



London is booming. Fifteen years ago when London First was established, it sought to present London to the world and the rest of the UK as a leading world city. It could be argued that it has achieved its goal. Certainly New York feels challenged. But it is too soon to begin popping celebratory corks.

The world is changing. The 21st century has begun with new challenges, threats and opportunities, much different from those envisaged even ten years ago. As a leading world city, London must change too, to keep up. I have a vision for the kind of London which will be ready to respond to competition from up and coming world cities such as Shanghai, Dubai and Mumbai as well as meeting the challenge from New York and Tokyo:

- a cosmopolitan city with a 'can do' attitude
- commuters and visitors travelling quickly in comfort and safety on a transport system which has caught up with demand, thanks to sustained investment
- access to work via training provision matched to the needs of employers and would-be employees
- workplaces, streets and public spaces which feel safe from crime

- devolved government with the necessary power and resource to determine London's destiny
- local decision making which is bold but accountable, strategic but opportunistic
- a capital city of which the UK is justifiably proud

“London First’s mission is to make London the best city in the world in which to do business”

London First achieves much of its work by campaigning, behind the scenes influence and building the support of others for its arguments. We will not receive praise or even acknowledgment for all of our achievements. All the more reason to set out our objectives clearly, so we can celebrate our successes.

In this document we summarise our objectives for the year to March 2008. In some cases, our objectives are the next steps in long running campaigns; top of our list are Government funding commitment to Crossrail and effective business input to a London skills strategy. In other areas we have new objectives for 2007, such as the establishment of a Business Network to support SMEs in seizing opportunities generated by the Olympics.

If London First continues to deliver on its objectives, we will ensure that the voice of business is heard in London, and help make London a better place to live, visit, work and do business.

I look forward to working with members, stakeholders and partners to achieve these goals.

Baroness Jo Valentine
Chief Executive, London First



What London First will do this year



1. Keeping the UK competitive

Persuade Government of London's importance to the UK economy and the vital need to invest in its infrastructure to support its world city status and future growth

Competitiveness

- ensure that Crossrail funding is resolved
- brief members of the Chancellor's High Level Group from financial services on key London issues
- make recommendations for increasing the UK's tax and regulatory competitiveness for corporate headquarters
- develop informed recommendations for managing immigration to support London's economy
- develop our climate change policy, drawing on our members' expertise

Governance & devolution

- support the Greater London Authority (GLA) Bill through Parliament, achieving effective, pragmatic devolution
- ensure revisions to the London Plan take account of business concerns
- ensure London-specific issues are considered in the debate over Planning Gain Supplement
- respond to the Lyons report on local government and ensure that the business voice is heard in any subsequent legislation
- develop innovative proposals to fund infrastructure improvements using money generated in London

A Mayor for London

A world city needs the structures to manage itself. London First argued for an elected London Mayor from the early nineties. The office was created in 2000.



2. Transport

Improve London's transport systems through better operational management and an investment programme to increase capacity and reliability

- improve the Tube, securing extra investment from the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and ensuring that commuters' needs are reflected in the management of the Tube and its improvement programme
- reduce delays and overcrowding at London's airports with increased capacity and improvements in the passenger experience

Tackling congestion

London First proposed congestion charging in central London, to avoid gridlock and pay for much needed transport improvements. London First also persuaded TfL to make the C-Charge more user friendly, for example with next day payment. Congestion Charging was introduced in 2003.

- tackle congestion by working to secure commitment to a local road pricing pilot in London
- improve London's rail services by lobbying for investment as part of CSR and for London priorities to be reflected within national policy
- ensure Transport for London's (TfL) plans are scrutinised for their cost effectiveness



3. Employment and skills

Ensure London's workforce is appropriately skilled

- ensure that the new London Skills and Employment Board produces a strategy for adult skills which reflects the realities of the market place and has wide support
- complete quantitative research for this board on employers' views of skills and employment in London
- secure funding and agree plans to deliver *SkillCity* careers events in 2008 and 2010, in the run-up to the World Skills Olympics in 2011



- deliver 100 business signatories to the Employer Accord programme, each agreeing to provide Londoners with job opportunities linked to the Olympics

SkillCity

The largest ever vocational careers fair in London attracted 160 exhibitors and 26,000 visitors. Run by London First, *SkillCity 2005* was the first of several such events planned up to 2011.

London Skills and Employment Board

London First advocated a single London body to tackle the gulf between London employers' needs and Londoners' skills. The London Skills and Employment Board was established in late 2006.

