

# Capital Ambition

annual report 2011/12



Capital Ambition is part of  
**LONDON**  
**COUNCILS**

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# Foreword

As Chair of Capital Ambition, I am pleased to present you with our fourth annual report, covering the work and achievements of London's regional improvement and efficiency partnership in 2011/12.

The Capital's local authorities have long sought a better deal for London's residents. Our part in this has been to challenge, inspire and support councils; to bring them together and encourage them to achieve significant efficiencies and performance improvements that they might innovate towards better public services fit for the testing times we face. This is not simply in response to Government pressing forward with public austerity measures but because of local authorities' vested interest in achieving added value for tax payers.

In the early years, Capital Ambition reports necessarily emphasised the aspirations and principles for the programme. They outlined the strategy and the seed-funded projects as they started up and made strides in delivering. But this year the Board are delighted to be able to affirm these commitments and celebrate the real results coming out of the hard work.

The Board can point to the evidence that London's local authorities are collaborating and have risen to the challenge; that they are marshalling hard pressed public resources; that they have moved from the drawing board, through significant service transformation, to begin realising the intended programme outcomes and benefits across the 32 London boroughs and the City of London.

This year, we can be proud of the £75.9m in efficiencies our investments have already realised. These cashable savings and cost avoidance already outweigh the £29.7m invested over the last four years. Furthermore, we can be encouraged by the latest forecasts, affirming that programme efficiencies should grow to over £357m by March 2016, representing an equivalent return of around 10:1.

So, what of the future? A key piece of work this year concerns the creation of an improvement and efficiency leadership support service. Bringing in support from commercial partners, we are confident that such a Capital Ambition service can perpetuate the spirit of collaboration, improvement and innovation typical of Capital Ambition. Under the guidance of the Board, the service will be expected to work with London's local authorities to develop projects that will continue to enhance efficiencies and improvements in support of London's local public services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Edward Lord'.

**Edward Lord OBE JP**

Chair of the Capital Ambition Board

# Board membership

The Capital Ambition Board reports to the London Councils Leaders' Committee and was restructured in February 2011. The Board comprises of five elected members, advised by three Chief Executives, with up to two nominees from the Greater London Authority, a representative from the Local Government Association and a nominee from the Society of London Treasurers.

## Board members in 2011/12

**Deputy Edward Lord** OBE JP – Chair of the Capital Ambition Board and elected member of the City of London Corporation

**Cllr Claire Kober** – Deputy Chair of the Capital Ambition Board and Leader of the London Borough of Haringey

**Cllr Clyde Loakes** – Capital Ambition Board member and Deputy Leader, London Borough of Waltham Forest

**Cllr David Simmonds** – Capital Ambition Board member and Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Hillingdon

**Cllr Michael White** – Capital Ambition Board member and Leader of the London Borough of Havering

## Board members for 2012/13

**Deputy Edward Lord** OBE JP – Chair of the Capital Ambition Board and elected member of the City of London Corporation

**Cllr Stephen Alambritis** – Deputy Chair of the Capital Ambition Board and Leader of the London Borough of Merton

**Cllr Ruth Cadbury** – Capital Ambition Board member and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning in the London Borough of Hounslow

**Cllr David Simmonds** – Capital Ambition Board member and Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Hillingdon

**Cllr Michael White** – Capital Ambition Board member and Leader of the London Borough of Havering

Capital Ambition wishes to acknowledge the work of the outgoing Board members and those elected members who have acted as deputies throughout the year; and to thank them for their contributions to the successes of the programme.

## Advisors

Representatives from the **Chief Executives of London Councils**: Rob Leak, LB Enfield; Mike More, City of Westminster; Martin Smith, LB Ealing

Representative from **Society of London Treasurers**: Jane West, Finance Director, LB Hammersmith & Fulham

Representative from **London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority**: Rita Dexter, Deputy Commissioner, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Representative from **Local Government Association**: Rachel Litherland, Principal Advisor, Local Government Association.





