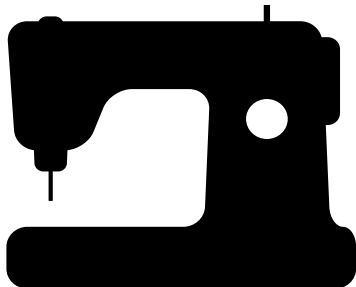
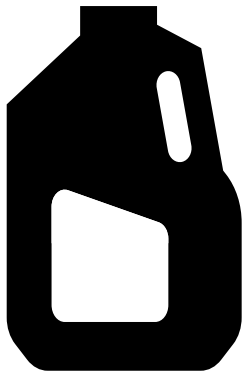
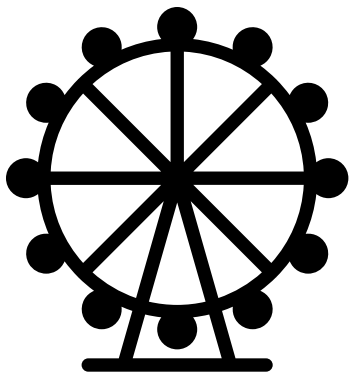


**Moving towards a low  
carbon circular city  
Impact report 2023-24**

**ReLondon**

# Contents



**Foreword**

**3**

**Introduction**

**4**

**Our approach**

**5**

**Pillar 1:  
Evidence and inspiration**

**6**

**Pillar 2:  
Local authorities**

**10**

**Pillar 3:  
Businesses**

**14**

**Pillar 4:  
Citizens**

**17**

**Governance and funding**

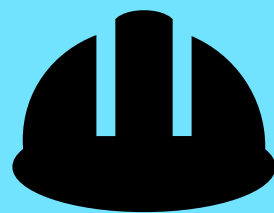
**21**

**Financial summary**

**22**



# Foreword



**“This report seeks to showcase our successes, demonstrate what’s possible, allow us to learn lessons and increase our impact.”**



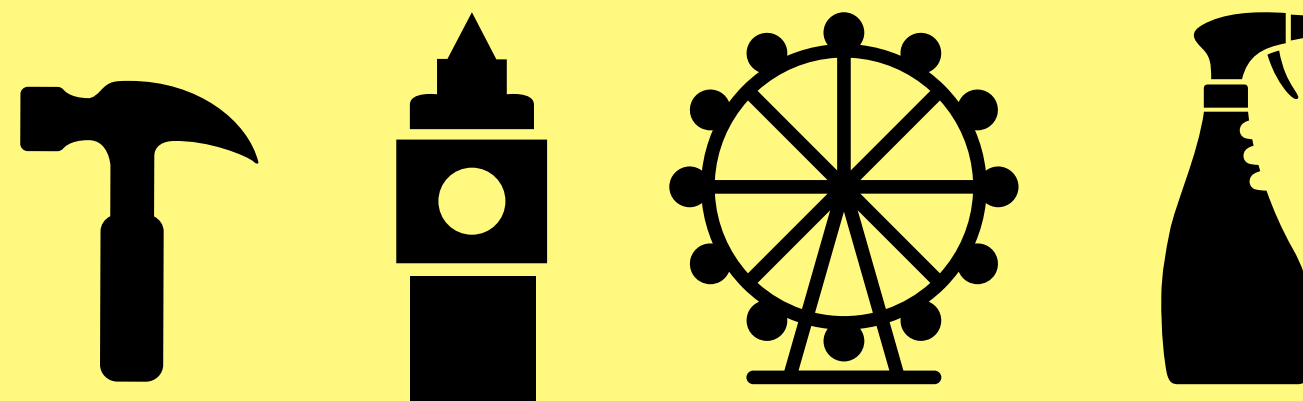
**Mete Coban MBE**  
Board Chair

**W**e have a critical opportunity to make sure all Londoners benefit from the transition to a circular economy. Since the publication of ReLondon’s last impact report, Sadiq Khan was elected as the Mayor of London for an historic third term, and we have a new government, already making clear their commitment to making our country use less, reuse more and ensure the public benefit from both.

That is why I am so excited to have become the new Chair of ReLondon and am already excited to build on and showcase the innovation and best practice happening within waste authorities, businesses and the waste sector that deliver against the ambition for a zero waste London.

ReLondon, as a partnership between the Mayor of London and the London boroughs continues to sit at the heart of this aim, and the work they do will continue to grow in importance. This is why, as the new Chair of the ReLondon Board and the Deputy Mayor of London for the Environment, I am delighted to introduce ReLondon’s impact report for 2023-24.

This report seeks to showcase our successes, demonstrate what is possible and allow us to learn lessons and increase our impact. It is also a testament to the expertise, enthusiasm, optimism and energy the ReLondon team bring to everything we do. We look forward to building on the achievements presented here, working with existing and new partners and continuing to demonstrate the critical role of cities in the global circular economy.



# Introduction



**Wayne Hubbard**

Chief Executive Officer

**W**elcome to our second annual impact report. It covers our 17th year as London's statutory waste, recycling and circular economy partnership.

In 2023-24 we had a significant impact in helping to transform our city into a leading low carbon circular economy – you can read about our projects in these pages. But it was also a year of consolidation, reflection and preparation, the springboard into a new operating context for ReLondon. Our funding model continued to evolve, and we began to develop a new strategy for our work in London and beyond.

Alongside delivering impactful projects, we grew our team, our Board and our audit committee, to help us with the challenges ahead. New partnership and fundraising experts also joined us through the year. Together, they've sharpened our focus, grown our networks and added clarity to our tasks and targets for the next five years.

**“In 2023-24 we had a significant impact in helping to transform our city into a leading low carbon circular economy.”**

## Focusing on our communities

Our connections with business, government and civil society continued to be fruitful. In late spring 2023 we secured continuation funding for our business transformation programme, through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Meanwhile, we continued to expand our work with waste authorities on recycling – kicking off a first-of-its-kind project on flats above shops – and increased our focus on community behaviours through circular neighbourhoods, in partnership with councils and a wide variety of local organisations.

Our campaigns team also had a strong year. They delivered more Love Not Landfill fashion events than ever before and launched our borough-sponsored food campaign Eat like a Londoner. And they ran our biggest ever Repair Week with another city – Manchester – taking part for the first time.

Just like last year, in this report we examine our impact through the eyes of three different audiences: London's local authorities, businesses and citizens. We showcase our work in food, textiles, plastics, electricals and electronics, and the built environment, against four key pillars informed by what we want to achieve with those audiences. We hope you find it engaging and inspiring.

## Get involved with ReLondon

Want to find out more about what we do? Or have a great idea you'd like to work on with us?

