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KEY FINDINGS

FUTURE TALKS  
November 2023

# ENVISIONING

# LONDON 2050

PAVING THE WAY FOR A GLOBAL SMART CITY



HereEast



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## INTRODUCTION

# Envisioning London 2050: Paving the way for a global Smart City



In November 2023, we were thrilled to host the third instalment of our Future Talks series, centring discussion around the topic 'Envisioning London 2050: Paving the way for a global Smart City'. The evening was a brilliant success, bringing together policymakers, business leaders, academia, and our vibrant community on campus to debate the future of London as a Smart City.

Diving into the heart of the conversation, we encouraged people to consider what constitutes a 'smart' city, exploring the factors that have positioned London as a leading Smart City on the global stage, as well as what we need to do to maintain and improve its standing in the years to come.

The event served as a hub for expertise, convening diverse perspectives on the intersection between technology, infrastructure, education, sustainability, urban planning, and governance.

Moderated by podcaster Jimmy McLoughlin OBE, the conversations touched on a range of sectors and issues, from the prioritisation of sustainability and affordability to the role of data in shaping a city that is innovative, economically competitive, and inclusive all at once.

Following a roundtable discussion where experts debated the challenges and opportunities ahead, we welcomed business leaders, visionaries, and our local community to join us in Plexal Park further to explore London's evolution as a smart city.

Leading London-based futurist and author Amelia Kallman delivered an insightful keynote which took a closer look at envisioning London 2050 and examined the potential impact of emerging technologies. Sandeep Arora, Co-Head of TLA Future Cities working group, and Pru Ashby, Head of Sustainability at London and Partners, also took to the stage to join Jimmy McLoughlin for a fascinating panel discussion focused on what we can do to ensure London's future remains bright.

The event was a testament to our ongoing commitment to facilitating conversation and encouraging collaboration, gathering both leaders and locals to pave the way towards a smarter, more sustainable and interconnected future.

## OVERVIEW



Gavin Poole welcomes everyone to the keynote and panel discussion

Innovation, technology, creativity and community are the tools we at Here East are using to shape the future – but what does the future hold for London as a leading global smart city?

As we imagine what our capital might look like in decades to come, more questions arise: What constitutes a smart city? What makes London a leading smart city globally? What will our capital look like in 2050? How can we stay one step ahead? And what role will the government play in ensuring the city's future remains bright?

These are fundamental questions for those of us who live, work and grow businesses in the capital, and we want to ensure Here East is at the forefront of developing this smart city.

Our campus has become a go-to destination for leaders across business, academia, and government, and it's this power to convene that leads to future collaborations.

Whatever challenges that smart cities, the environment, or population growth throw at us – London will rise to those challenges. Our capital will continue to adapt and thrive, and the impact that this city has had on the world will continue.

Through creating a shared vision of the pioneering global smart city we want London to be, together we have the power to shape it. Our campus exemplifies what a vision can deliver."

**Gavin Poole, CEO of Here East**

# Defining a smart city

“A smart city is for the people that live in it - everything in the city should enable the people within it to flourish. The future of a smart city will centre around the ability to reuse our resources effectively and make the city a place where the people living and working can thrive.”

**Pru Ashby, Head of Sustainability at London and Partners**

“A smart city has to be adaptable. It's got to be inclusive, efficient, and sustainable; a place where people can afford to live, and more importantly, where they want to live.”

**Sandeep Arora, Co-Head of TLA Future Cities working group**



Pru Ashby, Head of Sustainability at London and Partners in discussion with Podcaster Jimmy McLoughlin OBE and Sandeep Arora, Co-Head of TLA Future Cities working group

# Adaptive



Pictured: attendees gather in Plexal Park at Here East for the event

London has had three principal planning interventions: the Romans, the Great Fire of London, and The Blitz. History reminds us that London has always had to be smart, and has always had to adapt, regenerate and improvise.

In our constantly changing world, it's incredibly hard to create a long-term vision. You've got to get the right people in the room, and luckily, there are people right here right now who are thinking about the future of our city, and how we can ensure it continues to evolve as it has done for thousands of years."

**Jeremy Castle, Director at Deloitte**

# Innovation



Amelia Kallman, London Futurist  
delivers her keynote speech

The future is uncertain. But one thing that is certain is change. I believe we're at the beginning of a technological renaissance, one that is forever going to change the future of our cities... and within all the disruption lies opportunity.

Emerging technologies will play a major role in our future city, and we must embrace them to facilitate both innovation and long-term vision. We can think of Generative AI as the evolution of the microscope - it's the latest tool that allows us to see things that we couldn't see on our own, to identify patterns and gain advantages that weren't possible before."

**Amelia Kallman, London Futurist**

# Regulation

Innovation has always been one of London's strengths. A lot of tech start-ups come to this city and help bolster its reputation as a hub for new ideas.

However, to ensure London remains at the forefront, regulation will be key. We will need to develop new frameworks to accommodate new technologies. There will be a growing appetite for emerging tech and a buzz around what we can do with AI - staying ahead will involve keeping an eye on safety measures around cybersecurity and AI."

**Sandeep Arora, Co-Head of TLA Future Cities working group**



Sandeep Arora, Co-Head of TLA Future Cities working group talks about innovation and regulation

# Sustainability

By 2050, up to 80% of the world's population is expected to live in cities. This is going to involve a lot of data and logistics - and by consequence, a lot of energy. It is also predicted that by 2050 the temperature in London is going to rise by 3 degrees.