**Welcome to the fourth annual report of Capital Ambition. This report has an emphasis on progress in 2011/12, but includes sections on the origins and role of the programme; the Board's funding priorities; the programme achievements over the last twelve months; some key programme activities in that time; a comment on future intentions; a financial statement for the year; and a summary of active Capital Ambition projects.**

## Origins and role

Since its inception in 2008 as London's regional improvement and efficiency partnership, Capital Ambition has worked to lead and support London local authorities in developing approaches to greater efficiency, performance improvement, innovation and new ways of working together in their delivery of local public services to the boroughs.

Towards these goals and over these past four years, Capital Ambition has been responsible for the direction of over £39m, in year-on-year grants, from the Department of Communities and Local Government. This has comprised of around £32m in revenue grants and £7m in capital. Funding ceased in 2010/11 and there is little expectation of further Government funding.

Within this framework and in the face of the rapidly changing economic and policy context, there have been several strategic iterations of the programme, not least the absorption of the London Centre for Excellence and London Connects. As a result, the Capital Ambition programme has included a rich and broad-ranging portfolio of over 279 individually funded projects, part projects and discrete pieces of work. Many of these acted as pump-priming or demonstration activities, helping to instigate activities within local authorities' own mainstream programmes.

In 2010, following a decision by Leaders Committee, performance activity was integrated within the mainstream functions of London Councils. Led by the Self-Improvement Board, under the direction of Chief Executives of London Councils, officers have worked to develop packages of support that reflect the aspiration of London local government to be at the heart of driving its own approach to performance benchmarking and improvement. This small programme of work includes:

- The chief executive peer support & challenge process provides a useful, light touch opportunity to identify any early signs of risk to London local government's overall reputation, or ways in which it can be further enhanced. Following the success of this process, a pilot is currently being run for borough treasurers.
- Performance benchmarking: Work has been undertaken to develop a tool, which offers useful data on which to compare and assess relative performance. All of this data is a sub-set of that which is required by Government – although it has been tailored to meet London's own specific requirements.
- Future ways of working aimed at improving outcomes for local communities: Work is also underway to develop a model for sector led improvement for children's services and adult social care, which aligns with the wider national programmes.

At the same time, procurement activity was also integrated within the core functions of London Councils. The London Procurement Strategy Board seeks to bring together finance and procurement officers from across the various sub-regional groupings to facilitate a consistent approach to procurement across London. Under the direction of the board, work is ongoing to provide detailed analysis of both contract and third party expenditure data, which seek to identify opportunities for collaborative working and cashable savings within a broader category management approach.

London Councils has been working closely with the LGA to ensure that the package of support on offer in London brings together a complementary balance of the national programme, enhanced by London specific elements. This work has been based on the avoidance of duplication and maximising benefits for member authorities.

## Funding priorities

Consistent with its overarching improvement and efficiency goals, the Capital Ambition Board has identified five strategic funding priorities and a range of supporting funding criteria. These have helped to direct resources and work, most notably ensuring minimum thresholds when assessing project funding proposals. The five funding priorities are:

- 1. Enhancing collaborative procurement** – local authorities in London spend around £8.9bn on third party procurement. Within this priority, projects aim to coordinate procurement activities in pursuit of sustainable cashable savings. This can help protect frontline services and has tended to be through improved procurement policies and practices, such as coordinated category management; synchronised buying amongst boroughs; developing supplier and market management tools and techniques, like management information systems and e-auctions.
- 2. Developing shared services** – boroughs sharing services always sounds good in theory, but needs careful consideration in practice. Within this priority, projects aim to realise savings by: choosing the right services to share for the right reasons; building sound business cases; developing scalable and replicable shared service models; creating the legal, financial, organisational and ICT frameworks to implement transition and service reconfiguration.
- 3. Supporting service re-design and improving productivity** – efficiencies and improvements can result from radical transformations of service processes. Within this priority, projects aim to make savings a reality through: improving the tools and resources available for staff to engage with business process re-engineering and new models for co-design, co-production, social enterprise and self-service.