Email [hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk) or contact one of our passionate and expert team direct on our team page at [relondon.gov.uk/about-us](https://relondon.gov.uk/about-us)

# Our approach

**R**eLondon's mission is to revolutionise our relationship with stuff by helping London waste less and reuse, repair, share and recycle more – but not just for its own sake.

45% of damaging global greenhouse gas emissions come from all the food, materials and products that we make, use and consume every day. By changing the way we buy, use and get rid of materials and resources, we can reduce the huge environmental impact of our consumption of stuff.

In this report we'll show you how we're working to tackle waste and slash the carbon emissions caused by the things we make, use and throw away every day.

## We'll talk about:

- ♦ outputs (the things we've done)
- ♦ outcomes (the way those things have been received and acted on by the people we've worked with)
- ♦ impacts (the carbon and waste reduction our work makes possible) where they're available

## We've mainly used surveys to measure outcomes for each project, collecting data from:

- ♦ businesses that got funding or support from us in 2023-24
- ♦ Londoners through the London Councils' annual [citizen survey on climate](#)
- ♦ London's boroughs through our annual survey

## Our four pillars

We've brought all our output, outcome and impact information together to report against four pillars. They cover our main audiences and areas of work:

### 1 Building evidence to inspire action

We produce research and data to help ourselves and others build interventions to effectively tackle waste and climate change. This includes running pilots to test innovative ways of building a low carbon, circular city and sharing the results through insightful publications, engaging webinars and inspiring events

### 2 Equipping local authorities to embed circular practices

We provide one-to-one and one-to-many advisory support to local authorities. We also produce toolkits, case studies and assets to help them reduce waste, boost recycling and create more resilient communities.

### 3 Empowering businesses to grow the circular economy

We collaborate with London-based business to empower systems change. Plus, we run an award-winning programme of funded support for the capital's innovative small and medium-sized businesses who want to tackle the climate emergency by using or scaling circular business models.

### 4 Encouraging Londoners to embrace circular lifestyles

We design, build and deliver powerful behaviour change campaigns and interventions to help citizens waste less, change the way they consume, and reduce their impact on the planet.

# Pillar I: Evidence and inspiration

## Building evidence to inspire action

Our research and data helps us and others build interventions to effectively tackle waste and its impact on climate change. This involves running pilots and demonstration projects to test innovative ways of building a low carbon, circular city. We share our findings through informative articles and publications, engaging webinars and inspiring events.

In 2023-24, we continued to grow engagement with our audience across London and beyond through our content and events, with greater visibility of our work in the press and on social media.

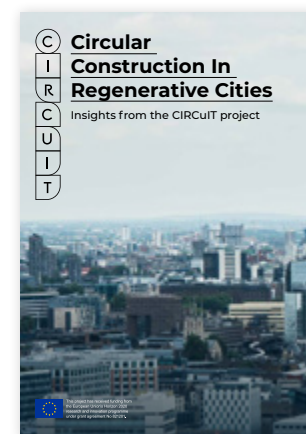
### Our three key reports

We produced three key reports in 2023-24. They brought new insights on material flows (how stuff is moved around) and circularity in London, focusing on fashion, the built environment and household waste and recycling.



#### 1. Focusing on fashion

'[London's fashion footprint](#)' traced the flow of clothing throughout Greater London's fashion supply chain. Through this research, we showed the impact of what Londoners wear on both waste volumes in the city and damaging greenhouse gas emissions. The report highlighted data forecast scenarios and London-specific interventions to tackle the city's clothing-related consumption-based emissions to help London play its part in keeping global temperature rises within 1.5°C.



#### 2. Driving a circular built environment

'[Circular Construction in Regenerative Cities - Insights from the CIRCuIT project](#)' presented the key learnings, tools, methodologies and recommendations from the four-year [CIRCuIT project](#) to accelerate market transformation towards a circular, regenerative built environment. We coordinated London's part in the project for its whole length (2019-2023), working with Copenhagen, Hamburg and the Helsinki/Vantaa region.



#### 3. Providing vital data on waste composition

'[Estimates of London household waste composition](#)' provided the most comprehensive picture yet of what Londoners put in their bins. This is highly valuable information for waste authorities to help them improve recycling rates and better understand the potential impacts of the incoming packaging reforms.

The report was supported by a handy [step-by-step guide](#) for council waste managers and waste disposal authorities who want to carry out their own waste composition analysis for kerbside properties and purpose-built flats in their boroughs.



## Pillar I: Evidence and inspiration

### Circular Economy Week

Our sixth annual Circular Economy Week in 2023 focused on how the circular economy can build cities' resilience against both the cost-of-living and climate crises, while driving green growth.

Sponsored by Visa, the week inspired 700+ people to take part in 78 in-person and online events. For the first time, we expanded Circular Economy Week beyond London and the UK to create global connections. We invited circular economy leaders and pioneers from businesses, governments and NGOs across Africa, Asia and the Americas to tell their stories and share learnings from their cities and regions through a series of insightful webinars.

**“Circular Economy Week enabled me to network face to face with other circular economy practitioners across London and beyond, gain a greater understanding of directions being taken, and understand that we are on the right road and direction [and that] others have similar challenges to us.”**

–Respondent from Tower Hamlets Council

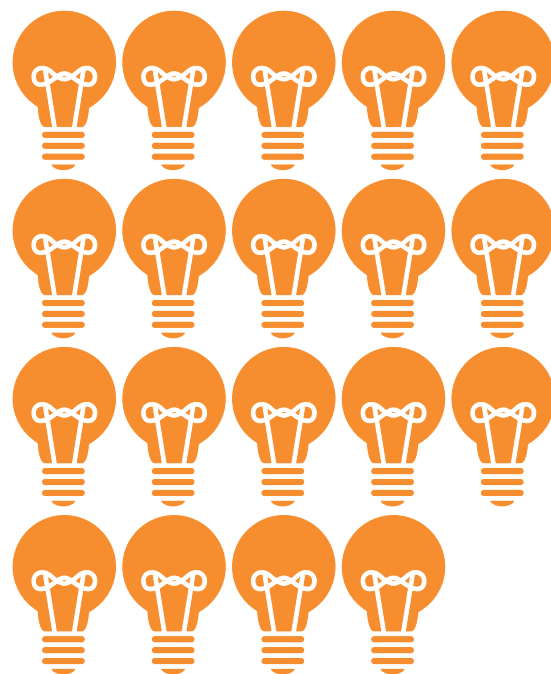
### Evidence shows the people who engage with our work take action

We know our work inspires change. In a 2024 survey circulated to London's local authorities, 75%\* of borough respondents reported that our research and data, pilots, events or other **related resources** have helped enhance their knowledge, competencies and capacity internally to take action. These actions included creating or making changes to new and existing services, policies, activities and programmes.

