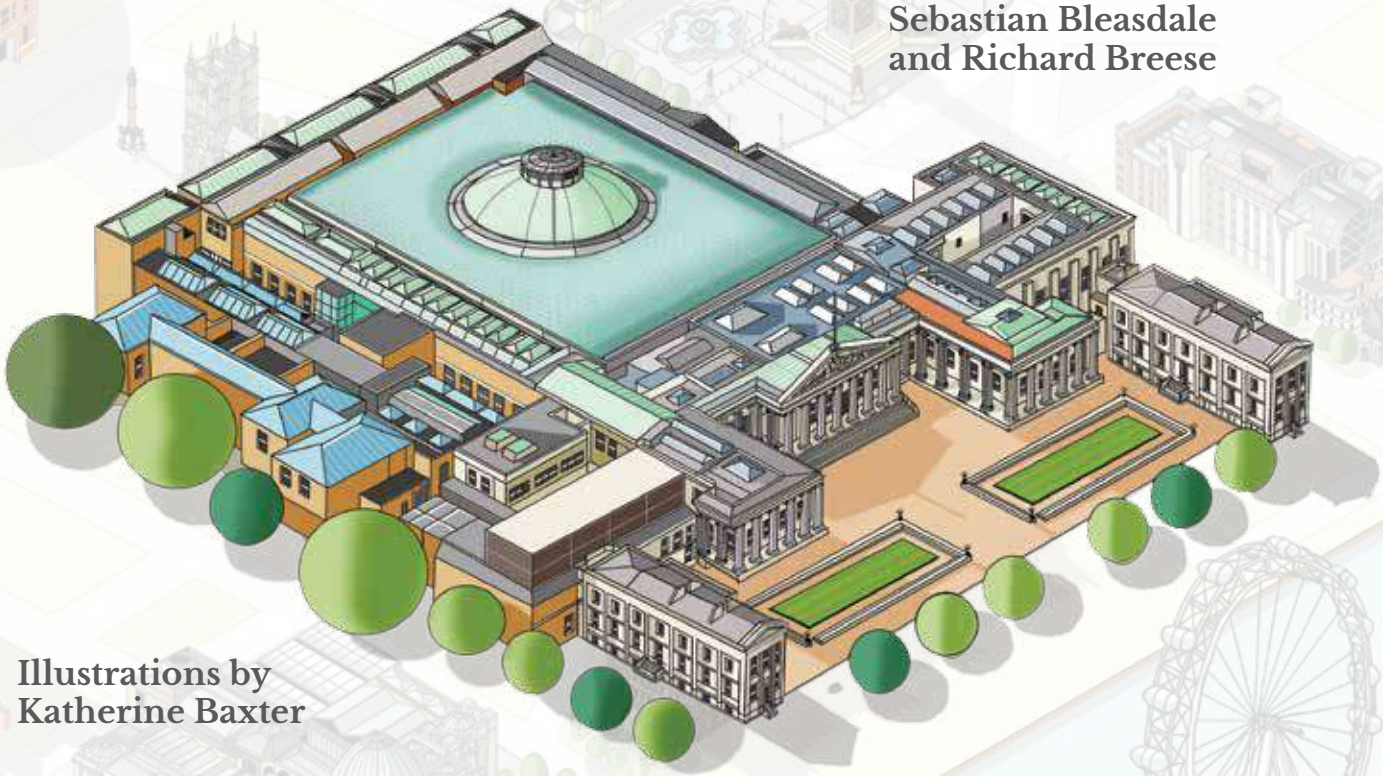
Key to the City
LONDON

Sebastian Bleasdale
and Richard Breese



Illustrations by
Katherine Baxter

Game overview

Key to the City – London is a game for 2 to 6 players. Each player aims to develop their own London **borough** based around their **home tile**, using the large hexagonal **location tiles**.

Each location tile gives victory points and may generate **resources** (**connectors** which connect two location tiles and **skill tiles**). Connectors and skill tiles can be used to upgrade location tiles for additional victory points and productivity.

The game is played over four **eras**. In each era new location tiles will be available to be bid for. In both era 1 and 2 these tiles will comprise of six resource generating tiles, plus some additional building tiles. In era 3, there will only be building tiles, which will arrive already upgraded. In era 4 some of the **Routemaster tiles** will become available.

On their turn a player choses one of five actions. They may use one or more of their team of wooden workers ('keyples') to (1) **bid** for a location tile, (2) **use** a location tile to generate resources or (3) **upgrade** a location. They may (4) **pass**, in which case they may play again in that era, or (5) cease playing in that era by setting off in their **sailing** barge along the Thames. The game finishes after the last river barge sets sail at the end of era 4, at which point the player with the most victory points wins the game.