- 4. Workforce planning and productivity** – clearly employer-employee relationships are critical for realising improvements and efficiencies. Within this priority, projects aim to develop comparative workforce data and benchmark policy and practice e.g. use of agency staff; improve workforce skills and productivity; create the right terms and conditions for staff; understand how staff are deployed to best effect e.g. using flexible and mobile working; and establishing rational management models towards these.
- 5. Supporting major policy programmes** – policy initiatives can reduce or indeed incur costs. Within this priority, projects aim to stimulate collaborative learning and action on major policy initiatives, such as youth violence, community cohesion and health and wellbeing; they also provide support to the development of more detailed reform and change propositions or support local tailoring vis-à-vis services.

By way of supporting criteria, Capital Ambition has particularly sought projects in which at least two boroughs are engaged and which might be scalable to a wider area of London or pan-London. They have scrutinised projects for a clear business case, milestones, deliverables and demonstrable outcomes; and Capital Ambition has also insisted on evidence of support from participating boroughs' political and senior leadership. Other criteria for efficiency projects include a minimum threshold of 5:1 for saving returns to be delivered by 2015.

## Programme achievements in 2011/12



The real test of Capital Ambition must be in the realisation of tangible benefits. In previous years reports have necessarily focused on outlining programme aspirations, approaches and activities. However, with the close of its fourth year, Capital Ambition can begin to report some significant outcomes and achievements from its investments.

### Financial benefits realised and forecast

By March 2012, fourteen project leaders were able to report that participating boroughs had already realised cashable savings and cost avoidance amounting to over £75.9m. In terms of the cashable savings alone, this represented a return on investment of around 1.52:1.

By March 2016, twenty-four projects are expecting to have realised cashable savings and cost avoidance of over £357m. Again, the return from the cashable savings alone is around 8.2:1 and can be compared to the 5:1 minimum threshold for funding.

The **London Energy Project** has been a major contributor to this, working across all 32 London boroughs to coordinate collaborative energy management and get the best deal on the energy markets. This work has demonstrated savings to March 2012 of £28.8m and having successfully made the case, Capital Ambition has overseen the transition of this initiative to become a mainstream activity supporting around thirty local authorities. As a result, the project anticipates savings to March 2016 of £87m.



Other significant contributors so far have included:

- **ICT e-auctions** coordinated for the boroughs in which cashable savings of £10.5m were realised
- the **Care Funding Calculator** project in which adult social care staff have been trained in a new calculator tool and market negotiation techniques to reduce the costs of care placements, to realise cashable savings of £10m
- the **Mainstreaming Assistive Technologies** project, run to coordinate boroughs' approaches to procuring and implementing technologies to support more independent living
- the **three shared service programmes** run within the North, East and West London sub-regions, to support boroughs reviewing council-wide operations and to March 2012, realising cashable savings and cost avoidance of over £6m.

In terms of the latest forecasts for cashable savings and cost avoidance to March 2016, key contributors include:

- **Programme Athena**, projecting savings of £43m from the coordination and rationalisation of ICT finance and HR systems across boroughs with common systems and greater management of the principal suppliers
- the **Transforming Highways Maintenance** project, forecasting savings of £40m from collaborative procurement of major highways maintenance contracts
- the **Transforming Community Equipment Services** project enabling service users needing community equipment more choice about the equipment they can get and through changes to the process, forecasting savings of £28m
- the **East London Shared Solutions** project forecasting savings of £20m from a range of shared service initiatives amongst six boroughs, notably in areas of procurement, adults' and children's social services and ICT.