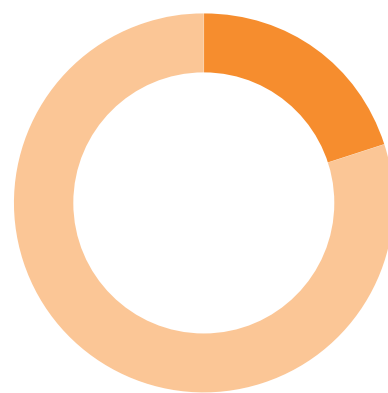
Plus, our Circular Economy Week survey showed 81% of delegates agreed that the event empowered them to explore ways to encourage behaviour change towards lower waste lifestyles. 50% said they would explore collaboration opportunities with industry actors, and over a third said they were inspired to explore opportunities for new policies, or update those already in place.

\* Based on 32 survey responses. 29 were respondents from London's boroughs, representing 22 different boroughs

## Our year in numbers



**19** **knowledge products published** including three reports and one guide, one database, 11 case studies and three thought leadership articles. Through these we shared new insights and data on material flows and circularity in London, alongside recommendations for the public and private sectors



**20%** **growth for our LinkedIn channel** with an average 6.4% engagement rate (versus an industry standard of 1-3%)

**1** **circular neighbourhood demonstrator** engaging 19 local partners, including businesses and schools, offering practical ways to help 8,000+ households reduce waste and reuse, repair, share and recycle more of their stuff locally



**38** **different pilots and demonstration projects delivered** in collaboration with local government, business innovators, community groups, industry experts and universities

**142,000**

**website visits from people in 158 countries and territories.** This was a huge 60% increase from the previous year, with 34,650 page views for our reports, insight notes and case studies



## Pillar I: Evidence and inspiration

### Case study – Heston in the Loop

# Creating the blueprint for a low waste neighbourhood

For London to become a low carbon circular city, we must empower communities to change how they consume stuff locally. Our work with Hounslow Council on the Heston in the Loop project highlights practical ways to make this happen.



## What does a circular neighbourhood look like?

A circular neighbourhood is a place where people have more access to affordable circular products and services. These could include ways to buy packaging-free food and household products, get produce that would have been thrown away, refill water bottles on-the-go, or have more local places to get items repaired.

Ultimately, a circular neighbourhood increases what's available to help everyone move from 'throw away' habits towards more circular, sustainable choices that reduce waste and keep materials in use for longer.

Circular products and services typically benefit the local community and economy too. They can boost community cohesion, save people money and help them build practical skills – a win-win for people, planet and prosperity.

We worked with Hounslow Council to set one up in Heston, west London, supporting residents to waste less and reuse, repair, share and recycle more of their stuff locally.

## Outputs – what did we do?

We designed and oversaw 20 circular interventions in line with five key circular business models from 21 delivery partners. These changed the 'choice architecture' (the goods and services available) for citizens, visitors and businesses. We engaged with five schools, 45 businesses and 13 community groups to achieve these results:

### Making things well

- 35 community gardening sessions training 255 citizens to grow food locally

### Using stuff again and wisely

- 87 events to upskill residents: 53 repair workshops, 34 school pop-up shops offering packaging-free refills for groceries and household products and 5 hair salons recycling hard-to-recycle materials

### Sharing and renting

- 6 apps and online platforms enabling Heston residents to share and rent more, with over 700 downloads and users
- 5,300 items shared or rented, including 3,400kg of food redistributed
- 3 Love Not Landfill events to foster clothes swapping in the community, with 29 attendees

Overall, 700+ citizens attended all our events, including 350+ children, with 480+ items repaired

## Results – what impact did we have?

The results showed people gained a better understanding of how and why a circular lifestyle should be adopted. We also saw evidence of behaviour change through residents making different consumption choices.

- 80% of surveyed residents said they understood how their daily activity could affect climate change (compared to 56% before the project)
- 79% were aware of at least one of our activities
- Just 14% of residents identified barriers to circular behaviours, including lack of knowledge about repairs (down from 55% before)
- 61% are making more sustainable lifestyle choices to reduce their environmental impact (compared to 39% before)
- We saved a minimum of 6,440kg CO<sub>2</sub>e and maximum of 19,278kg CO<sub>2</sub>e – equivalent to 82 return flights from London to Rome

## Want to learn more?

What we did and what we learned makes a replicable model for other neighbourhoods aiming to transform consumption habits and embrace circular economy principles.

To share our learnings, we've developed a circular neighbourhoods framework and toolkit for local authorities.

Get in touch with our team at [hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)



## Pillar I: Evidence and inspiration

### Case study – London's fashion footprint

# Working towards a circular fashion ecosystem for London

The global fashion industry has a huge environmental impact, reported to account for up to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions – more than aviation and shipping combined.

98 million tonnes of valuable non-renewable resources are used to produce our textiles each year, making fashion the fourth biggest user of raw materials in the world.

To make matters worse, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation estimates that 500 billion US dollars' worth of value is lost each year due to clothing being hardly worn and discarded too soon. Plus, when it's no longer wanted, only 1% of clothing is recycled.

Without radical system transformation, these impacts are expected to compound as consumption levels increase, putting the industry on track to use over a quarter of the world's carbon budget by 2050.

## Outputs – Uncovering London's fashion footprint

Textiles is one of the Mayor of London and London boroughs' priority sectors due to its high environmental impact and economic value. As clothing makes up the largest share of all consumer textiles globally, ReLondon worked with University College London and Circle Economy to explore London's fashion sector and uncover opportunities for effective action.

Our resulting report, '[London's fashion footprint](#)', traced the flow of clothing throughout London's entire fashion supply chain. We found it's characterised by high levels of consumption and disposal, responsible for over two million tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

However, we also found it's possible to slash annual emissions by over a third through greater reuse and repair of existing clothing and using more sustainable fibres in new clothing production.

### Want to learn more?

Read the report: [London's fashion footprint](#)

Get in touch with our team at [hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)



## Results – Enhancing knowledge and inspiring actions

- The report has been viewed online 2,914 times with 449 downloads from over 275 organisations around the world.
- The research has been presented at many events and won media coverage – the findings and figures have been quoted in articles across a range of fashion trade and sustainability news outlets.
- 100% of respondents to our survey said the report has helped enhance their knowledge on the environmental impacts associated with London's fashion and textiles consumption.
- 96% of respondents have taken at least one action as a result of downloading and reading the report. These include developing new partnerships or collaborations, informing strategies or supporting funding for actions linked to circular practices.