4. Safer business

Increase London's resilience and safety by ensuring a strong and productive partnership between business, police and government

- develop and market online testing of continuity plans making it easier for businesses to test their arrangements for dealing with catastrophic events
- ensure an effective structure and rehearsed process are in place for communicating with businesses in the event of terrorist attack



Safer Business

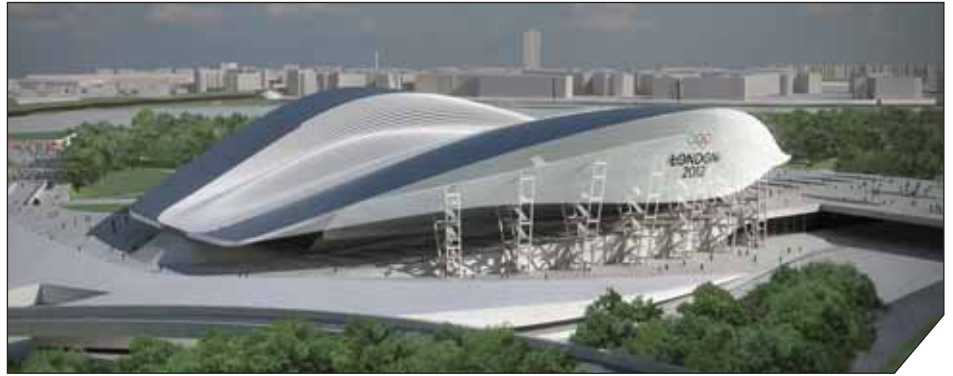
Thanks to London First, working with the Metropolitan Police, over 500 businesses have benefited from business continuity training.

- implement the highest priority actions identified through our 2006 crime consultation with businesses
- promote greater organisational effectiveness within London's police through our *Leadership Exchange* scheme, encouraging senior business and police leaders to share management expertise

5. Olympics legacy

Ensure the Olympics leaves a positive legacy for London

- drive forward the business-led Olympic legacy action plan outlined in our 2006 report, *London's Business Opportunity Prospectus*, including a follow up conference in early 2008
- influence the appointment of a strong commercial Chairman for the Olympic Delivery Authority and press for a Ministerial-level legacy champion within Government, to ensure a proper focus on legacy



- enable the Olympics to act as a catalyst, accelerating the growth and regeneration of east London
- support the London Business Network in assisting 30,000 of London's small and medium sized enterprises to seize Olympic-related commercial opportunities
- improve London's visitor offer by improving public spaces in the West End and bus congestion in Oxford Street

What difference does London First make?

Our track record demonstrates the importance we place on getting results. The following are some of our successes since London First began, alongside specific achievements over the past year.

Keeping the UK competitive

As part of our work to ensure the capital has the tools to manage itself effectively as a world city, our lobbying was influential in creating the current office of Mayor of London in 2000.

Over the past year, we have driven the debate on London's global competitiveness, regularly briefing the high level financial services group advising the Chancellor. We successfully influenced the current GLA Bill's proposals on new planning powers for the Mayor and Sir Michael Lyons' recommendations to HM Treasury on local government finance.

Transport

London First proposed Congestion Charging as a means of tackling central London gridlock and as an alternative funding stream to deliver vital investment in the capital's transport system. We have

since persuaded the Mayor to make the original scheme more user-friendly, including introducing next day payment, extra pay points and a 6pm finish.

London now urgently needs more sophisticated road pricing schemes to tackle congestion in hotspots across the whole of the city and, over the last year, London First developed recommendations for a London pilot that were launched by the Transport Secretary.

Employment and skills

Improving the calibre of teachers in London schools, we pioneered *Teach First* in 2001, which has encouraged 800 exceptional graduates to teach in challenging London schools for two years. In 2005 we ran *SkillCity*, the largest ever vocational careers event in London, attracting 160 exhibitors and 26,000 visitors.

In 2006, we successfully campaigned for a single London body to address London's skills challenges. The new London Skills and Employment Board is chaired by the Mayor, with our own Chairman, Harvey McGrath, leading the business input to ensure training matches business needs.

Safer business

We have forged strong links between the business community and police services in London. In partnership, we have published guidance on counter terrorism and business continuity, endorsed by government, and our *Leadership Exchange* scheme has developed over 250 partnerships between senior police personnel and business leaders.

Olympics legacy

We galvanised business support for London's successful 2012 Olympic Bid as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform east London and leave a lasting legacy for London.

We commissioned *London's Business Opportunity Prospectus*, a business-led action plan to deliver in key Olympics legacy areas. We also led work to set up a business network, to help London's smaller businesses to make the most of opportunities linked to the 2012 Games.