## Non-financial benefits

As well as the significant efficiencies realised and on track over the coming years, Capital Ambition has made an impact in terms of non-financial benefits. Some notable examples include:

- **Health and Wellbeing Boards support** – the benefits to boroughs are derived from coordination, shared intelligence and expert policy support towards meeting the emerging new duties and national policy requirements; seeking a seamless transition to the new strategic governance arrangements, so that risks are well managed and opportunities for added value are capitalised
- **Reducing Serious Youth Violence; Building Cohesion in Outer London Boroughs** – the benefits to boroughs have been through the development and shared coordination of leadership and capacity in support of local communities, especially addressing acute challenges (e.g. violence) and chronic challenges (e.g. concerning cultures and inequalities), such that councils have developed their understanding of the issues and are better able to improve residents' life chances and quality of life.
- **West London Alliance Careplace Management Information System; Channel Diversification; and Council Tax and Parking Permits** – the benefits to boroughs are expected to be derived from better information technologies, towards improved customer and citizen experiences e.g. enabling respectively: better informed and hence empowered client and customer decision-making about care services; greater choice and optimisation of citizen-council contact 'channels'; and faster, more straightforward transactions for residents' payments
- **Programme Athena; Supplier Relationship Development** – boroughs are benefiting from the work to coordinate greater collective strategic learning and understanding through the enabling frameworks these programmes created: the former concerned with rationalisation of ICT systems; the latter with rationalisation of procurement processes
- **Service Transformation Academy; Enterprise Solutions; East London Shared Solutions; North London Strategic Alliance; West London Alliance Property and Asset Management** – boroughs have benefited from expertise and coordination in collaboratively understanding and developing pioneering models for more efficient or improved service delivery. These are expected to showcase and disseminate good practices and learning for others.

Other more generic non-financial benefits from the programme include:

- **Leadership and awareness** – there is a greater level of political and senior officer awareness, understanding, support for and leadership of improvement and efficiency work across London. The evidence of need, of new models, of successes and of urgency have grown substantially, along with the interest in driving changes amongst London boroughs and their partners, in terms of better activities towards better outcomes.
- **Experienced professionals** – there is a greater range and number of staff with change management, service transformation and innovation experience and skills (e.g. managers and legal, finance and procurement professionals)

The most useful learning that has taken place has undoubtedly been the “on-the-job” learning amongst boroughs’ immediate transformation teams, project staffs, professionals (e.g. legal, finance, procurement and IT officers). Additional learning has taken place through the networks of partner boroughs’ and agencies’ collaborating services; including where services pursue shared solutions or joint procurement. Much of this has been achieved through specific problem-solving and planning in the development and delivery of projects.

- **Networks of collaboration** – there is an improved range and number of networks working at multiple levels, with a focus on improvement, efficiency and innovation

A further amount of learning has taken place through more strategic governance bodies and networks e.g. Capital Ambition Board, Shared Services and Joint Procurement Board, Self Improvement Board, Joint Improvement Board, Procurement Board, Chief Executives of London Councils, Society of London Treasurers, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Heads of Procurement, and the London Collaborative Efficiency Network.

- **Knowledge base** – including local and regional repositories of feasibility, scoping and project documents, as well as case studies

An amount of project specific intelligence has been made available on the Capital Ambition website over the course of the programme and the intention is that more will be featured as currently active projects progress and close.

In addition, there continues to be scope to develop further formal or organised learning and dissemination of information, through additional materials and by ensuring a sustainable and well-used repository. To this end we are pursuing opportunities through the LGA Knowledge Hub.

- **Demonstration projects** – greater awareness of “the possible” as exemplified through completed and ongoing projects and model approaches (as well as the range of scoping, strategy and guidance materials)

Pump-primed work and mitigated risks – feasibility work, project initiations and successful “phase ones” funded under Capital Ambition, now being sustained by boroughs in subsequent years

- **Clear strategic direction** – areas for ongoing improvement and efficiency activity, for example:

- self regulated performance framework across London
- support for pan-London and sub-regional networks of coordination
- collaborative procurement
- collaborative market and supplier relationships management
- smart and selective shared services (e.g. between boroughs and other stakeholders)
- coordination of infrastructures (e.g. ICT or assets)

## Programme activities in 2011/12



Behind the achievements, much hard work has taken place to direct key programme activities. Throughout 2011/12 the Capital Ambition Board has continued to oversee and manage the many ongoing commitments, not least of which have been its sixty active funded projects. Against these commitments, Capital Ambition paid out £3.7m and successfully guided thirty-nine projects either to a natural close, having delivered their intended outputs or to be mainstreamed by boroughs, having demonstrated their capacity to add ongoing value.