Alongside the Greater London Authority and London Councils, we developed a commitment to act on the research and unlock opportunities for action across the capital.

We also held two workshops with London boroughs to uncover local priorities and help develop a London Textiles Action Plan. The first had participation from 12 local authorities, increasing to 16 for the second. The officers we engaged came from waste, communications and engagement, climate and sustainability, culture and creative industry, and procurement teams.

The next phase of development for the London Textiles Action Plan will provide a framework for continued action on clothing across London, with the aim to make London a global hub for circular textiles by 2030.



## Pillar 2: Local authorities

# Equipping local authorities to embed circular practices

London's local authorities are the custodians of our social infrastructure and directly impact the daily lives of citizens through the delivery of essential services including waste and recycling services.

They are key stakeholders for change providing the link between the government and their communities. When it comes to transitioning to a low carbon circular city, London boroughs are at the vanguard of this change, working with their communities, neighbourhoods and citizens and investing in the local environment.

Through our work with London's boroughs and waste authorities, we engage with a wide range of borough teams, including waste and recycling, climate change and circular economy, strategic planning, economic development, procurement, culture and education teams, among others.

In 2023-24 we continued to build and grow our relationship with London's local authorities. We also gave support far beyond the capital, including 24 UK local authorities outside London, through training guided by their needs and priorities.

**Our work supports local authorities to drive success**

“All the knowledge gained from written resources, collaboration and networking opportunities and webinars have helped us enhance our projects and programmes, which in turn have also helped us towards reaching environmental targets. Research for our Circular Economy Action Plan was done using some of [ReLondon's] reports – which in turn helped us to secure [£20,000 of] capital funding.”

– Respondent from Hackney Council climate, sustainability and environmental services team



## Pillar 2: Local authorities

### Supporting boroughs towards a zero waste economy

London's boroughs received 3,285 dedicated hours of ReLondon support. This included supporting the development and review of their waste Reduction and Recycling Plans (RRPs) and compiling the [RRP database](#) with over 850 searchable actions to deliver their circular ambitions. 26 also benefited from our expertise and help across five or more different projects during the year.

### Making a commitment to healthy, sustainable food

One of our most significant achievements this year was helping develop the [London Food Purchasing Commitment](#). It's an ambitious initiative empowering local authorities to ensure that food bought and served across council services is healthy, climate- and nature-friendly and never wasted.

The commitment was developed by ReLondon, London Borough of Hackney and Sustain – the alliance for better food and farming – in collaboration with a working group of 21 London boroughs. It forms part of the One World Living theme of London Councils' climate programme, to reduce the climate impact of London's food system.

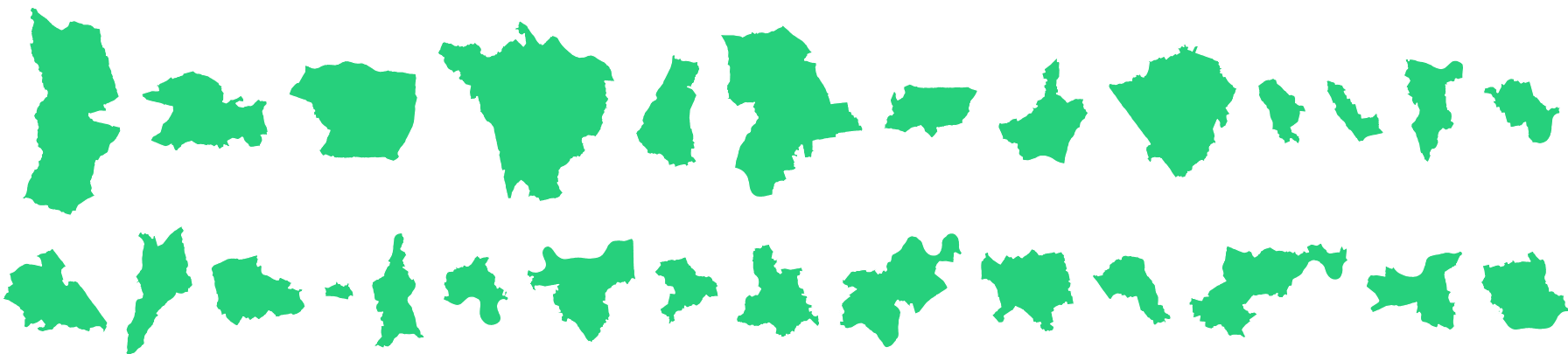
In July 2023, the London boroughs of Hackney, Hounslow, Lambeth and Newham signed the commitment. This was a ground-breaking move to reduce the environmental impacts of the food they procure, and deliver against their net zero and consumption-based emissions targets. The commitment has sparked interest and conversations with many other London local authorities and several UK cities, who are keen to explore signing the commitment.

### Increasing recycling rates from flats above shops

During the year, we also began a two-year project exploring how to make recycling easier for people in flats above shops. To kick it off we commissioned research to better understand the unique challenges residents face managing their waste and recycling, and how this affects their behaviour.

Our [report](#) was downloaded around 600 times, showing the appetite to solve this tricky problem. The research informed new interventions and strategies to make recycling easier for residents – and we look forward to sharing what we learned when the project finishes.

## Our year in numbers



**28** London boroughs became more closely involved with ReLondon through our projects including CIRCult, and networks like our Circular Neighbourhoods Network, Commercial Waste Network and our Local Authority Circular Food Procurement working group



**41** events and training sessions delivered to 800+ attendees from London and UK local authorities to enhance knowledge and provide local authority officers with tools to create a circular economy



**83%** of respondents to our borough survey\* reported that engaging with our work has enhanced their knowledge and competencies, increasing their capacity to take actions



**60%** of borough survey respondents\* said our work helped them build capacity to reduce waste and increase reuse, repair, sharing and recycling

\* Based on 32 survey responses. 29 were respondents from London's boroughs, representing 22 different boroughs.



## Pillar 2: Local authorities

### Case study

# Understanding household waste to inform a circular transition

In December 2023, we published our '[Estimates of Household Waste Composition](#)' report. A collaboration with London's waste authorities, it includes data from 22 London boroughs, to give the most comprehensive picture available of what goes in Londoners' bins – and how much is collected for recycling.

This included analysing waste from people in different types of property, including 6,000 households living in flats.

### What we found

Food is the largest single material (by weight) found in London's bins. Our data shows that 27% of overall waste is food waste. Almost a fifth (19%) could have been eaten.

People are more likely to put the wrong materials in communal waste facilities than kerbside collection. Over a fifth (21%) of dry material (like cardboard) that could have been recycled was put in the wrong bin at kerbside properties versus 51% of recyclable stuff at communal properties.