Key to the City – London has similarities in structure to the award winning 2012 *R&D* game *Keyflower*. An explanation of the main differences between the two games is given on page 7.

Game components and set up

Components

57 Large hexagonal **location tiles** comprising:

5 **River tiles**, identified by their blue text.

6 **Home tiles**, identified by the coloured house icon in front of the location's name and a coloured background information panel.

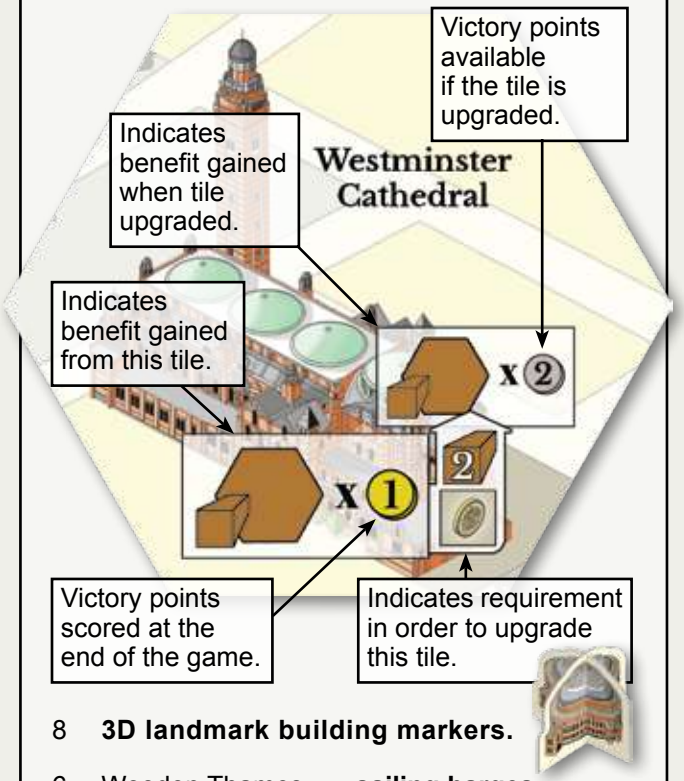
6 **Era 1 tiles**, identified by green hex 1 icon.

6 **Era 2 tiles**, identified by orange hex 2 icon.

12 **Era 4 Routemaster** (London bus) tiles, identified by Routemaster illustration on back of the tile.



22 **Building tiles**, including 8 **landmark** building tiles and 3 tiles which include river sections.



8 **3D landmark building markers.**

6 Wooden Thames **sailing barges**, 1 in each of the player colours: blue, green, orange, purple, red and yellow.

Resources:

144 Wooden **connectors**: 24 in each of the following colours: black (telecom cables), blue (water pipes), brown (waste pipes), grey (electricity cables), red (underground tunnels) and yellow (gas pipes).

72 **Skill tiles**: 24 bricks (builders), 24 coins (financiers) and 24 compasses (architects).

120 Wooden **keyples**: 40 in each of the colours blue, red and yellow.

1 **Cloth bag**, in which to place the keyples.

6 **Screens.**

6 **Rulebooks** in English, Dutch, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish.

1 **Information booklet** about the London landmarks. (You do not need to read this to play the game.)

1. Separate the 57 large hexagonal **location tiles** into the six types: home tiles (6), era 1 tiles (6), era 2 tiles (6), Routemaster tiles (12), building tiles (22) and river tiles (5).

Each player selects one of the **home tiles (1a)**, the matching **screen (1b)** and the matching coloured **sailing barge (1c)**. Place any unused home tiles, screens and sailing barges back in the game box. They will not be used in this game.

2. Place the 5 **river tiles** face (with the berths visible) to the side of the playing area in easy reach of all players. Connect the river in the following sequence from left to right: era 1, era 2, era 3, era 4 and 'game end'.



8. Place all of the **keyples (8a)** in the **cloth bag**. Each player draws **10 keyples (8b)** at random and places these behind their screen without showing their colours to the other players. Then place the bag to the side of the playing area in easy reach of all players.

Note, if you are playing in a tournament game or with somebody who has difficulty counting, then when a player needs to draw keyples from the bag (at the start of the game and at the end of each era), then the player to the receiving player's left draws the number of keyples blind and hands them to the receiving player blind. The receiving player checks that they have received the correct number of keyples and then puts them behind their screen. If the receiving player has received an incorrect number of keyples then they show their hand with the received keyples. These keyples are then placed back into the bag and the drawing process is restarted.