Beyond existing commitments, the programme still had uncommitted monies at the start of the year totalling £6.49m (£3.85m revenue and £2.64m capital). Furthermore, in year, the Board were also able to identify, reclaim and redirect around £1m between projects to make the best emerging opportunities and hence greater programme outcomes.

Therefore, the Board were able to award a further £4.5m of uncommitted funds across fourteen projects. These were either new pieces of work or existing projects, which successfully met first phase performance objectives and could have second tranche monies released to them. Awards made in 2011/12 are shown in **Appendix One**.

In response to the end to Government funding and pressure on remaining resources, in June 2011 the Board suspended further funding rounds and were able to maintain a reserve of uncommitted funds towards future opportunities. This remains the case.

While going forward into 2012/13, the programme has around £2.6m uncommitted funds and twenty-one active projects. On top of which the competitive tendering process is well underway to find the best partner to model and deliver a Capital Ambition leadership support service. The contract for this is expected to be awarded in December 2012 and the service should be operational in 2012/13. This should deliver a sustainable programme of improvement and efficiency work into the future.

The financial position at the end of 2011/12 is shown in **Appendix Two** and includes spend, commitments and reserves; while a list of ongoing Capital Ambition projects that are still active beyond 2011/12 is included in **Appendix Three**. These projects make up the core of the programme's remaining commitments. There is also a map showing active participation by London boroughs in current projects in **Appendix Four**.

## Leadership Support Service – a future model for Capital Ambition

The Capital Ambition Board has been consistent in recognising the value of the Capital Ambition programme in delivering transformational activities across London. With the end of the RIEP funding in 2010/11 the Board affirmed its commitment to the work, its intention to identify ways to refocus, sustain and capitalise on the programme, in order to continue to deliver improvements and efficiencies for local authorities across London.

Having reviewed a number of options for the future organisation of the Capital Ambition programme, the Capital Ambition Board has identified a future funding model based upon private-sector input to lead the further development of the programme. The intention is for the boroughs to provide opportunities, challenges, some staff resources and infrastructure, whilst the private sector provides financial resources, skilled personnel, ideas, innovation, technology and solutions.

The private sector role that is being out-sourced via the competitive dialogue process is the Capital Ambition Programme leadership support service; operating as a 'broker' between the private and public sectors in London. The principal task of the Capital Ambition Leadership Support role is to bring together partnerships of boroughs and commercial firms in order to leverage the maximum synergy from the potential for collaborative projects between the public and private sectors in London.

The service specification sets out to procure strategic consultancy for Capital Ambition leadership support, in order to support the ongoing delivery of the Capital Ambition programme, acting in a central facilitator/catalyst/broker role.

The specification seeks to deliver member's ambitions as follows:

### Vision

Opportunities for innovation and transformation in London boroughs to support radical improvements in outcomes for citizens, communities and businesses

### Strategic Goals

- To secure self-sustaining support for improvement and efficiency activity across London boroughs through a creative partnership between the private and public sector
- To 'franchise' the Capital Ambition brand; providing a legacy to the regional partnership commitment to service transformation and operational efficiency in London local authorities
- To maintain London political ownership through robust governance arrangements and accountability to London Councils Leaders

### Objectives

- Facilitating agreements between the private sector and London local authorities to advance improvements and efficiencies through activities such as joint procurements, joint development of specifications, technological developments, and including:
  - Identification of potential private sector companies and projects which could lead to joint working with local authorities in London to achieve improvements and efficiencies
  - Identification of local authorities in London who might be interested in working with the private sector on identified projects to achieve improvements and efficiencies
- Facilitating agreements between these two parties, including agreement that each project should be self-financing



- Disseminating information and good practice as part of project deliverables
- Developing arrangements to enable this service to become self-financing in the future or identifying potential longer term costs

## **Areas of Work**

### **■ Developing Shared Services**

This will include supporting major inter-borough collaboration and merger of services. It could also include sharing of professionals, platforms, transactional services, property and data.

