

Menu

[Home](#) [Press release](#) [Mayoral](#) **[London's smart technology drive](#)**

London joining forces with European cities to trial smart technology

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Using the River Thames to heat homes, testing electric bikes and trialling state-of-the-art smart parking bays are just some of the innovative projects to be put to the test in London as part of a Europe-wide technology drive.

London is joining forces with cities across Europe in a €25m project that will demonstrate how innovative uses of technology can improve the lives of their residents. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, in partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich has been chosen to take part in the Smart Cities and Communities Lighthouse programme which aims to develop solutions to challenges faced by all major cities as they continue to grow and develop.

To ensure this unprecedented growth is managed sustainably, the Mayor is already harnessing new technologies, London's burgeoning tech sector and the creative power of city data to improve the capital.

The 'Sharing Cities' Lighthouse programme will see Greenwich used as a testing ground for new technology to deliver a better future for local people.

Initiatives taking place in Greenwich include:

- Trialling 300 smart parking bays that aim to optimise parking spaces and help drivers find a space quickly and conveniently.
- Testing shared electric bikes to see if these support a shift from private cars, while electric vehicles will be piloted for local deliveries and car sharing.
- Using the River Thames as a renewable energy source to provide affordable heat to local homes. A heat pump will be used to increase the water temperature before being piped through a heat network for space heating and domestic hot water use in local homes. This will improve air quality by avoiding the need to use boilers and provide lower energy bills for residents.
- Installing solar panels on homes to provide green energy and improve energy efficiency. The supply and demand of energy will be locally managed by energy partners involved in the programme via state-of-the-art digital technology that will also reduce energy bills and carbon emissions.

Similar projects will be put to the test in the cities of Milan, Lisbon, Warsaw, Bordeaux and Burgas and could eventually be rolled-out across Europe. Greenwich is already the focus of other ground breaking initiatives, linked to the Greenwich Smart City Strategy published last year, including the introduction of driverless cars later this year as part of a national pilot in the UK.

The project will also develop a new model of sharing data across cities to make the best use of encyclopaedic amount of information now available that can be used to change the way cities, their communities and services work. This will deliver a common data sharing platform that can be used by all the programme cities and beyond.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson MP said: "London is growing at a record rate and to support the city's future growth, we need to harness our incredible technical prowess and look to what new approaches and technological innovation can bring. By leading this ground-breaking international project we will be able to share ideas with our European counterparts as we work to create a city that is fit for the future and an even greater place to live, work and visit."

Denise Hyland, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, said: "I am delighted that The Royal Borough of Greenwich has been selected to be the demonstrator area for smart cities and communities as part of this important Horizon 2020 European Programme. I am also delighted to be working with the Mayor of London's Office, the many prestigious partners involved, and of course, the cities of Milan, Lisbon, Bordeaux, Burgas and Warsaw. This provides the opportunity to share our experience and learn from others and in doing so, provide further insight into how the use of technology and data analytics can help tackle many of the problems our cities face.

"The Horizon 2020 project will give further impetus to our smart city work and help bring about transformational change. I would like to add my thanks to all those involved in preparing this winning bid for their future commitment in ensuring its successful implementation."

Professor David Gann CBE, Vice President (Development & Innovation) at Imperial College London and Chairman of the Smart London Board, said: "No city in the world can match London for its technical nous, creative prowess and financial savvy. In recent years, the Smart London Plan has helped turn the capital's innovative capabilities into tangible improvements to Londoners' lives. The Smart Cities and Communities Lighthouse programme provides a great testbed as we endeavour to innovate, harnessing the opportunities of the Internet of Things and Data to sustain the capital's leading position as the world's smartest city."

Claire Mookerjee, Head of Urban Futures at Future Cities Catapult: "Future Cities Catapult is committed to putting people at the heart of innovation. Our approach to user-centred design is why we're so excited to be leading on citizen engagement for Sharing Cities. We'll be making sure that citizens in each of the cities are included in the creation and development of these new types of services and that feedback will be integrated so that services are constantly updated, iterated and improved."

Paul Brodrick, Head of Connected Communities, Siemens Energy Management, said: "We are proud partners of the Smart Cities and Communities Lighthouse programme. We believe that by investing in technology, with a focus on renewable and electrification London has the potential to be a global beacon for smart technology and sustainability. This programme will help make that possibility a reality. What is really exciting is the long term potential of this project. The data sharing between European cities and opportunities to develop a cities focused R&D pipeline in London could help keep the UK at the cutting edge of future city technologies."

In London, a world-class partnership has also been created to accelerate these urban innovations to market, to grow the economy and improve the city. The partnership includes centres of expertise like the Future Cities Catapult and Imperial College, city network experts like Eurocities, as well as Siemens and London's top engineers, designers, academics and business professionals, all of whom are known for discovering and testing which new ideas can have the biggest impact on our urban environments. Since March 2013, the Smart London Board has

worked to help London to integrate opportunities from new digital technologies into the fabric of the city.

The programme will also exploit the power of London as a financial capital to develop business models and raise substantial smart city investment funds.

Last year, the Mayor published his London Infrastructure Plan 2050 - the first attempt to set out the full range of infrastructure requirements for the capital over the next half century. This plan considered how data and smart technology could be embraced to influence the future of London. Last year, the Mayor also upgraded the capital's data-sharing platform, the London Datastore, by adding reams of new city data and making it easier for it to be used to make the capital an even better place to live, work and visit. The Datastore has led to the creation of more than 200 apps, such as the Citymapper travel app, which has now been exported to some of the biggest cities in the world.

Other press releases

Mayor's Budget that meets commitment to cut bills

Date: 22 December 2015

The Mayor has proposed to cut his share of the council tax in a draft Budget

Mayor invests almost £80m in London SMEs

Date: 09 December 2015

A total of £78m has been invested in 19 of the capital's SMEs, helping them to innovate and grow.

Mayor welcomes Chancellor's pledge

Date: 25 November 2015

The Mayor of London has welcomed the Chancellor of the Exchequer's pledge to protect the police from budget cuts.

New visa proposals

Date: 17 November 2015

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson is today proposing new visa proposals.

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