OPEN DATA CHARTER
The Greater London Authority’s commitment to providing, promoting and using Open Data

Introduction
The GLA has been at the forefront of the Open Data movement since the launch of the London Datastore in 2010. The London Dashboard and Smart London Plan demonstrate our ongoing commitment to the principles of transparent government and tackling city challenges through the power of data.

Recent years have witnessed a growing momentum in the emerging field of Open Data. This has been facilitated on the one hand by high level recognition of the benefits of Open Data including the G8 Open Data Charter, the UK Government Open Data White Paper and the growing influence of bodies like the Open Data Institute (ODI); and on the other, by rapid improvements in technology which now mean it is easier to provide, access and share Open Data than ever before. Both of the above, and the promise of further change as the internet of things becomes a reality in cities, come together to form a thriving and dynamic environment.

This charter sets out the GLA’s own position with regard to the Open Data ecosystem in London and the wider city data environment. Under a set of broad principles, we outline our commitments as the strategic authority to provide, promote and drive the use of open data in the pursuit of a better London. These will be reviewed in August 2015 to ensure our commitments reflect changing priorities.

DEFINITION OF OPEN DATA
The GLA supports the Open Knowledge Foundation (OKF) definition of Open Data:
“A piece of data or content is open if anyone is free to use, reuse and redistribute it – subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and/or share-alike”.

The key features of this definition are available here.

Principles and Commitments
There are three key principles which are discussed in more detail over the next few pages:

1. The GLA as an Open Data catalyst and promoter
2. The GLA as Open Data provider
3. The GLA as a user of Open Data
The GLA has identified the opportunity to adopt a strategic role in promoting the benefits of Open Data in London. Our flagship project the London Datastore, one of the first publically accessible, city-level data platforms in the world, has proved an unrivalled success, achieving millions of hits, generating economic, social and environmental value, and providing genuine day-to-day benefit to users.

We are now aiming to building upon this success by working with partners across the capital to open up and analyse datasets of genuine potential for public good, creating an environment for new insights to policy and programme development, developing new business models and putting in place the building blocks of a smarter and more transparent city.

In this vein, in September 2014, the GLA will launch the second generation London Datastore. It has been commissioned pursuant to the principles of openness and will both promote and catalyse the release of Open Data:

- The intellectual property and technical specification for the second generation London Datastore will be non-proprietary.
- The second generation London Datastore will be promoted as a place where partner organisations are encouraged to publish their datasets in open format and access support and peer advice.

The GLA can also play a pivotal role through the expertise of its Intelligence Unit (IU), capitalising on opportunities to access and add value to data not otherwise available in an open format. We can build on recent examples of success here, such as the London Schools Atlas, where data previously inaccessible to the public has been obtained, cleaned and redistributed by the IU in a manner which meets the OKF definition of Open Data.
Commitments

In order to continue to catalyse and promote the publishing of Open Data across London, the GLA commits to:

1. Engage with partners and stakeholders across London to encourage and actively facilitate the further release and use of Open Data. We will do this through specific enterprises like the London Borough Open Data Partnership (established in July 2014).

2. Create a dedicated section of the London Datastore to contribute to a growing body of examples of identifying, publishing and using Open Data to deliver public benefit.

3. Facilitate opportunities to collaborate with dedicated Open Data organisations including the ODI, the OKF and the Open Data User Group.

4. Identify and pursue funding opportunities for collaborative efforts which take forward and further demonstrate the value of the Open Data agenda and explore the application of related fields like the Internet of Things and access to private sector data.

5. Ensure the new Datastore has a facility for users to request datasets, share intended use-cases and develop the rationale for further release of datasets in an open format.

6. Working with others to provide the right conditions for the ecosystem to develop, including through the adoption the ODI Open Data Certificate Scheme¹ to aid better data sharing and grow confidence in Open Data Sustainability.