### **■ Supporting Service Redesign and Improving Productivity**

This is likely to include opportunities for improving service design and productivity through the radical transformation of processes and systems.

### **■ Workforce Planning and Productivity**

This will include improving workforce efficiency and productivity within the context of significant organisational change.

### **■ Supporting Major Policy programmes that Advance Localism**

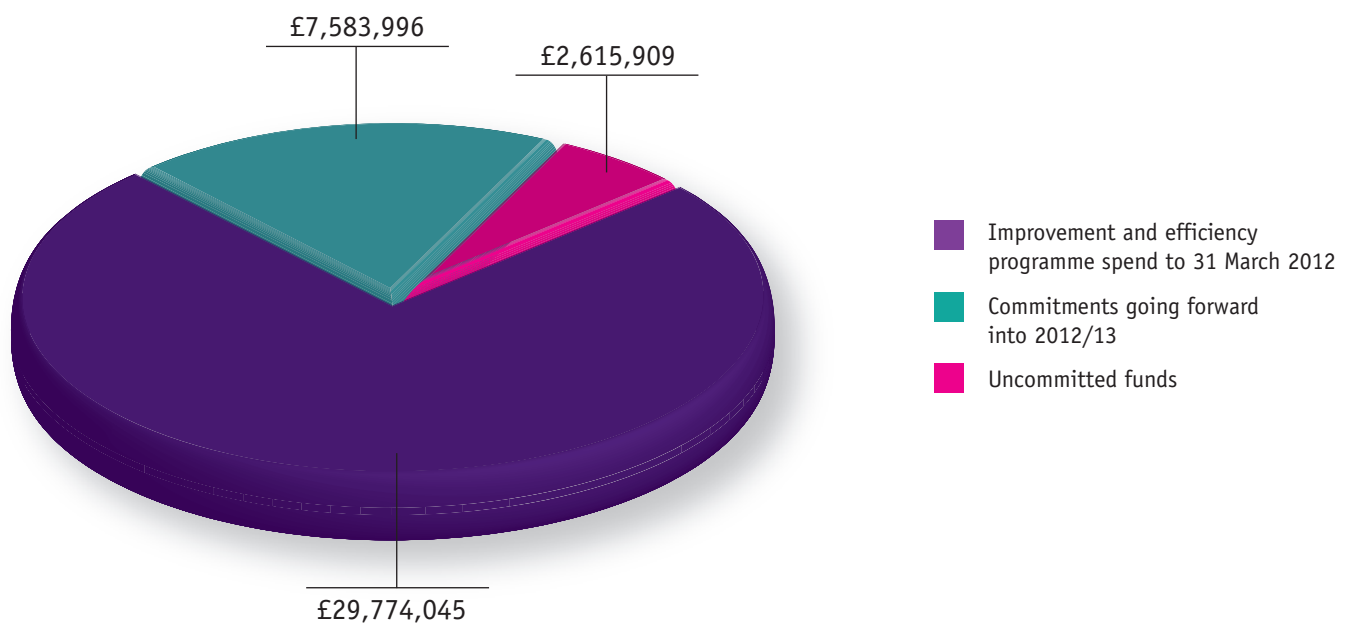
This is likely to include innovation in implementing major areas of change in public services and support for collective approaches to reform.

Assuming a successful tender process and the identification of a preferred bidder, the service will commence, subject to contract, in February 2013.