We will need to increase our biodiversity and rethink as a community how we use spaces, redesigning our environments to promote both socialisation and sustainability.

The decisions that we make today are going to set a precedent for how we move forward. We need to ensure we make the most responsible, ethical, and strategic decisions today that will lead to the best possible future cities of tomorrow."

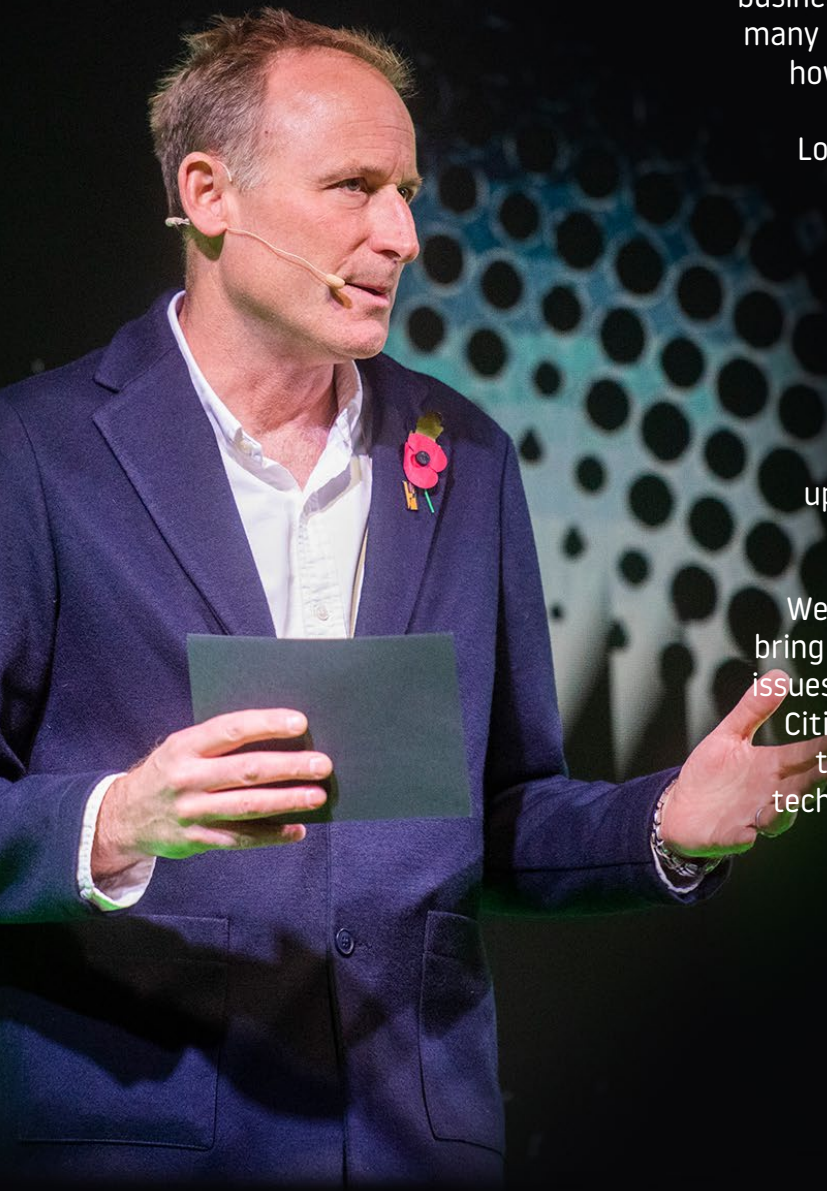
**Amelia Kallman, London Futurist**

Pictured: attendees networking in Plexal Park





# Conclusion



Efficient. Sustainable. Inclusive. Equitable. These were just a few words used at our recent Future Talks event to describe the London we want to see in 2050.

London - and its people - have the capability to fulfil all the ambitions outlined by our guests - and more. And it was a pleasure to bring together experts from across business, architecture, the creative arts, academia and many more to discuss the future of our great city, and how we can maximise its potential as a Smart City.

London is the best city for innovation in the world. It is brimming with new ideas, entrepreneurs, exciting technology and academic prowess.

This ethos is represented on our campus at Here East. Here East is a microcosm of London's innovative spirit. We have grown to over 6,000 people on our campus over the last decade - and it is a place where students sit alongside start-ups - and around every corner, right here in Plexal, new ideas are emerging and being formulated.

We take seriously our duty as a convening power to bring together the best minds to discuss the pressing issues facing our city and society. Our event on Smart Cities follows sessions examining the importance of the Metaverse and the rise of AI technology - key technological advancements that will have a lasting impact on how we all choose to live and work.

It was inspiring to hear about the technological advancements our city has pioneered, the trials and tribulations it has overcome and the promise of an exciting future, based on innovation and spearheaded by a commitment to creating a city that works for everyone.

The future of London is certainly bright."



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Gavin Poole, CEO of Here East

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**Roundtable guests:**

Always Thinking, Avison Young, Cisco, Configured Things, Deloitte, Ford, Framestore, Hawkins\Brown, HOK, London & Partners, MArt, Pilbrow and Partners, TLA Smart Cities, Volterra Partners LLP

