

Lambeth Digital Strategy

March 2021



Lambeth

Foreword



We are living through an era of emerging technologies where we still don't know what the impact of digitisation will have on our way of life, the way we run our businesses and even the way our public services are delivered. Technological developments have always played a role in altering the way in which we live, and new technologies have given us opportunities that now not many of us would want to do without.

Our response to Covid-19 has demonstrated the extraordinary speed with which technology can adapt to address social challenges. We have been able to respond rapidly to the urgent needs of our community, and new community connections have been formed through virtual channels.

This greater reliance on technology will bring with it problems of inequity that local government are best placed to help to address.

In a number of areas Lambeth is prepared for this challenge. However, in other areas, we need to do more. Therefore, we must work closely with businesses, residents,

community and voluntary organisations to be among the leaders in digitisation so we can capitalise on the opportunities and benefits that ever-increasing developments in modern technology present for everyone.

By adopting a more outward looking approach, working in close partnership with the London Office of Technology and Innovation, we will ensure that key delivery partners are not left behind on this journey and that we maximise the benefits to our residents of collaborating with organisations on the cutting edge of digital development.

As a diverse borough where advantage is not equally distributed, we need to provide

the high-quality public services enabled by digitisation to allow all our citizens to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, whatever their circumstances.

We therefore welcome this Digital Strategy, which sets out our course to put Lambeth on the map as an area in which all who live or work benefit fully from technology; we will be fit for the future.

Cllr Andy Wilson
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Lambeth Council – Our Digital Vision

We want Lambeth to be a vibrant, connected, inclusive place for people and business to thrive, where everyone has access to excellent services enabled by modern technology and modern ways of working.

Introduction

Digital technology has enormous potential to enrich lives.

When we are connected through high-speed broadband and reliable mobile technology, we can access information and services at the touch of a button; businesses can prosper through intelligent use of data and process innovation; and public services can be delivered with increased efficiency and value for money. Through the Internet of Things that 5G connectivity will allow, services will become even more responsive, as automatic signals and alerts prompt action that could otherwise be delayed or missed.

Such advances depend not only on good infrastructure, but also on users having the necessary digital skills and access to devices; all underpinned by governance systems that ensure privacy, security and ethical use of data.

This future is no longer science fiction, but available and essential today with the right ambition and investment.

Lambeth has moderately good digital connectivity through broadband and mobile technology, but there are still parts of the Borough that are missing out and areas where data speeds fall short of what would be expected in a capital city. Through poverty, disability, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other source of social or economic exclusion, many of our citizens lack the skills or access to equipment to take proper advantage of digital services. And at local government level, the council remains some way from exploiting all the potential increases in productivity and value for money that could come from the full harnessing of digital technology.

This Digital Strategy therefore outlines how Lambeth Council will work alongside our residents, businesses and partners up to 2025 and beyond to build the physical assets and develop the human capabilities to create a thriving community with a prosperous economy and responsive public services powered by the latest technology.

Building blocks

To achieve this vision, four main building blocks are required:

- 1. ensuring digital access for all**
- 2. creating economic advantage**
- 3. developing a sustainable digital infrastructure**
- 4. innovating public services**

In the following sections of this document, we set out our ambitions and proposed action plans for each of the building blocks and consider the what we need to do to fulfill our vision.

Our Digital Future

The digital ambitions, actions and measures set out in this strategy have been developed to align with our values of equality, collaboration with local communities and delivering value for money.

Our big aims

 <p>Removing barriers to access devices and the internet</p>	 <p>Creating an economic advantage</p>	 <p>Developing sustainable digital infrastructure</p>	 <p>Providing innovative public services</p>
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Why they matter?

 <p>Keeps people connected</p>	 <p>Support local jobs and education</p>	 <p>Support business growth and innovation</p>	 <p>Allows people to do more and maintain independence</p>
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Future state

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A connected community• Inclusion to opportunities digital access has to offer for all residents• Improved basic digital skills for all residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lambeth recognised as a digitally enabled borough ripe for inward investment• Increased affordable workspaces• Increased work opportunities for upskilled digital workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased internet and mobile coverage across the borough• Evidence based learning on how to transform Lambeth into a smart city with healthy buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing services that are digitally enabled, convenient and accessible for residents• Ability to make decisions driven by robust data
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1 Digital access for all

Vision: We want Lambeth to be a vibrant, connected, inclusive place for people and business to thrive, where everyone has access to excellent services enabled by modern technology and modern ways of working.