**Appendix One: Capital Ambition funding awards made to projects in 2011/12**

	Project	Lead borough(s)	Funding awards in 2011/12
CA014	London Energy Project	LB Haringey	£195,000
CA060	Commercial Vehicles Acquisition (London commercial fleet project)	LB Bexley	£51,775
CA101	Chief Executives of London Councils (coordination of...)	N/A	£50,000
CA221	Programme Athena (pan-London finance ICT solutions programme)	LB Croydon	£600,000
CA507	WLA Property and Asset Management Programme	LB Brent	£551,250
CA516	The Joint Service (shared processing centre)	LB Lambeth	£500,000
CA517	Preferred Partner Shared Services programme	LBs Haringey and Waltham Forest	£750,000
CA518	Self-Service Council Tax and Parking Permits project	LB Bexley	£500,000
CA519	Health and Wellbeing Boards (coordination of...)	LB Croydon	£80,500
CA520	Tri-borough Managed Corporate Services (an Athena project)	City of Westminster	£500,000
CA521	Enterprise Solutions (social enterprise model development)	LB Lambeth	£77,000
CA523	WLA Transport Efficiencies project	LB Brent	£200,000
CA524	Procurement Strategy (implementation)	LB Camden	£150,000
CA525	Tri-borough Children's Care Proceedings	LB Hammersmith & Fulham	£150,000

## Appendix Two: Capital Ambition financial position following 2011/12



This chart demonstrates the financial position at the end of 2011/12. The Capital Ambition programme fund totalled £39,973,950 as at 31 March 2012.

Around 75% of the fund has been spent in support of improvement and efficiency work.

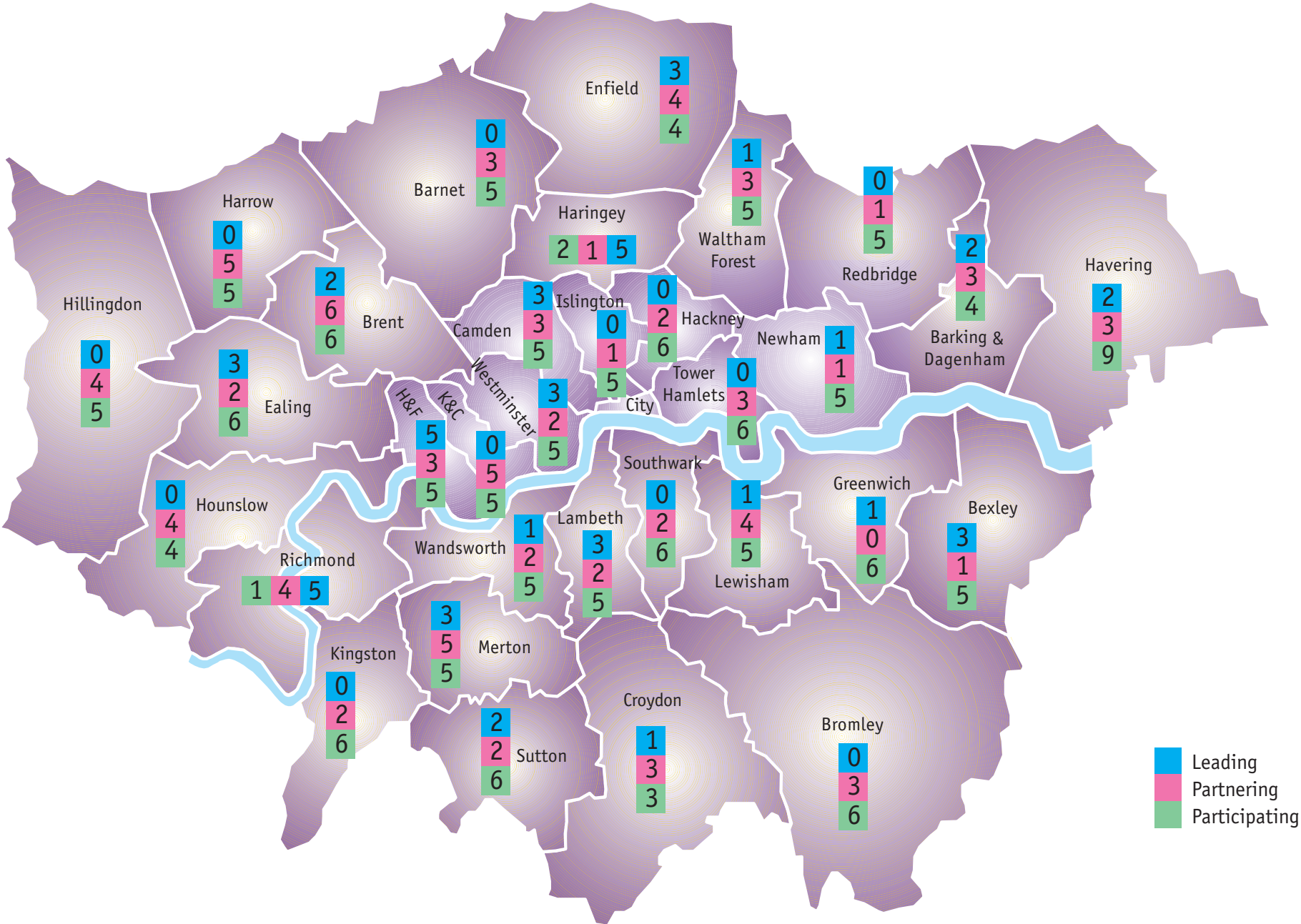
A further 19% of the fund has been committed to further projects, while the Board has retained a reserve of about 7% of funds uncommitted: around £1m revenue and £1.6m capital