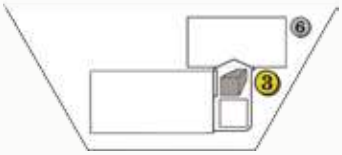
3. Choose a start player, e.g. the player who most recently visited London. The start player places their **sailing barge** on the #1 space on the era 1 **river tile** (Hungerford Bridge). The other players place their sailing barges in the other berths in any order (the order does not affect the game).

4. Select at random a number of **Routemaster tiles** equal to two times the number of players. Place these face up at the side of the playing area. Place any remaining Routemaster tiles back in the game box. They will not be used in this game.

5. Place the six different coloured **connectors** (5a) and three different types of **skill tiles** (5b) in separate piles at the side of the playing area as a general supply. (Or use the game box bottom as a convenient tray.)

6. Place the six **era 1 tiles** (6a) face up (showing the era one (1) icon) in the centre of the playing surface and, depending on the number of players, place at random the following number of face up **building tiles** (6b) in the centre of the playing surface: 2 players – 4 tiles, 3 players – 5 tiles, 4 to 6 players – 6 tiles. The tiles should be separated and have the same orientation as each other.

Note most of the location tiles have an initial side and an upgraded side. The initial side has two information boxes and an upgrade arrow which shows the upgrade cost. The grey victory point icon shows the number of victory points available from the tile if it is upgraded.



The upgraded side has one information box. The yellow victory point icon shows the number of points the tile will score at the end of the game.



7. Place the remaining **building tiles** (7a), the **era 2 tiles** (2) (7b) and the **3D landmark buildings** (7c) markers to the side of the playing area for use later in the game.

Start of the era

Place a number of location tiles in the centre of the playing area:

	Location tiles					
	Era 1 *(see set up)*		Era 2		Era 3	Era 4
Players	Era 1 ①	Building	Era 2 ②	Building	*Upgraded* building *	Route-master **
2	6	4	6	4	4	4
3	6	5	6	5	5	6
4	6	6	6	6	6	8
5	6	6	6	6	6	10
6	6	6	6	6	6	12

In eras 1 to 3 the building tiles are selected at random.

* In era 3 the building tiles are introduced already upgraded.

** The Routemaster tiles used are those set aside in point 4 of the *Set up*.

Game play

The player whose boat is on the right most space on the current era river tile plays first, then play continues clockwise.

On their turn player may:

(1) **bid** for a tile,
(2) **use** a tile to generate resources,
(3) **upgrade** a tile,
(4) **pass** or
(5) **set sail**.

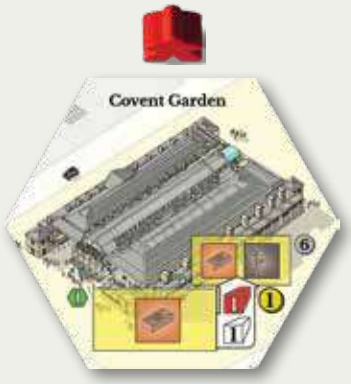
The main actions are (1), (2) and (3), each of which involves using keyples. All keyples used in these actions must be of the same colour as each other and the same colour as any keyples that have been used as part of a bid for that tile, that have been placed on that tile for resource generation, or that have been placed on that tile to upgrade it.

The keyples used in actions (1), (2) or (3) may be taken from behind the player's screen, from a losing bid elsewhere, or from both. A player cannot reallocate keyples that are part of a winning bid, or that have previously been used for resource generation or upgrading a tile.



1. Bidding

Each player is allocated one of the sides of the hexagonal tiles (normally the side facing the player's seating position). In order to bid a player places one or more keyples on *their* side of one of the location tiles being bid for (following the colour restrictions discussed in *Game Play*).



If the tile has already been bid for by another player or players then the bid must consist of a greater number of keyples than the previous bid(s) **(1)**. There is no maximum number of keyples that can be bid.



A player may spend their turn adding more keyples to a previous bid **(2)**, including a winning bid, as long as the new total of keyples is a winning bid.

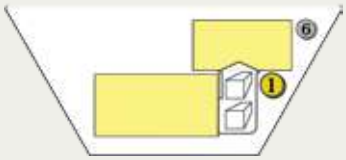


If a player's keyples are outbid, then the keyples remain where they are. The player may then use the outbid keyples on a subsequent turn, however the keyples must remain together. When using outbid keyples a player may supplement these keyples with keyples from other losing bids and/or with keyples from behind their screen. Keyples cannot be moved back behind a player's screen during the era.