Strategic ambitions

- **No resident will be excluded** from the social, educational and economic opportunities that are made available through the digital world.
- **Our children, young people and students** will be able to access the devices and networks they need to thrive and achieve.
- **Our older residents and residents with disabilities** will have the skills, confidence and support to live independently and well.
- **Our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities** will have equitable access to the digital world and the skills needed for learning, play and work, helping to make Lambeth the home to the most diverse digital sector in the UK.
- **Our unemployed, homeless, refugee, asylum seeking and non-English speaking residents** will be able access the digital world to access further training and support, and participate in our communities and economy.
- **Be a forward thinking council which embraces the digital world** to create opportunities for everyone.

Lambeth 2020

7% of Lambeth residents have no access to the internet, roughly equivalent to 22,000 people*. National statistics suggest that this figure is unlikely to have changed significantly since 2016. (*Residents' Survey 2016)

46% of adult social care service users in Lambeth do not have any access to the Internet with a further 26% only accessing the internet via another person. (Adult Social Care Survey 2020).

Nationally, disabled people are 35% less likely to have essential digital skills for life and 25% don't have personal access to a connected device (vs.12% of UK adults). (OFCOM Disability tracker 2020 digital exclusion analysis).

Nationally, 34% of parents with children aged 5-16 said their child did not have their own computer

or tablet* and **one in five children and young people** receiving free school meals had no access to internet during the lockdown**. *(Sutton Trust,2020) **(UCL)

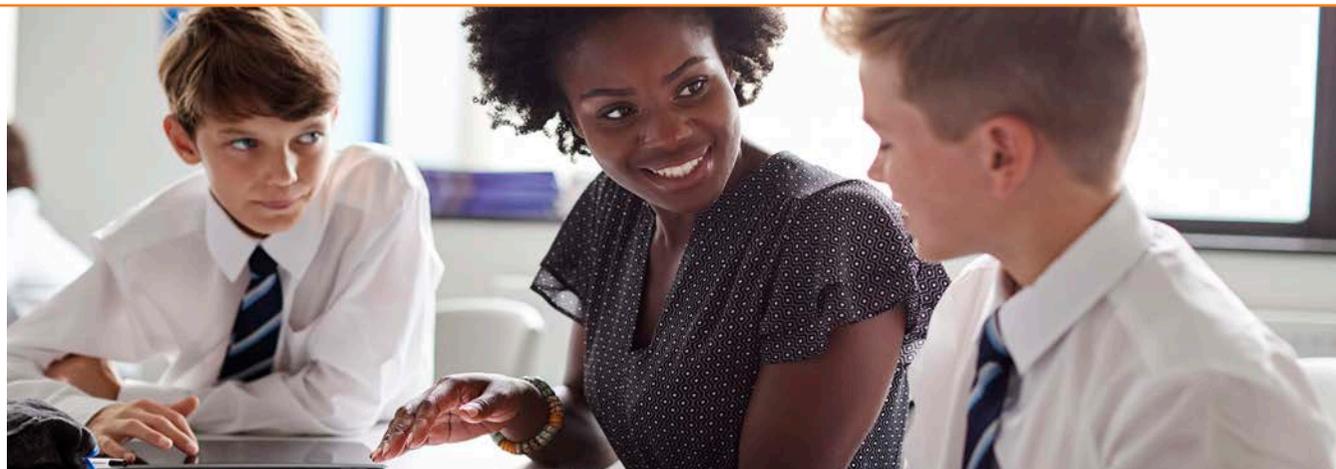
Lambeth has a 47% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population* and in areas of high deprivation, **Black, Asian** and Minority Ethnic representation is higher. Data and experience shows that people with a disability and people of Black Caribbean, Portuguese and Somali heritage are at a higher risk of exclusion and inequality of opportunity. (*Trust for London, 2020)

28% of our community are living in poverty, including a quarter of people in retirement and **37%** of our children live in a household in poverty*. *(London-Wide data –London's Poverty Profile 2020, Trust for London)

Progress so far

Whilst digital poverty existed before the pandemic, COVID-19 has shone a light on the inequality in the borough and exacerbated its impact. In response, the council has been expanding digital inclusion efforts, working alongside schools, voluntary and community organisations, and corporate partners to identify, re-purpose (or purchase) and distribute digital equipment and support skills development for residents who needed it. Council initiatives have included distributing over 1000 DfE laptops to vulnerable children, providing digital support through libraries, digital skills development through adult learning, funding digital equipment provision through a voluntary and community sector grant and promoting donations from the public. Digital exclusion and poverty is an issue that can only be addressed with a wide range of partners. We have convened a local Digital Inclusion Network to support collaboration across a number of local initiatives including Techaid, Connecting Tulse Hill, the Lambeth Forum Network, Age UK Lambeth, Disability Advice Service Lambeth and Lambeth Citizens.and are working with private sector partners to bring funding and support opportunities into the borough.