¹ The UK Open Data Institute have launched an Open Data accreditation system against which data publishers can assess their datasets and receive a certificate at one of four levels: Raw, Pilot, Standard and Expert. More information is available at the following link: https://certificates.theodi.org/overview
PRINCIPLE 2 - THE GLA AS OPEN DATA PROVIDER

As an organisation, the GLA creates, holds and maintains multiple datasets. These include what may be thought of as “data exhaust” datasets such as expenditure data, annual returns and building efficiency metrics – data created as part of running the organisation. Additionally, the Intelligence Unit generates new and highly complex datasets by combining data from multiple sources such as the authority’s population and employment projections.

There are two primary ways in which sharing this information can bring benefits to a multitude of stakeholders:

**Transparency:** As a key strategic body with significant statutory responsibility it benefits both the authority itself and its stakeholders to share its data openly, and in keeping with the Cabinet Office’s Transparency Code Empowering citizens with Open Data and encouraging them to use it to make better decisions should be an integral part of the future governance of cities.

**Innovation:** Opening up data freely permits wider usage and creates an environment in which innovation can flourish. The public, private and third sectors can use Open Data to inform service design and delivery, optimise resource allocation and target investment.

**Commitments**

In order to ensure that the above benefits are fully realised for users of GLA data, the GLA commits to:

1. Publish GLA data as Open Data under the Open Government License on the London Datastore. That is, wherever permissible, GLA data will be free to use, re-use and redistribute.
2. Identify and publish in open format, datasets which meet London’s growth challenges.
3. Work towards ensuring that GLA datasets on the London Datastore meet the “pilot” level of ODI Open Data Certification.

The GLA acknowledges that there are some datasets it maintains containing personal and or sensitive information which cannot be shared. These datasets are considered by the GLA to be exempt from our commitments to sharing data openly.

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2 ‘GLA data’ here refers to data either generated by the GLA or created by the GLA. Datasets such as those the GLA may procure or access from other data providers are not covered by this commitment since the responsibility for publishing them lies with the data provider not the GLA.
PRINCIPLE 3 - THE GLA AS A USER OF OPEN DATA

As both consumer and provider of Open Data, the GLA can derive real-world tangible benefits for its stakeholders. Through the application of advanced analytics and sophisticated software solutions, Open Data can be used by the GLA to improve internal decision making, enhance transparency and accountability and inform policy at the organisation level and informed choice at the individual level.

There are three main channels through which the GLA can use Open Data to deliver benefits to stakeholders:

- **Application of advanced analytical techniques** to clean, distil and interpret Open Data to support improved decision making, policy development and evaluation at the GLA and across the functional bodies and London Boroughs.
- **Improvement of transparency** through high quality publication of GLA data on the London Datastore. The GLA can build upon current initiatives including the London Dashboard to demonstrate delivery against corporate objectives.
- **Development of innovative software solutions** for better dissemination of Open Data to the individual. The sheer volume and variety of Open Data sources and the expertise required to manage and collate it, can inhibit effective use at the individual level. The GLA can play a key role in streamlining this process without compromising user choice.

**Commitments**

In order to ensure we make optimal use of Open Data, the GLA commits to:

1. Invest resource in and prioritise projects which take innovative approaches to working with and interpreting Open Data.
2. Maintain and improve upon the London Dashboard, regularly refreshing indicators to reflect the GLA’s performance against its objectives.
3. Explore the potential to create a MyLondonData application which brings the benefits of Open Data to the fingertips of all London Stakeholders.
MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

To ensure progress against the principles set out in this charter, we will in the coming 12 months:

1. Through the Borough Open Data Partnership and other routes carry out 3 open data-led public policy or innovation challenges per year.

2. Achieve the ‘Raw’ level of ODI accreditation as a minimum for all GLA datasets published on the Datastore.

3. Establish a live Datastore ‘scorecard’ which monitors our progress against our commitments.

4. Report on progress against targets set out in the Smart London Plan to double the number of users of London Datastore and Dashboard by 2018.

5. Publish an annual report in the Autumn on all of the above and review this charter to ensure it reflects developments in the Open Data environment.