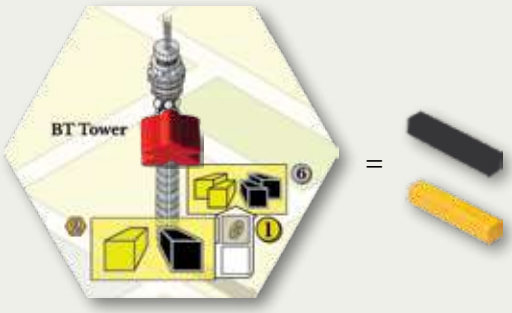


2. Generating resources

A number of location tiles (including the home tiles) have coloured information panels.

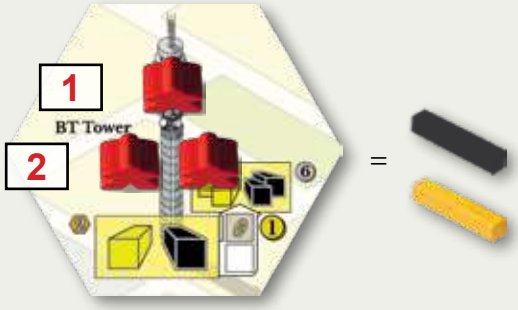


Players may use these tiles to generate **connectors** or **skill tiles**. Players do this by placing one or more keyples onto them (following the colour restrictions discussed in Game Play) and taking the resources shown in the information panel.



The location tile may be in the player's own borough, in an opponent's borough or a current tile which is being bid for in the centre of the playing area.

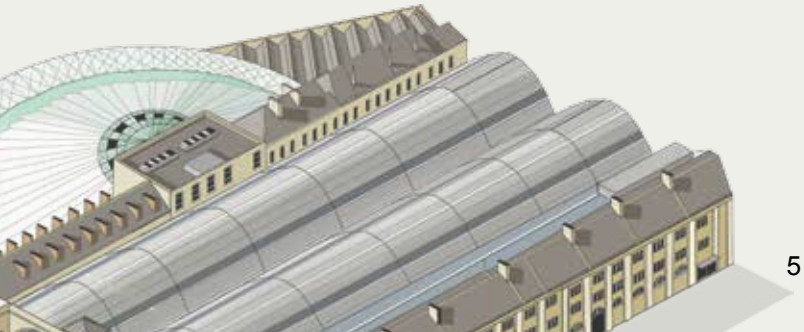
If the tile has already been used for resource production or upgrades previously **(1)**, then the placement must consist of a greater number of keyples **(2)** than the previous placement. There is no maximum number of keyples that can be used.



Some location tiles require that a skill tile of a player's choice is returned to the general supply in order to generate resources. If the player cannot do this they may not use this tile to generate resources.

Connectors

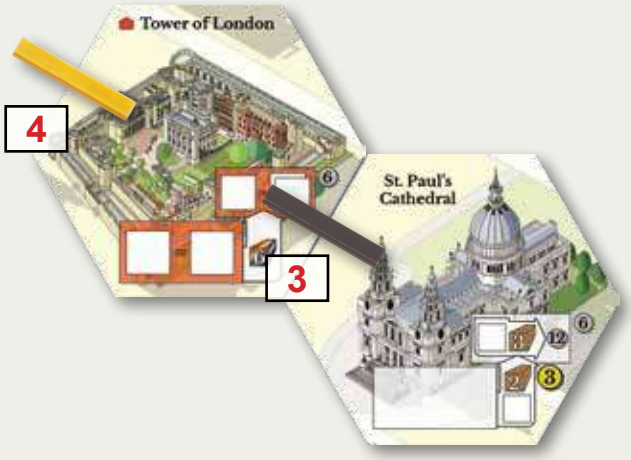
When generated, players should immediately take and place the connectors indicated (where white connectors represent a connector of the player's choice). A player does not have to take all of the connectors available from the tile. The player must place (or discard) all of the connectors gained before they start their next turn. (Note, there is no need for the next player to wait whilst the player places these.)



Connectors are placed so that they lie over the side of any tile in the player's borough.



Only one connector can be placed on each side of the location tile. Connectors placed on a side adjacent to another tile sit across both tiles to connect them together **(3)**, however connectors may also lie on just one tile at the edge of a player's borough **(4)** (which will be the case in era 1 when the player only has their home tile in their borough). Placing a location tile against that edge later in the game will cause the two tiles to be joined by the connector.

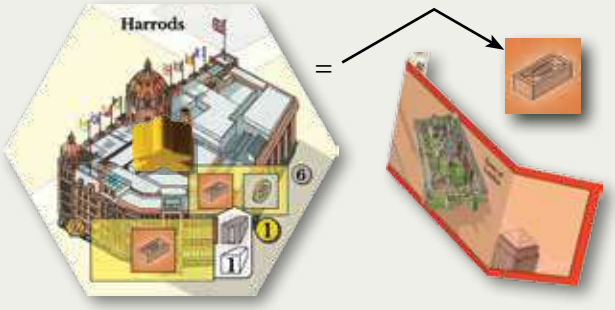


Once placed, connectors cannot be removed or repositioned.