Actions



Digital skills, motivation and confidence

- **Deliver, co-ordinate and promote a strong local digital skills offer**, bringing together existing services such as libraries, community facilities, adult learning, housing estates, voluntary sector organisations and free online learning.
- **Provide digital skills learning through council funded services** including libraries and adult learning.
- **Work in partnership across sectors** to develop a digital volunteer offer for residents and local businesses including quality standards and training.
- **Adopt a common approach across council services** to the assessment of a resident's digital skills, confidence and level of exclusion.

Getting online

- **Increase provision of free WiFi** in public and community spaces, including:
 - Promote and increase free WiFi in council buildings, libraries and community buildings.
 - A review of the provision of digital access at all service points for homeless people and in sheltered housing.
 - Piloting local free or low cost WiFi solutions.
- **Promote free and low-cost data and WiFi packages** for individuals and families.
- **Convene VCS and business partners** to test and develop solutions to the issue of ongoing connectivity for residents.

Access to devices

(including laptops, tablets, smart phones)

- **Increase availability of low cost and free-to-use devices** in public settings through libraries and other community facilities including piloting a device loaning scheme for housebound residents.
- **Launch a digital inclusion fund** to support the direct provision of devices to vulnerable residents through support to VCS initiatives and schools.
- **Continued maintenance and support for DfE laptop scheme** for children with a social worker.
- **Encourage refurbishment, reuse and recycling of disused devices**, including through work with local business partners.



2 Creating economic advantage

Vision: A digitally skilled workforce for a thriving, modern economy, creating high value jobs.

Strategic ambitions

- **Lambeth will have a thriving digital sector**, with the infrastructure and mix of workspaces to ensure start-ups, SMEs and larger business are able to flourish
- **Improved digital connectivity will increase the number of high-value jobs across the borough**, attracting new members to Lambeth's workforce and creating more employment opportunities for our residents
- **Businesses will have access to the digital skills and infrastructure required to increase productivity**, reach new customers and markets online and generate economic growth across the borough
- **Lambeth will continue to be known for its digitally enabled economy** and attracts inward investment from locating business and development.
- **Entrepreneurs from underrepresented groups in the technology sectors** will have access to bespoke business support programmes
- **We will ensure the benefits of improved connectivity are evenly distributed**, by collaborating with neighbouring boroughs, businesses, educational institutions and voluntary groups and the council to bring benefits to all.

Lambeth 2020

Of our **328,000** population **74%** are **working age**, **12%** above the UK average, meaning that access to good jobs either in the London economy or locally is a high priority.

67% of Lambeth residents are in **senior managerial and technical occupations**, (the UK average is 48%); Many residents have excellent qualifications and digital abilities making a great workforce for all companies

47% of our community is **Black, Asian and minority ethnic** and are most represented in our areas of high deprivation with only **15%** of the digital tech workforce from **Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds**. This reflects the structural and perceptual inequalities we need to remove.



Progress so far

Creative Ways to Grow sets out our vision for Lambeth to be at the cutting edge of London's dynamic creative and digital economy . Just some of the programmes delivering on this vision are:

- Stride, in partnership with Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth councils, is driving an inclusive creative and tech economy in South London. At least 50% of the programme's beneficiaries will be from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the sector.
- The Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone, with backing from the Mayor of London, is using innovative approaches to safeguard and support the existing creative and tech community whilst providing the space and conditions for growth.
- Lambeth Works, the councils award winning programme of affordable and supportive workspaces in creating the conditions for businesses to thrive. This further enhanced by Lambeth's draft Affordable Workspace Policy in the local plan, and recently approved £8m capital fund for Future Workspaces.

Actions



Business Support

- **Deliver programmes to support underrepresented founders** to develop ideas, start-up and grow technology businesses (for example, OneTech South London delivered through the Stride Programme)
- **Connect businesses with existing support provision through signposting** on the council's website and in partnership with Lambeth's Business Improvement Districts
- **Increasing the provision of affordable and supportive workspace across the borough.** Through projects such as the Brixton Rec STEM focused workspace, the council's Affordable Workspace Policy the Future Workspaces Fund.

