NATIONAL PARK CITY IDENTITY, STORY AND PRESENCE**
TO INSPIRE MORE PEOPLE TO ENJOY LONDON'S GREAT OUTDOORS AND HELP MAKE LONDON GREENER, HEALTHIER AND WILDER.

4. **CONNECT LONDONERS TO SHARE SKILLS, TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE, BEST PRACTICE, IDEAS, HOPES AND DREAMS**
BY SUPPORTING SEASONAL CITY-WIDE NATIONAL PARK CITY GATHERINGS.

5. **PROTECT AND INCREASE LONDON'S GREEN, BLUE, PUBLIC, WILD OPEN SPACES**
AND IMPROVE THEIR QUALITY, QUANTITY, SAFETY, CONNECTIVITY AND DIVERSITY OF USE.

## 99 WHAT IF'S FOR THE NEXT MAYOR

The Mayor of London should help London be a world class National Park City in many other ways too. Londoners answered our call for What if ideas to make life better in London. For each "what if" idea, the follow-up question for us all is "why not?".

**WHICH OF THESE IDEAS, HOPES AND OBJECTIVES WILL THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON FULFILL?**

*∗1 What if more than half of London was physically green? ∗2 What if we doubled the number of people enjoying outdoor sports and activities? ∗3 What if all Londoners felt London's great outdoors was for them? ∗4 What if London was the first major capital to be net carbon neutral? ∗5 What if half of London's green space was prioritised for nature? ∗6 What if every resident could see green space and trees from their window? ∗7 What if London's air was not poisonous? ∗8 What if most children walked or cycled to school? ∗9 What if souvenirs sold to tourists featured London's great outdoors and natural assets? ∗10 What if women could walk and run safely in our green spaces on their own at any time? ∗11 What if London celebrated all four seasons, not just two? ∗12 What if London businesses held staff awaydays outdoors? ∗13 What if green spaces could help cross divides between postcodes and borough lines? ∗14 What if more people felt able to enjoy the outdoors more often - as part of everyday life? ∗15 What if every child could play in nature on their doorstep? ∗16 What if a quarter of all of London's walls were covered in well mantained ivy or other nature-rich plants? ∗17 What if the Mayor and Councils backed an annual campaign to connect everyone with nature and help them enjoy themselves outdoors? ∗18 What if London doubled tree cover for shade and beauty and to store carbon, boost nature and cut flood risk? ∗19 What if spaces between new development were designed to be great for nature, play and learning?∗20 What if shopping centres, visitor attractions and entertainment venues promoted active travel? ∗21 What if there were 1,000 signed residential play streets? ∗22 What if London had 1,000 volunteer National Park City Rangers? ∗23 What if the Mayor's National Park City Festival was as big as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival? ∗24 What if new public ponds were created in each of London's 654 wards? ∗25 What if a tree was planted in the greenbelt for every child born in London? ∗26 What if 33 major streets (1 per borough) were transformed into parks? ∗27 What if anyone without a car could turn a parking space into a parklet space? ∗28 What if there was a new and fully-funded All-London-Green-Grid? ∗29 What if there was an independent National Park City Fund to raise funds from philanthropists?*