Connectors are limited to the number included in the game. It is possible, but unusual, for a particular colour to be used up, in which case no more connectors of this colour can be generated.

Skill tiles

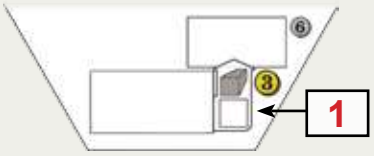
When players generate skill tiles they should take the skill tile indicated and place it behind their screen (where white skill tiles represent a skill tile of the player's choice).



Skill tiles are also limited to the number included in the game. It is possible, but unusual, for a particular type to be used up. Skill tiles may become available later in the game if they are spent by players during upgrading, however earlier shortfalls are not made up from the new supply.

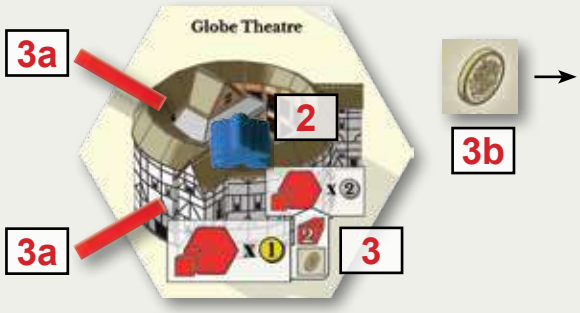
3. Upgrading

Location tiles in a player's borough showing an upgrade arrow **(1)** can be upgraded by that player.



These include **the player's home tile**, all of the **location tiles** which are acquired during eras 1 and 2 (except for **river tiles**) and **landmark building tiles** acquired in era 3. Note that the era 3 tiles will already be upgraded when they are acquired, but the landmark building tiles can be upgraded a second time.

Players trigger an upgrade by placing one or more keyples onto the tile **(2)** to be upgraded (following the colour restrictions discussed in *Game Play*) and meeting the requirement shown in the upgrade arrow **(3)**.



If the tile has already been used for resource production or upgrades previously, then the placement must consist of a greater number of keyples than the previous placement. There is no maximum number of keyples that can be used.

If the upgrade requirement includes connectors, the connectors simply have to be in place **(3a)** (on any side of the tile). The upgrade arrow **(3)** shows the number and colour of connectors that are required. A white connector indicates that any colour can be used. A multi-coloured connector, as shown on the home tiles, indicates that *different* colours must be used. The connectors remain on the tile after the tile is upgraded.



If the upgrade requirement includes skill tiles, these are 'spent' and returned to the general supply for re-use **(3b)**. The upgrade arrow **(3)** shows the type of skill tile that is required. A plain white skill tile means that any type of skill tile can be used.

To upgrade the tile, carefully slide any connectors onto the adjacent tiles or playing surface and temporarily remove any keyples on the tile. Flip the tile over, and then put any connectors and keyples back into place. The eight landmark tiles can be upgraded a second time. When this occurs place the corresponding 3D landmark building marker **(4)** onto the tile. Do not flip the tile over again.



Keyples used to upgrade a tile do not also, at the same time, generate resources from a resource generating tile.

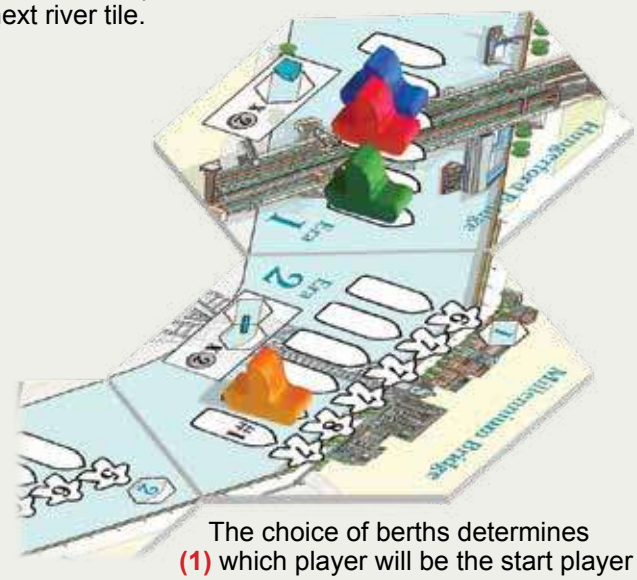
4. Passing

On their turn a player may pass and do nothing. If a player passes they can play again later, unless all the other players who have not already sailed also pass. If all the remaining players also pass then all players sail in the order that they passed.

