

Summary Report: Adapting to climate change

This report contains summary findings from the public consultation on the draft London Environment Strategy, with a focus on adapting to climate change. It draws together data from both quantitative and qualitative research. Detailed reports supporting this summary are available from the Greater London Authority Opinion Research and Statistics team.

1. Methodology

Adapting to climate change public consultation methodology		
Qualitative Research: A programme of qualitative research was designed to explore attitudes towards heat and flooding amongst Londoners. All qualitative research was conducted with Talk London members. This resulted in a more engaged sample than would be the case in the general population.		
Offline qualitative research (focus groups + interviews)	Online qualitative research (discussion threads)	Correspondence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eight in home interviews were conducted with 70+ year old Talk Londoners to explore their experiences of coping with heat in London• Participants were paid £40 to attend• Sample split in the following way:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Gender: 4 women/ 4 men○ Age: 70+○ Ethnicity: 8 x white participants○ Housing tenure: 8 x homeowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two discussion threads ran for 3 months on the Talk London community:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Coping with the heat (7 comments)○ Reducing the impact of flooding (1 comments)• Analysis of the discussion threads, supported by key quotes, has been included in this report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The GLA received a total of 1,345 emails from members of the public either writing in as individuals or as part of a campaign• Emails from individuals have been included in the analysis for this report

2. Coping with heat

Summary of views based on qualitative research:

- Participants had a strong sense that London's climate was becoming more unpredictable, but were unsure whether London was becoming hotter:
 - Participants said they found it difficult to remember seasons / temperature.
- Participants did not think heat was a problem for London today, but accepted that it might become more of a problem in the future:
 - And thought that it was right to be preparing for that eventuality.
- Apart from making life uncomfortable, participants did not have a strong sense of the risks of high temperatures:

- Participants had a vague sense that heat could cause health problems, but were unsure about what these problems were.
 - Participants with long term health conditions said they found high temperatures difficult to cope with, especially when combined with pollution.
- Participants thought that attitudes towards heat in the UK were outdated:
 - The traditional view of the UK as a cold country means people tend not to worry about / plan for heat, but rather focus much more on protecting against cold.
- Participants showed concern for the trend in construction of glass buildings, and reliance on air-conditioning.
- In terms of policies, participants most wanted to see planning laws changed to ensure building design takes cooling into account, and more trees planted to give shade.

“Tackle urban heat islands by reducing the amount of cars on the road, having adequate cycling networks and planting more trees!”

Talk London Member, 21 years old, female, Waltham Forest,

3. Reducing the impact of flooding

Summary of views based on qualitative research:

- In focus groups conducted as part of the consultation, flooding was raised spontaneously as an environmental challenge for London:
 - In the research on green infrastructure, participants showed a high degree of concern over the trend towards paving over of gardens and the impact this will have on flooding risk.
- Participants did not have any suggestions for what could be done to improve information on flooding in areas of risk.