Plastic film makes up around 7% of London's residual waste. That's the same as 114,000 tonnes of stuff every year, or 5,000 carrier bags per household per year.

### Filling critical data gaps can support new actions to improve recycling and waste management.

The results show the vital importance of both preventing waste and introducing food recycling collections, as highlighted in our [London's food footprint](#) research.

We've used the data to inform projects including the flats above shops recycling pilot, and our circular food community project in Islington. Meanwhile, the data on plastics helped inform our [research](#) into London's packaging material flows.

The data is relevant both locally and nationally. It's helping individual waste authorities understand the waste they collect and prepare for coming collection and packaging reforms. This valuable data might not be available to them otherwise.

It also helps London show the UK government the challenges of delivering services in a global mega-city and the only entirely urban English region.



### Sharing the results to inform action

We presented our findings to

- national government, including Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
- the National Infrastructure Commission
- key local government (Local Government Association and local government officer networks)
- industry bodies (Environmental Services Association and Incpen)
- London waste authorities and the Greater London Authority

The data covers 2018-2022. In 2024-25 an extra seven London boroughs will add their data, increasing our understanding of household waste and recycling trends. We'll review the data set annually, gradually removing older information to ensure it remains relevant.

### Want to learn more?

[Read the full report](#)

Contact our team at  
[hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)



## Pillar 2: Local authorities

### Case study – Moving high streets beyond waste

## Working through local networks to strengthen our high streets

Transitioning to a circular economy can't happen without including the bricks-and-mortar businesses that make our high streets thrive – cafes, restaurants, salons, shops and more. Many of these businesses are unaware of the opportunities a circular approach can offer, like simplifying operations, improving customer experience, or cutting costs.

To help bridge this gap, we delivered eight training workshops in the year 2023-24 for high street businesses to explore ways to design circularity into their work, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

To reach as many businesses as possible, ReLondon partnered with councils and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to deliver five of the workshops in collaboration with trusted local networks. These partnerships were particularly effective in fostering positive hyper-local connections, like breweries in Waltham Forest exploring joint projects after attending a session, among others.

We recognised businesses needed trust to try new approaches. So we also upskilled trusted council staff and BID representatives to promote the workshops. We ran two interactive webinars attended by 83 participants from 22 of London's 33 boroughs. The sessions equipped council officers with tools and language to confidently engage local businesses, using practical case studies and tailored communication packs.

Council representatives are often deeply embedded in their communities, personally knowing many businesses and treated as trusted voices. This made them ideal ambassadors for circular economy practices, able to connect with businesses that might not otherwise get involved in sustainability initiatives.

**“Excellent pace and format, really enjoyed the session, thank you. Looking forward to receiving the assets and engaging with our businesses!”**

– Council representative workshop participant

### Want to learn more?

Contact our team at  
[hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)



### Key results

- ♦ 91% of council participants learned something new about the circular economy
- ♦ 86% felt more confident discussing circular practices with businesses
- ♦ 82% committed to engaging at least five businesses in three months

Participants appreciated having fresh, positive topics to share with businesses,

which helped strengthen relationships and foster meaningful connections.

This replicable initiative highlights the power of trusted local networks to engage a broader, more diverse range of businesses. By upskilling council and business improvement district staff, ReLondon extended our impact, helping high streets become more resilient while supporting environmental goals.



## Pillar 3: Businesses

# Empowering businesses to grow the circular economy

Right now, 99% of London's businesses are small or medium-sized. This makes our work with startups and small businesses critical to support circular business models and mobilise change in the capital.

Our business transformation programme's funding from the European Regional Development Fund came to an end earlier in the year. However, the team was successfully re-financed through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

We've seen strong growth in the number of businesses we supported during the year. This includes expanding our services to support high street businesses, through our High Streets Beyond Waste programme.



Pillar 3: Businesses

Facilitating positive connections

We introduce innovative circular businesses to investors and public sector organisations who want to build a greener, more circular city.

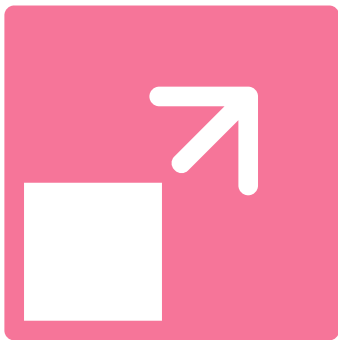
This matchmaking offer grew during the year, especially between innovators and boroughs, or other public sector organisations. Much of this was made possible by additional funding through London and Partners and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Importantly, we're also seeing greater diversity in the leadership of the businesses we support. The number of minority-led businesses doubled compared to last year, and we saw an increase in businesses founded and led by women or non-binary people.

“Facts/figures in case studies and introductions to potential circular businesses provide knowledge to help us build a case to progress.”

– Respondent from Ealing Council’s waste and recycling team

Our year in numbers



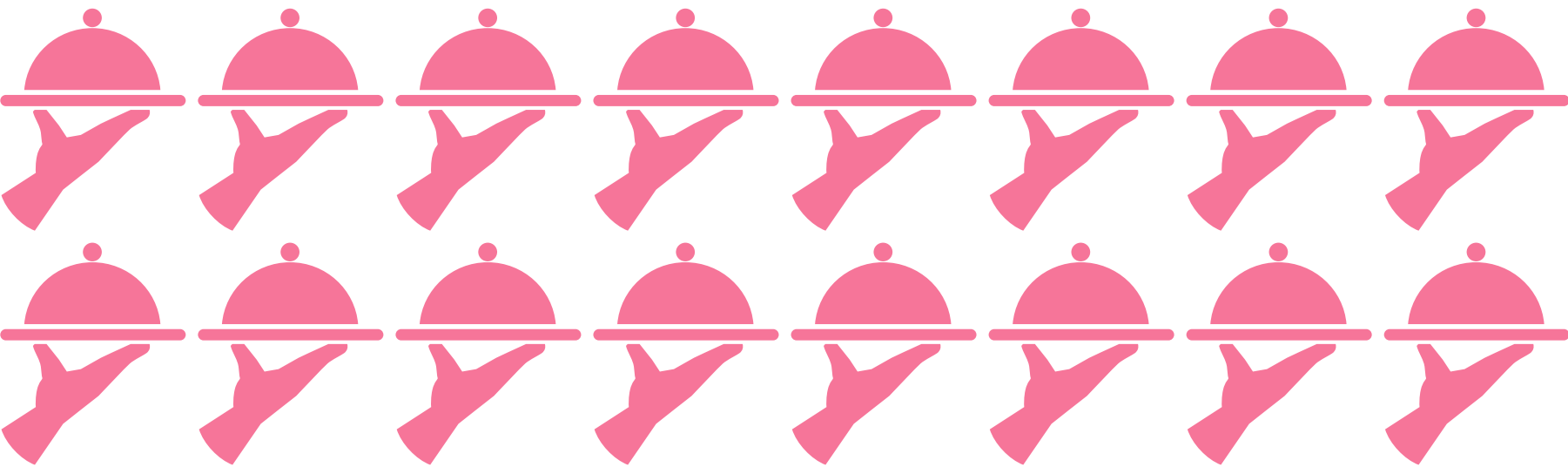
199 businesses supported to adopt or scale circular business models