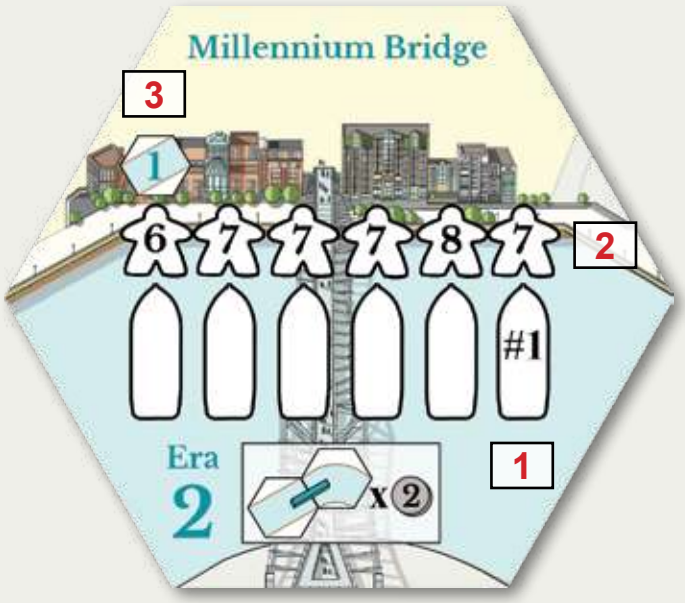
5. Sailing

On their turn a player may set sail. Once a player has set sail they may take no further actions in the current era.

To set sail the player sails their river barge to the right (downstream) onto one of the available berths on the next river tile.



The choice of berths determines **(1)** which player will be the start player in the following era, **(2)** how many keyples they will receive in the next era, **(3)** which player will receive the river tile from the era just finished and, at the end of the game, how many victory points they will receive for their river barge.



When the last player has set sail this indicates the **end of the era**.

End of the era

At the end of each era the following takes place:

1 Keyples which are part of **unsuccessful bids** are returned to behind the screen of the player who placed them.

2 Starting with the player whose river barge is in the right most berth, and then in clockwise order, players **take the tiles** that they have successfully bid for. They also take any keyples which were placed on those tiles. It is strongly recommended that players do this one player at a time in order to avoid confusion. The keyples that formed part of the winning bids are placed into the bag.

Any location tiles that have not been bid for are placed back in the game box lid. They are not available later in the game.

3 The player, if any, that placed their river barge on the berth that enables them to **claim the river tile** from the era just finished now takes that river tile. When added to the player's borough the river tile is flipped over so that it shows the side without the berths. If that berth has not been taken, then return the river tile to the game box.

4 Players take the number of **keyples from the bag** as indicated by the number above their berth and places them behind their screen. Players do not show the keyples to the other players. (For tournament games, refer also to paragraph 2, note 8 of the *set up*.)

5 Players **retrieve any keyples in their own borough** and place these behind their screen.

6 Simultaneously, players then **place the location tiles** they successfully bid for into their borough. Tiles must be adjacent to at least one other tile. Tiles may be placed underneath protruding connectors.

If the tile includes a river section then the river sides of that tile can only connect to the river side of other tiles with a river. River sections do not have to connect to each other.

End of game

Players add up the scores on their tiles (where tiles with 3D landmark building on them score 12 victory points).

The player with the most victory points is the winner.

In the event of a tie, of the tied players, the player whose river barge occupies the berth furthest to the right of that tile is the winner.