## Appendix Three: Capital Ambition active work programme following 2011/12

URN	Project area	Project name	Lead organisation	Total of funding awards
CA060	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Commercial Vehicles Project (formerly Category Management - Vehicles)	LB Bexley	£241,700
CA065	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Transforming Highways	Transport for London	£327,090
CA204	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	Service Transformation Academy	LB Lewisham	£478,048
CA207	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Transforming Community Equipment Services in London	Joint Improvement Partnership	£1,928,000
CA215	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Pan London Procurement Portal	Westminster City Council	£492,940
CA221	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Programme Athena (formerly Pan London Finance IT Solutions)	LB Croydon	£945,000
CA238	Develop Shared Services	LoGo Cloud (aka "Introducing Cloud Computing Across Boroughs through Virtualised Desktops")	LB Merton	£560,000
CA324	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	E-Auctions - ICT	LB Enfield	£210,850
CA507	Develop Shared Services	West London Alliance Property and Asset Build Initiative	LB Brent	£716,688
CA508	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	West London Alliance Children's Services Market Management Programme	LB Harrow	£223,533
CA509	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	Delivering Complex Community Equipment Services in London	Joint Improvement Partnership	£198,450
CA514	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	Care Funding Calculator (Children's)	LB Merton	£111,800
CA516	Develop Shared Services	The Joint Service – Shared Processing Centre	LB Lambeth	£500,000
CA517	Develop Shared Services	Preferred Partner Shared Services	LB Waltham Forest	£750,000
CA518	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	Self-service Council Tax and Parking Permit	LB Bexley	£500,000
CA519	Supporting Major Policy Programmes	Health & Wellbeing Boards Partnership Support Programme	LB Croydon	£80,500
CA520	Develop Shared Services	Tri-borough Managed Corporate Services (a Programme Athena project)	LB Westminster	£500,000
CA521	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	Enterprise Solutions (Social Enterprise Model Development)	LB Lambeth	£77,000
CA523	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	West London Alliance Transport Efficiencies	LB Ealing	£200,000
CA524	Enhance Collaborative Procurement	London Procurement Strategy (implementation)	LB Camden	£175,000
CA525	Support Service Redesign or Significantly Improve Productivity	Tri-borough Care Proceedings Pilot	LB Hammersmith & Fulham	£150,000



Appendix Four: Active participation in Capital Ambition projects (May 2012)



**Capital Ambition**

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