425 hours of advice, training and brokerage given to businesses across the year



67 introductions made through the programme either through the Circular Economy Matchmaker platform or the community offer launched this year



16 new products and services launched by businesses who credited their success in part to ReLondon support



## Pillar 3: Businesses

### Case study - Circular food business grant scheme

# Growing London's circular food system: supporting tomorrow's pioneers

Our grant programme supported 10 London innovators to reduce food waste and enhance access to local, healthy food. With funding of up to £15,000 each, these businesses are strengthening supply chains and generating future-ready jobs, as part of advancing London's circular food system.

We need to improve London's food system. Today, it accounts for **over 10% of the capital's consumption-based emissions**, generates high levels of food waste, and fails to offer affordable, healthy food for many people.

In response, we leveraged £134,450 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to invest in small businesses tackling these challenges and working to advance a healthier, low carbon and fair food system.

### Outputs - what did we do?

We awarded grants of up to £15,000 each to ten businesses pioneering circular food solutions. These included helping reduce food waste or food loss, creating value from food waste or surplus by-products or providing access to locally grown, sustainable food. Businesses ranged from app-enabled food waste bins to community-focused vegetable growing initiatives. Their solutions invite action from a range of people – including the food industry, citizens and communities.

Our programme was three times oversubscribed, showing the demand and

diversity of London's circular innovation ecosystem. The selection process involved the Food Flagship Initiative, a collaboration between ReLondon, the Mayor of London and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, to ensure that the programme addressed public and private sector needs.

Grantees used the funds for salaries, equipment, marketing and scaling capacity. They collaborated with wholesalers, manufacturers and commercial kitchens to repurpose food waste, resulting in new products like crackers made from industrial by-products, and natural dyes. Partnerships with regional farms rescued surplus produce, and one business helped divert food waste by turning it into bio-fuel through anaerobic digestion.

Alongside funding, we provided grantees with six months of light-touch support, networking and visibility. We did this through initiatives like awarding the businesses **Circular Food Pioneer Project** status and connecting them to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's business community.

### Want to learn more?

Read the full [case study](#)

Contact our team at [business@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:business@relondon.gov.uk)

### Results: A small investment can unlock circular business opportunities that maximise impact

Small grants, when offered flexibly and provided upfront, can yield significant returns. In just six months, businesses demonstrated tangible economic and environmental benefits, setting the stage for long-term success. Many achieved customer growth, launched new products and enhanced their equipment and skills, helping build capacity for future progress.

- ♦ 70% of businesses reported improved overall business health and growth

- ♦ 50% measured increased customer traction
- ♦ 5.5 permanent, London living wage jobs were created or or safeguarded in six months

Our approach helped innovators manage cash flow, adapt to unexpected challenges and seize new opportunities. The funding's flexibility empowered grantees to meet targets that might otherwise have been unachievable.





## Pillar 4: Citizens

# Encouraging Londoners to embrace circular lifestyles

**Behaviour change – whether in business, among policy makers, or across civil society – powers the zero waste economy.**

Technology and new forms of energy can solve a huge chunk of the climate challenge. But there are still dangerous carbon emissions which can only be addressed through wholesale shifts in behaviour.

Playing our part as citizens is a really big piece of the jigsaw. This could mean buying fewer new clothes each year, finding ways to stop throwing away food at home, or simply repairing a toaster instead of replacing it. There are many effective approaches we can take individually, and as families and communities, to meaningfully slow down consumption.





## Pillar 4: Citizens

### Helping Londoners go zero waste

We saw significant growth in people's interest in repair as **Repair Week** almost doubled in size for the fourth year in a row. Manchester took part again this year, with more planning time and a real intent to scale up activities, after dipping their toe in the water in 2023.



During the year **Eat like a Londoner**, run on behalf of 27 London boroughs and the One World Living theme of London Councils' climate programme, went live. We ran three advertising bursts with messaging encouraging Londoners to waste less food and eat more plants to help save money and eat more healthily.

Our **Love Not Landfill** campaign team ran more activations during the year than ever before. We attracted interest from a wide range of partners and got young Londoners excited about buying second-hand. We also ran our third and final year of **London Recycles** 'Be that person' campaign, sharing a full toolkit of free-to-use campaign assets with boroughs and other partners across London.

We saw evidence that all of our campaigns have good levels of recall across the city, with those who saw them telling us they're recycling more and wasting less.

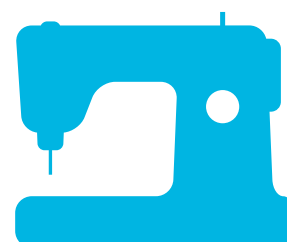
The London Councils' climate survey, run in September 2023, showed that over 40% of respondents said ReLondon's campaigns had prompted them to adopt more circular practices (such as repair, reuse, sharing and recycling). They also said we'd helped build their understanding about how they can personally help with the climate crisis.