The Jennifer variant

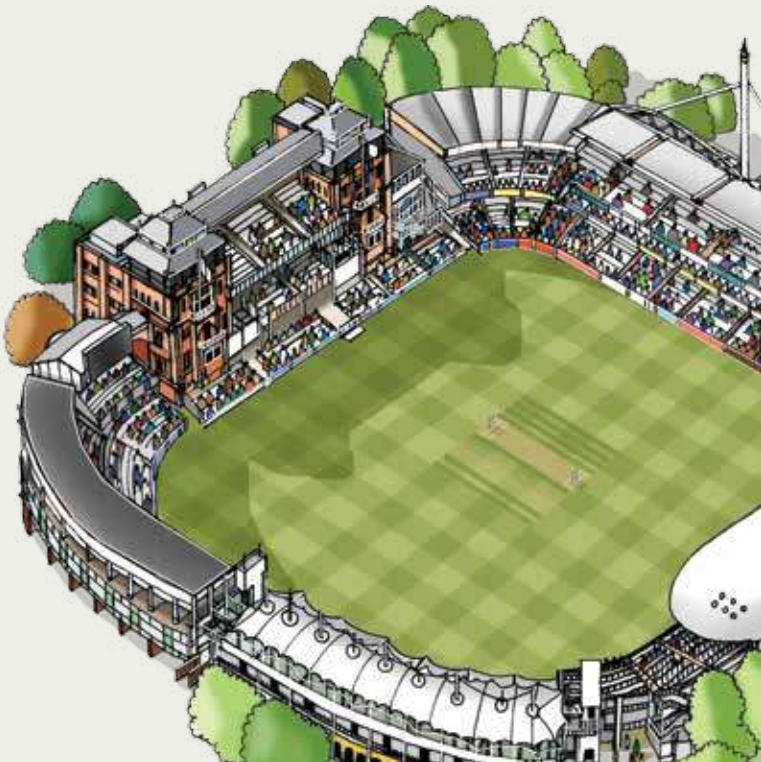
Keyples a player receives at the beginning of the game or at the beginning of an era are placed behind the player's screen as usual. Any keyples that are recovered as part of losing bids or that have been deployed in the player's borough are placed *in front* of the player's screen, where they remain visible to all players. This will result in a more intense and challenging game and should only be adopted if all the players agree.

Quick rules for *Keyflower* players

Key to the City – London uses some of the same game mechanisms as *R&D Games's* 2012 award winning game *Keyflower*. If you are an experienced gamer and are already familiar with the *Keyflower* game then you will probably be able to start playing *Key to the City – London* without having to read through all of the rule book. *Key to the City – London* is a slightly shorter and more streamlined game than *Keyflower*. This is largely because in *Key to the City – London* there are no keyples generated, green keyples, transport requirements or special boat powers.

Both games are played over four rounds (seasons / eras) and use the same bidding mechanism. The main differences between the two games are as follows:

Subject	Keyflower	LONDON
A round is:	A season.	An era.
Upgrading:	Keyple placed on upgrade tile.	Keyples placed on tile being upgraded.
Tile usage:	A maximum of 6 keyples on a tile.	No limit on number of keyples on a tile.
Boats and keyples for next round:	Boat selection is bid for.	A berth is selected when a player sets sails.
Resources:	Tiles generate keyples (including green keyples), resources, transport for resources and randomly drawn skill tiles.	Tiles generate connectors and specific skill tiles.



Tiles

When referring to 'place a keyple onto the tile', this refers to the first use of the tile. Subsequent uses will require more keyples as explained in the '*Generating resources*' section. Where applicable, all scoring referred to takes place at the end of the game.

River tiles



Hungerford Bridge. This **era 1** river tile may be acquired by the player who places their river barge on the furthest left berth on the era 2 river tile, the Millennium Bridge. The owner scores 2 victory points for each blue connector on this tile.



Millennium Bridge. This **era 2** river tile may be acquired by the player who places their river barge on the furthest left berth on the era 3 river tile, London Bridge. The owner scores 2 victory points for each river tile that is connected directly, or indirectly, by a blue connector to this tile. The links must form an unbroken chain.



London Bridge. This **era 3** river tile may be acquired by the player who places their river barge on the furthest left berth on the era 4 river tile, the O2. The owner scores 2 victory points for each connector on this tile.



The O2. This **era 4** tile river may be acquired by the player who places their river barge on the 8 point berth on the 'end of game' river tile, the Thames Barrier. The owner scores 6 victory points.



Thames Barrier. The river barges finish their journey on this river tile at the end of the game. Players score victory points shown next to the berth that their river barge occupies. The player whose river barge occupies the 8 point berth, also acquires the era 4 river tile, the O2. The river barges remain on this tile and the tile is not claimed by any player.



Home tiles

Buckingham Palace



Greenwich



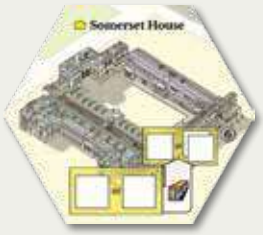
Palace of Westminster



Royal Hospital, Chelsea



Somerset House



Tower of London



The building icon in front of the tile name and the information panel on the home tiles indicates the owner's player colour. The upgrade requirement is six *different* coloured connectors – one of each type.



A player places a keyple on this tile and then discards one skill tile of any type to the supply of that type and takes one replacement skill tile (or two if the tile had been upgraded) of any type(s) in exchange.

Missing pieces

Whilst the manufacturers make every effort to ensure that your copy of *Key to the City – London* is complete and in good condition, the large volume of units and components means that occasionally errors will arise. In these circumstances:

Please contact:
Service@GameSalute.com
or visit:
www.GameSalute.com/Replacements
if you acquired your copy of the game in **North America**.