*30 What if a "tourist tax" on hotel stays helped make London greener, healthier and wilder? *31 What if all of London's rivers were clean and safe to swim in? *32 What if, inspired by business improvement districts, there were Green Improvement Districts? *33 What if London parks were as well funded and run as Royal Parks? *34 What if every child in London was taught about living in the London National Park City? *35 What if there were more natural lidos? *36 What if there was an urban right to roam map of London? *37 What if there was a "Tinder" style website for connecting people to available land? *38 What if there was more signage to help people discover parks, green and blue spaces? *39 What if all TfL, police and fire staff were told about the London National Park City? *40 What if the greenbelt was made greener and better for people and wildlife? *41 What if orchards were planted going through people's back gardens? *42 What if there was a National Park City course for people to learn green your street and other skills? *43 What if more golf courses became public parks? *44 What if there were more grants to scale-up National Park City-related projects and businesses? *45 What if all new buildings and their surroundings included habitat making and connecting features? *46 What if there was more social public seating? *47 What if there were 1,000 rope swings across London's parks? *48 What if part of every park's grassed area was given to children to plant up and maintain? *49 What if council and housing association grounds became spaces for food growing? *50 What if existing nature on developers' sites as protected and incorporated into development plans? *51 What if there were more free bike courses for fixing and riding bicycles? *52 What if 10,000 new fruit trees were planted in people's back gardens? *53 What if mature trees were properly protected? *54 What if Transport for London's rail routes were thriving with nature? *55 What if TfL Legible London applied to London's long distance footpaths and waterways? *56 What if London's rivers, waterways and water bodies were restored for nature and to reduce flooding? *57 What if all major roads were lined with pollution absorbing hedging? *58 What if we all stopped using bug sprays and weed killer? *59 What if every London home stored rainwater for gardening and ran on clean, green energy? *60 What if everyone in London could confidently identify 10 trees, 10 birds, 10 plants and 10 insects? *61 What if London bought no bottled water? *62 What if "Garden Bridge amounts of money" went to manage and create green spaces, parks and greener streets London wide? *63 What if an eight year-old could bike to school safely? *64 What if more streets and public spaces were designed to give people joy? *65 What if all parks were linked to each other by at least one 'quiet way' for walking, cycling and gardening? *66 What if London brought back house sparrows, swifts, starlings and skylarks? *67 What if more school lessons were held outside? *68 What if there were more places for growing food in public spaces? *69 What if London held a massive plant swap day? *70 What if residents could turn streets into pop-up sports and play areas, complete with painted lines? *71 What if there was no rubbish in our streets? *72 What if there was a beach or public swimming pool on the Thames in central London? *73 What if all London schools taught a London National Park City curriculum? *74 What if there were more playful "do this" signs instead of "don't do / no ball games" signs? *75 What if we could hear birdsong and buzzing bees above road and aircraft noise? *76 What if every child in London went on a Thames safari to look for seals and a walk in Richmond Park? *77 What if more of the greenbelt was used for sustainable smallholdings and similar skills? *78 What if allotments and parks were safe from development threats? *79 What if signs, art and interpretation on buses and trains helped people understand the world outside? *80 What if bandstands were brought to life again through talks and performances? *81 What if all brownfield sites were made available for meanwhile use, for play, recreation and exercise? *82 What if the city was designed so we heard more beautiful sounds? *83 What if the Mayor of London went camping in Epping Forest with a group of young people? *84 What if we could see the night sky in London? *85 What if businesses made their window boxes, hedging and hanging baskets great for bees, pollinators and nature, and knew how to maintain them? *86 What if London valued and invested in skills like food growing, gardening and urban greening? *87 What if there were more fish, eels, otters and beavers in London's rivers? *88 What if parks had signs and information to explain and promote their multifunctional benefits? *89 What if people in London could adopt a new street tree outside their home? *90 What if there was a National Park City community hub in every borough? *91 What if there were more revenue grants to support people's time to do things? *92 What if every ward knew what it could do in its area to bring nature back? *93 What if well known and respected people championed their part of the National Park City? *94 What if central London had a National Park City eco-cultural visitor centre? *95 What if every front garden lost to hard paving had to create new green space within 100 yards? *96 What if there was more colour in London? *97 What if people gained Oyster card credits for physically active visits to green spaces and places across London and the south east, including to local Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks? *98 What if London showed the world how urban life can be nature-rich and climate friendly in the 21st century? *99 What if all Londoners felt empowered, proud and hopeful to be part of the world's first National Park City?

*100? What would you add as the 100th What If idea? *Let us know*

FOR THESE AND MORE GREAT WHAT IF IDEAS SEE **WWW.NATIONALPARKCITY.LONDON**

**LONDON NATIONAL PARK CITY***

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