## Our year in numbers



**43%** of people\* who saw one or more of our campaigns said they were repairing, reusing, sharing or recycling more

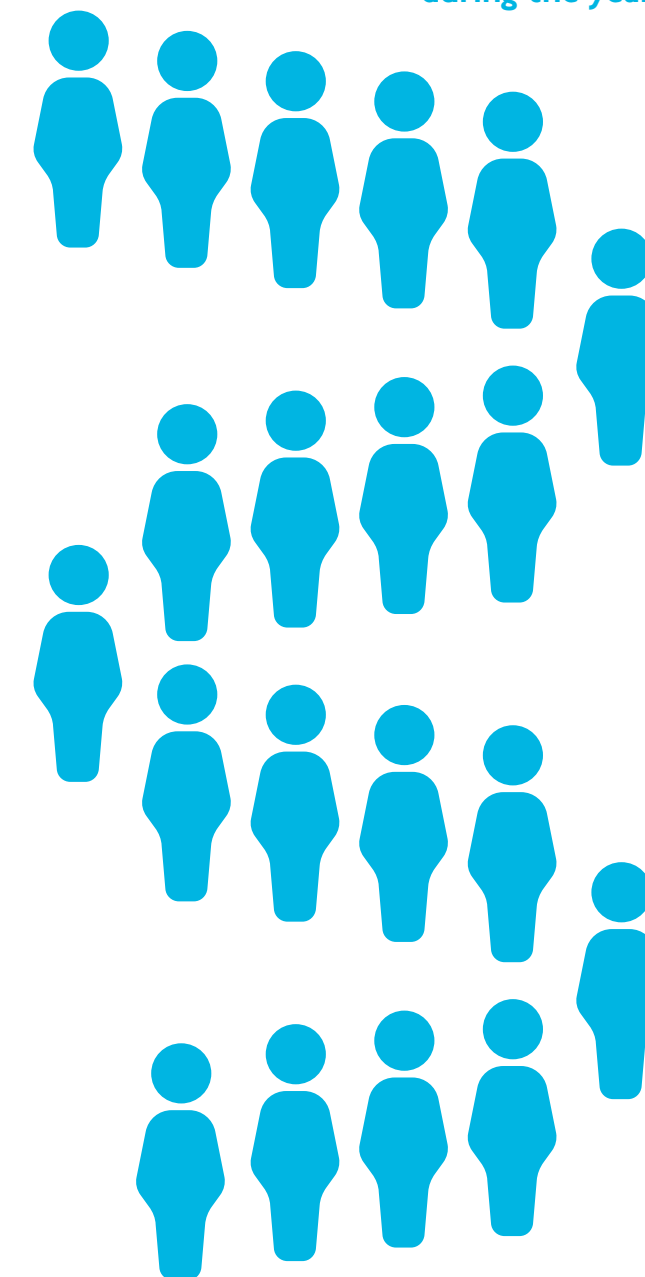


**70** active partners in **Repair Week** ran 140 events between them, with 58% of survey respondents saying that repairing an item during the week had stopped them buying a new one



**3** toolkits containing **99** campaign assets were created for **Eat like a Londoner** campaign partners, including 27 London boroughs

Over **19,000** people took part in **Love Not Landfill** events during the year



\* 1,001 citizens responded to London Councils' climate survey: Londoners' views on climate change in 2023



## Pillar 4: Citizens

### Case study

# Love Not Landfill: Transforming student engagement with sustainable fashion

**Love Not Landfill** is our behaviour change campaign dedicated to transforming how 16-24-year-old Londoners engage with their wardrobes.

In 2023, the campaign designed a new education programme for small groups of sixth-form students supporting them to co-produce clothing swaps for their school community.

We worked with a group of 15 students over three months at Cranford Community College in Heston, west London. In total we ran three sessions teaching students the impact of textile waste in the UK. Sessions also included opportunities for students to gain leadership skills by designing and running their own clothing swaps for lower-school students.

The students worked in two teams. Both teams produced marketing and logistics plans covering all bases and ensuring that food and drink, photography, branding and health and safety requirements were all expertly delivered.

## Results: Creating a ripple effect for pre-loved clothing swaps

Before the sessions students had limited exposure to, or experience in, clothes swapping or buying second-hand clothing. In fact, none of the student leaders planning the swap had attended one before organising their own. Only 13% of the students who came along to the swap had previously bought second-hand clothes.

Despite this, the event was really successful, with over 75% of attendees saying they would like to buy or swap second-hand clothes again in future.

The project has a real legacy too. After the swap's success the college bought clothing rails, hangers and display furniture to enable students to keep organising swaps for the school community.

So far, they've successfully run two more swaps at the school, plus a third swap in their wider local community. The leadership team at Cranford Community College say that the clothing swaps will now become a permanent part of the school calendar due to their popularity and potential for developing students' leadership skills. They plan to hold student-led swaps up to three times a year and support more swaps in the community.

### Want to learn more?

Contact our team at  
[hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)

**“Young people want to take action to improve the environment. The swaps are a small measure, but they are meaningful. If this initiative were replicated in other schools, it would have a huge impact, as the awareness raising is much more effective through co-produced events like this, as opposed to stand-alone workshops or assemblies.**

**With years of experience working with young people, we immediately knew that the Love Not Landfill campaign would be a hit with the students.”**

– Alan Fraser, Director of Community Development, Cranford Community College





## Pillar 4: Citizens

### Case study

# Love Not Landfill: Bringing pre-loved clothing to fashion- conscious shoppers

In 2023/24, [Love Not Landfill](#) took the lead in championing second-hand fashion with two dynamic pop-up shops in London. The first, organised with Graduate Fashion Week, showcased standout collections of pre-loved clothes from the British Red Cross and Shelter, creatively curated by Kingston University students.

With an estimated footfall of 11,000 people over four days, it was a great opportunity to inspire 16-24-year-old fashion students to embrace sustainability as they launch their careers.

Just two weeks later, the team was back in action at Angel Central to launch ReLondon's report, '[London's fashion footprint](#)', and host our hugely popular annual charity pop-up shop. This time we teamed up with Shelter, Cancer Research UK, Fara charity shops, and rental app HURR, who were selling luxury outfits that had reached the end of their rental life. Together, we created a second-hand shopping extravaganza, all curated by London-based fashion influencers.

The pop-ups didn't just grab shoppers' attention, they made headlines too. We won live coverage on ITV News London and BBC Radio London, plus 20 other PR features. Packed with vibrant energy and thrifty treasures, these pop-ups proved again that sustainable fashion can be fun, stylish and impactful.

### Results: Almost all our shoppers said they would shop second-hand more often

The second pop-up in Angel Central was as popular as ever and achieved some great results:

- An average of 200 items were sold every day
- Over £22,000 was generated for charities and circular fashion partners
- More than 6,000 shoppers came through the doors across the week
- In-store and online surveys revealed that 91% of shoppers felt encouraged to shop second-hand more frequently following their visit

### Want to learn more?

Contact our team at  
[hello@relondon.gov.uk](mailto:hello@relondon.gov.uk)





# Our governance and funding

**R**eLondon's Board is made up of the Mayor or their representative as Chair, plus one other member appointed by the Mayor. We also have four London borough elected members and two independent members appointed by London Councils.

The Board appointed two non-voting Board advisors in the year to support the Board in better understanding the challenges of running and funding smaller sustainability organisations.

The Board meets quarterly to review ReLondon's performance and provide strategic leadership to the organisation.

The Board is supported by an Audit Committee that also meets quarterly to scrutinise and advise on financial, management and staffing issues. The Board appointed two additional members to the Audit Committee in the year to boost the commercial and organisational development expertise of the group.

The Board is responsible for high-level risk management focusing on income, stakeholder support and staffing and has delegated responsibility for other risk areas to the CEO.

