

# ADEPT President's Awards 2026

Entry form

## Award category

Shaping Places for People

## Project Title

Reimagining Hanover Square

## Local authority

Westminster City Council

## Partner/s if applicable

WSP, Publica, FM Conway, NRP

## Headline summary (150 characters max.)

A historic traffic dominated square transformed into an inclusive, green, people focused space improving wellbeing, access and community connection.

## Shaping Places for People: How was this project an innovative response to a significant local challenge? (150 words max.)

Hanover Square faced a long standing challenge: a historic civic space overwhelmed by traffic, unsafe for pedestrians, lacking green infrastructure, and offering little to support community wellbeing. With the arrival of the Elizabeth Line set to dramatically increase footfall, the risk of congestion, poor air quality and reduced accessibility intensified. The project team adopted an innovative, systems wide response: transforming a traffic roundabout into a healthy, inclusive and future focused public space. By integrating transport planning, landscape design, heritage protection and public health principles, the scheme shifted the Square's purpose from movement to meaningful place making. Innovations such as reclaimed materials, new play installations, accessible wayfinding and a three fold increase in pedestrian space enabled a step change in environmental quality and community experience. This approach exemplifies ADEPT's mission to shape resilient, people centred places by addressing everyday challenges with creativity, collaboration and long term thinking.

## Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the quality of outcomes obtained from the project (for example improved/more efficient services, increased inclusivity for residents, futureproofing the service). (150 words max.)

The redesigned Square delivers clear, tangible improvements for residents, workers and visitors. Pedestrian space has increased from 1,900m<sup>2</sup> to almost 6,000m<sup>2</sup>—supporting safer movement, active travel and healthier behaviours. Enhanced lighting and accessible materials improve safety and legibility for people with limited mobility or sensory impairments, while generous new seating offers rest points for older residents and those with additional needs. The expanded gardens, increased tree canopy and water feature create a calming environment proven to support mental wellbeing and reduce urban stressors. New play elements encourage intergenerational activity, while the integration of cycle parking and inclusive crossings supports active travel across age groups. The space is now used for informal gatherings, social interaction, longer dwell times and community programming, contributing to the area's economic and social resilience. Sustainable materials, reclaimed granite and long life components ensure longevity, futureproofing and strong value for public investment.

## Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the level of collaboration between place and people services (both within the council and with external partners/providers). (150 words max.)

The project exemplifies whole systems partnership working. Westminster City Council led a multi disciplinary collaboration between place shaping services, public health teams, access and mobility

specialists, heritage bodies, landscape architects (Publica), engineers (WSP), contractors (FM Conway), and townscape and traffic experts (Norman Rourke Pryme). This ensured that both the spatial design and community needs shaped the outcome. Public health and accessibility input influenced lighting, seating, gradients, materials and play provision to support wellbeing and reduce inequalities. Close partnership with Crossrail aligned the project with new transport patterns, reducing health and safety risks associated with increased footfall. Three stages of public consultation exceeded statutory requirements, ensuring resident voices, business needs and community aspirations directly informed the design. This collaboration demonstrates ADEPT's core values: working across services, sectors and systems to deliver inclusive, healthy and long term solutions for place and people.

**Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the level of buy-in to the project or its goals from members of the local community, health and social care, and external organisations. (150 words max.)**

The vision for a safe, inclusive and greener Hanover Square gained strong backing from the community and key partners from the earliest stages. Local residents, businesses, estates, cultural partners, health and access groups all participated in shaping the design through three rounds of consultation. Feedback influenced decisions on lighting, seating, planting, crossings, play and accessibility—ensuring the Square genuinely met local needs. Crossrail, heritage groups and the New West End Company actively endorsed the transformation, recognising its contribution to safety, wellbeing and economic vitality. The community's sense of ownership is reflected in how the space is now used: as a meeting point, wellbeing destination, play space and cultural hub. Stakeholder alignment with the project's goals has ensured strong ongoing support for maintenance, future programming and stewardship—demonstrating robust, sustained buy in consistent with ADEPT's emphasis on influence, inclusivity and partnership working.

**Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the use or consideration of new sources of investment to fund projects. (150 words max.)**

The project's funding model brought together a range of non traditional and multi partner investment streams. While the Elizabeth Line station works triggered initial obligations, the team used the opportunity to attract additional contributions from Westminster City Council, local estates, partner organisations and infrastructure bodies. A sustainability led funding approach reduced costs and carbon through the use of reclaimed granite from the Thames Tideway project, refurbishment of existing benches, and recycling of paving and carriageway materials. By aligning the project with transport, green infrastructure, heritage, public health and accessibility priorities, the team unlocked investment that would not ordinarily fund public realm improvements in isolation. This demonstrates a forward looking, whole systems financing model, maximising value while delivering high quality social, environmental and health outcomes. The approach reflects ADEPT's ambitions for place leaders to steward resources creatively and responsibly for long term community benefit.

**All categories: please add anything else that supports your award entry**

<https://www.wsp.com/en-gb/projects/hanover-square-and-gardens>