A digital workforce

- **Increase the visibility of career opportunities** in STEM subjects for young people
- **Facilitate schools relationships with local digital companies** for work experience, internships and apprenticeship opportunities.
- **Provide access to training and support for people in low-paid work** in the creative and digital industries to upskill and improve job prospects
- **Provide access to training and support for those currently unemployed** to gain skills required to access job opportunities in the creative and digital industries.

Destination Lambeth

- **Promote Lambeth as a digitally enabled community** and economy to drive inward investment
- **Engage with pan London partnership via GLA and LOTI** to promote digital capacity, collaboration and opportunities in Lambeth.
- **Digitise land use planning processes** to facilitate investment in the borough which meets our strategic policy objectives



3 Sustainable digital infrastructure

Vision: A world-class, borough wide digital infrastructure with full fibre connectivity and mobile technology for everyone to access, allowing us to be fit for the future.

Strategic ambitions

- **Our neighbourhoods will be great places to live, work and relax** which means fair and affordable access to services and technological advances available via high-speed broadband and 5G mobile.
- **We want to use 'Smart City' technology in the public realm and in our properties** to monitor air quality, traffic levels, parking, lighting and community safety and much more.
- **We will embrace 'Smart Building' technology** to improve efficiency and health in all our buildings and council housing.
- **We will require all new developments to allow for fibre broadband** from 2021 making them fit for the future.
- **We will work towards the Government commitment of full-fibre broadband to all by 2025** and we will engage with providers to ensure equitable 4G and 5G coverage of the borough.

Lambeth 2020

4.5% of properties in Lambeth have no broadband access. Lambeth rates **194th** local authority for coverage. (OfCom 2020)

9.8% of properties in Lambeth can access the fastest full fibre optic services Lambeth rates as **125th** local authority for full fibre availability. (OfCom 2020)

4G coverage is good and 5G mobile is being rolled out by some providers, but there are many 'not-spots' where coverage is poor (signal coverage maps from 4 mobile operators)



Progress so far

The council is working across the Borough with G.Network, a London-focused full fibre broadband operator who are laying new fibre optic cables with the aim of digging past 1.3 million premises in London within five years. G.Network started laying cables in 2019 and are making a multi-million pound investment in Lambeth and are on track to pass over 85% of all properties by 2023. Bringing the opportunity of full fibre broadband to all properties in the Borough is the foundation to all digital developments that will happen in the future.

Actions



Digital connectivity

- **Collaborate with broadband providers to ensure maximum coverage of 'Fibre to the premise technology' (FTTP)** for residents and business.
- **Ensure there is maximum 5G roll-out across the borough** through engagement with providers and sufficient planning of the necessary infrastructure decisions.
- **Establish a 'not-spot' elimination process** with providers for broadband and mobile.
- **Pilot free Wi-Fi in community spaces** and to assess suitability of roll out in locations across the borough.
- **Deliver a programme to expand and upgrade the availability of FTTP** to council housing stock.
- **Ensure standards for full fibre broadband and 5G provision are conditional in our planning guidance**, with all new developments meeting modern digital standards

Assistive technology

- **Review potential assistive tech solutions across all service user groups** to provide the best outcomes for clients in a modern and independent manner.
- **Pilot Assistive technology in accommodation** to enable more people to manage and maintain their independence with 24 hour virtual support when required.

Smarter cities and healthy buildings

- **Undertake a pilot on the potential benefits, implications and costs of developing smart devices** to collect new data and manage the borough in a digital way.
- **Pilot and roll out smart sensors** within council housing to support energy efficiency, fuel poverty and improve maintenance – leading to healthy buildings for residents.



4 Innovating public services

Vision: Providing Lambeth residents with responsive, convenient and safe digital access to information, we will be a digital council where services are data led and consistently and efficiently delivered.

Strategic ambitions

- **Digital Services will be designed to be accessible and so appealing** that those citizens who can, choose to use them.
- **With digital services as a foundation, we will be a modern, forward looking council** ensuring efficient delivery and excellent value for money.
- **We will communicate openly with Lambeth people** as we improve their services, to help them understand our ambitions and decision making.
- **We will have a culture of innovation and collaborative working** using digital technology to design and deliver council aspirations.
- **We will ensure services have a ‘User centered design’** where we embed a culture of evidence-based decision making that is tested with users.
- **We will continually invest in our staff** so that we can exploit technology and drive better outcomes for Lambeth people.
- **Embed effective governance, standards, principles** and methods for digital service design and delivery will ensure integrity and safe use for all.

Lambeth 2020

3 Million visits per annum to the council website. A well-used website, yet many people tell us they can’t find the information they need.