## Members who served on the Board this year:

**Dr Liz Goodwin OBE\*** (Chair)

**Shirley Rodrigues\***, Deputy Mayor, Environment and Energy at Greater London Authority (Deputy Chair)

**Cllr Nesil Caliskan**, London Borough of Enfield (left 31 July 2023)

**Cllr Krupa Sheth**, Brent Council

**Cllr Clair Holland**, London Borough of Lambeth (left 1 October 2023)

**Cllr Nicholas Bennett**, London Borough of Bromley

**Cllr Jo Blackman**, London Borough of Redbridge (from 25 January 2024)

**Cllr Mike Hakata**, London Borough of Haringey (from 25 January 2024)

**Chantelle Nicholson**, chef, restaurateur and sustainability advocate

**Joe Murphy**, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

## Board advisors

**Shaun Spiers**

**Mike Brown**

## Audit committee members

**Ayo Abbas**

**Dimitra Christakou**

## Our funding

ReLondon was set up as the London Waste and Recycling Board with a core grant from the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs in 2008. We were initially set up to invest in infrastructure to support environmental waste management and recycling services. ReLondon has evolved to support local authorities, businesses and citizens to reduce waste, improve recycling and embed circular economy principles in London.

We've supplemented our core grant over the years to ensure the longevity of our reach and impact. ReLondon's reserves are now £3.25m. The Board set a reserves policy of £2m during the year and we're implementing a plan to make ReLondon financially sustainable by 2030.

We'd like to thank all of our partners who provided financial support for our work in 2023-24:

**Circular Buildings Coalition**

**CircularPSP**

**Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance**

**European Regional Development Fund**

**EU DEAR**

**Greater London Authority**

**Horizon 2020**

**London and Partners**

**Southwark Pioneers Fund**

**SUEZ**

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

**Visa**

\* Dr Liz Goodwin OBE and Shirley Rodrigues both stood down from the Board after the period covered by this report. Mete Coban MBE subsequently took office as Deputy Mayor and, in December 2024, as ReLondon's new Chair.

# 2023-24 financial summary

## Income

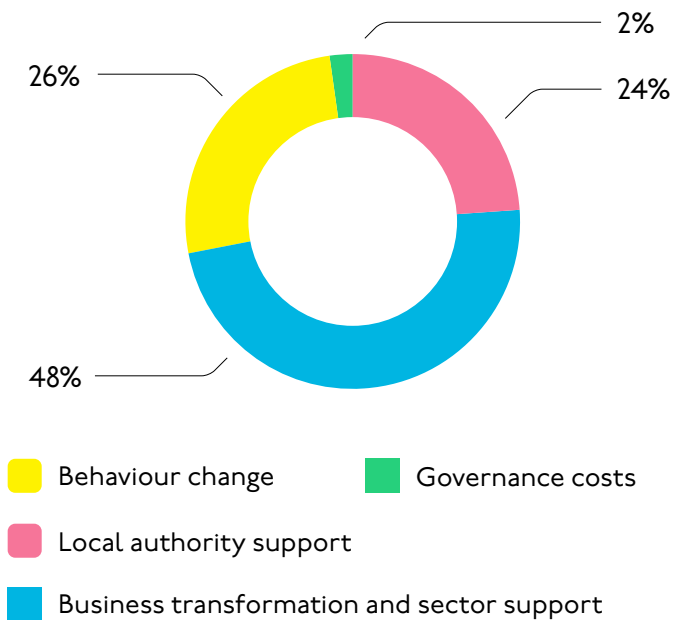
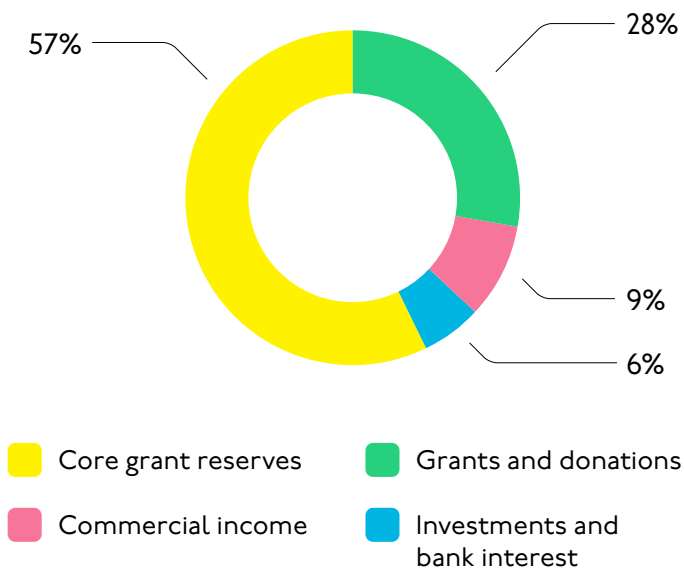
In the year ended 31 March 2024 ReLondon’s fundraising income dipped to £1.6m from £1.9m in the previous year. We spent a further £2.1m from reserves on delivering our plans. This reduction is primarily attributed to a small decrease in grant income as some multi-year grants ended and have not yet been replaced – and no returns on any investment funds. Our commercial income increased slightly from paid projects and campaigns with local authorities.

ReLondon has investments in three funds: Greater London Investment Fund, Circularity Capital and Sustainable Ventures. We encourage investment in circular businesses.

These funds are not due to complete until 2028 and there were no early exits in the year.

## Expenditure

ReLondon spent £3.7m in the year 2023-24 on building evidence to inspire action and embed circular economy principles in the capital through our work with London’s local authorities, businesses and citizens.



## Summary income and expenditure statement to 31 March 2024

	2023	2024
<b>Income</b>		
Grants and donations	£1,124,373	£1,051,205
Commercial income	£291,725	£316,394
Investments and bank interest	£434,769	£231,758
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£1,850,867</b>	<b>£1,599,357</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Governance costs	£67,942	£72,030
Local authority support	£1,254,895	£900,834
Business transformation and sector support	£1,749,364	£1,773,289
Behaviour change campaigns	£1,101,091	£937,686
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£4,173,292</b>	<b>£3,683,838</b>
Surplus/ (deficit)*	(£2,322,425)	(£2,084,481)
*deficit amount is drawn from the core grant reserves		
Closing cash balance 31 March 2024		£3,268,070

ReLondon

# Revolutionising our relationship with stuff

ReLondon is a partnership of the Mayor of London and London's boroughs to improve waste and resource management in the capital and accelerate our transition to a low carbon circular city. Our mission is to make London a global leader in sustainable ways to live, work and prosper by revolutionising our relationship with stuff and helping London waste less and reuse, repair, share and recycle more.

[www.relondon.gov.uk](http://www.relondon.gov.uk)