10% reduction in residents feeling ‘very well informed’ about council services between 2016 and 2020. (residents survey 2020)

54% of residents who contacted the council used telephone. Email contact is increasing (residents survey 2020)



Progress so far

Redesigning our customer experience through our digital platforms has been developing for some time. A new council website is being finalised with users involved and supporting the design and experience. Once the new website is launched it will be continually reviewed to developed to provide the best service possible. Alongside this, a user group made of residents and local business has been established which will be the basis of emerging engagement regarding future innovation and development. A corporate Customer Experience and Digital Programme has been established to deliver our ambitions and service re-design in a number of areas, including housing and council tax services, has commenced with a focus on designing excellent customer journeys.

Actions



Digital services and communication

- **We will provide easy to use online services**, so that citizens don't have to wait in phone queues or at our customer service centre
- **The new website will be routinely reviewed and updated and will use language** our customers use and not council jargon.
- **User centered design will become embedded in the council**, as we invest more in staff knowledge and skills
- **All council websites and services will comply with accessibility legislation** or describe the actions and timescales needed
- **A Digital Customer Experience Platform will be implemented**, to manage all customer contact including phone calls, emails, visits and online services
- **We will use digital communications tools and channels** to keep Lambeth people informed and engaged with what's happening in their community and the parts of the council that matter to them.

Data-driven decisions

- **Embed the council's Data Strategy at the heart of Lambeth's Digital activity**, adopting its best practice data management principles.
- **Enabling data-enabled decision making across services**
- **Provide a robust framework for the use of people's data** widely communicated to staff and residents.
- **Strengthen our ability to use anonymised data** and enable real-time access with partners as part of introducing a 'Smarter Cities' and 'Smart Buildings' approach.
- **Champion an ethical approach** to data handling.

Digital council

- **Implement all opportunities to use digital technologies** to ensure more efficient council operations.
- **Move to a place where all council services and operations** are digitally enabled and compatible including 'back office' and front facing operations.
- **We will exploit emerging technology such as chatbots, artificial intelligence (AI) and automated robotic** where there is benefit to our citizens.

Headline Targets

Building Block	What we will measure	Target	Borough Plan KPI
Digital access for all	Number of people of with digital access (Survey)	10% increase from 2021 (per demographic)	No
	Number of people who are digitally confident (Survey)	10% increase from 2021 (per demographic)	No
Creating economic advantage	Increase digital industries employment in Lambeth,	To above London Average	No
	Talent development opportunities created to support residents into employment in the creative and digital industries (including paid work experience, pre-employment training, in-work progression, and apprenticeships)	480 by 2025	No
Sustainable digital infrastructure	% Percentage of premises with Full Fibre availability from fixed broadband (BP)	50% by 2025	Yes
	Increase the FTTP coverage across the borough	100% by 2025	No
	All tenants of council housing will have access to high speed (fibre) broadband services	95% by 2025	No
	Percentage of council housing with smart devices to reduce energy consumption	75% by 2025	No
Innovating public services	Percentage of resident who access council services through online and/or self service channels	80% by 2025	No
	Resident satisfaction with online/self-service channels.	90% by 2025	No

Our digital future – What next?

Taking advantage of everything digital technology offers will not be a quick fix but it is a vital ingredient if we are to secure a **sustainable, healthy and prosperous borough, where everyone, regardless of ethnicity, income level, ability, gender or sexual orientation** can maintain and improve their economic and social well-being and live life to the full.



With the **right infrastructure** in place and people with the **right access to devices and skills**, businesses will be attracted to the borough and **create desirable jobs**. With growing economic prosperity, by developing effective partnerships and through **using state-of-the-art technological solutions**, the council will be able to deliver the **high-quality public services** that residents and businesses want and need.

We recognise that as a council, we can not deliver this important work on our own. We need to come together as a broad group which will include **public bodies, the voluntary sector, businesses and through neighbourhood working**. Lambeth Council will be pivotal in this work and will ensure an **inclusive approach** and help lay the foundations for the future.

Funding will be vital and we will not only provide significant **council funding**, but will seek to work with **key providers and companies** to seek investment, so together we can bring Digital Lambeth to life.

We will also work with the London Assembly and Government to share knowledge and pursue **grant** and **direct funding** opportunities.

Within the council, we will establish a Digital Board which will have **oversight of all aspects** of development work within this strategy and **along with councillors**, will **drive the change** that our community deserves.

We will review progress every six months for all the aims and targets in this strategy. As we know, technology changes rapidly and we may change and add to our ambitions and action plans accordingly.