Please contact:
info@hutter-trade.com
or visit:
www.hutter-trade.com
if you acquired the game **elsewhere in the world**.

Please contact:
preorder.masterprint@gmail.com
or visit:
www.quined.nl
if you acquired the **Quined edition**.

Era 1 tiles

Era 2 tiles

Bank of England



Barbican



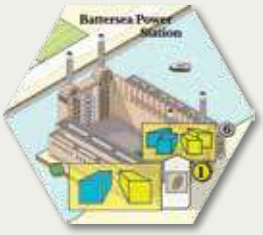
British Library



BT Tower



Battersea Power Station



Covent Garden



Charing Cross



Harrods



Paddington Station



Senate House



Lloyd's Building



Southwark Cathedral



A player places a keyple on the **era 1** tile and receives two connectors or one skill tile as indicated. If the tile is upgraded then the player receives four connectors or two skill tiles of the types indicated. All skill tiles and connectors are subject to availability.

A player places a keyple on the era **2 tile** and receives two connectors or one skill tile as indicated. If the tile is upgraded then the player receives four connectors or two skill tiles of the types indicated. All skill tiles and connectors are subject to availability.

Acknowledgements

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Illustrations by **Katherine Baxter**.

Graphics, additional illustrations and realisation **Richard Breese**.

Dutch translation by **Marie-José van Lent**.

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German translation by **Ferdinand Köther**.

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Spanish translation by **Ketty Galleguillos**.

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Special thanks to *Hans im Glück* who kindly gave their permission to use their popular *Carcassonne* meeples to represent their distant descendants, the keyples, in this game.



Building tiles

Canary Wharf



King's Cross Station



Gherkin



Globe Theatre



Marble Arch



MI6 Building



Monument



Royal Academy



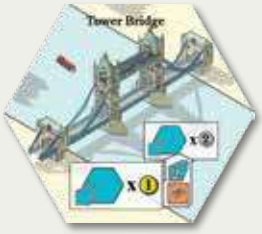
Royal Opera House



Westminster Abbey



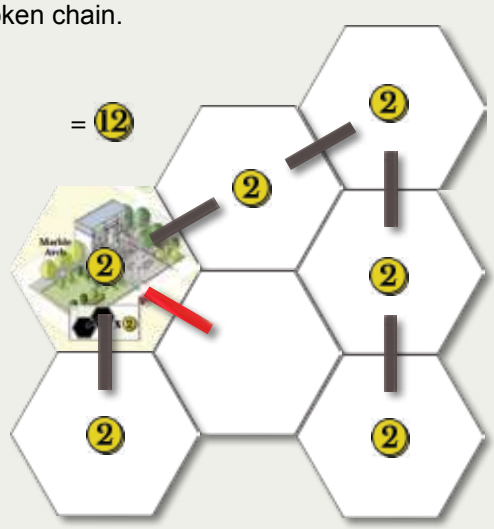
Tower Bridge



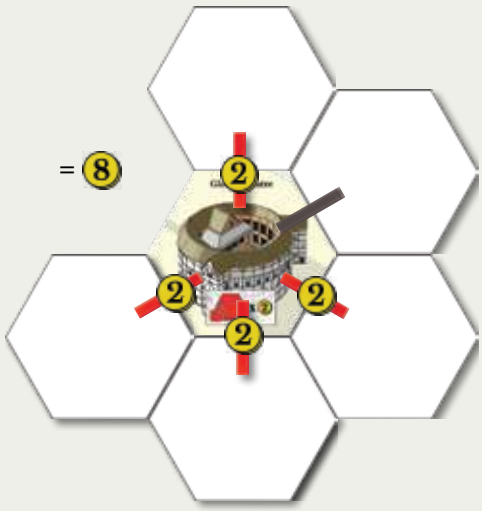
Westminster Cathedral



The owner scores 1 victory point (2 victory points (2) if the tile is upgraded) for each *tile* that is connected directly, or indirectly, to this tile by a connector of the colour indicated on the tile. The links must form an unbroken chain.



The owner scores 1 victory point (2 victory points (2) if the tile is upgraded) for each *connector* on this tile of the colour indicated.



Waterloo Station



A player places a keyple on the tile and also returns one skill tile of any type to the general supply. The player may then take two connectors (or three if the tile is upgraded) of any type available.

Great Ormond Street Hospital



The owner scores 1 victory point (2 victory points if the tile is upgraded) for each *different* coloured connector on this tile.

Landmark building tiles

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens





London Eye





Piccadilly Circus





Royal Albert Hall





St. Pancras Station





St. Paul's Cathedral





The Shard



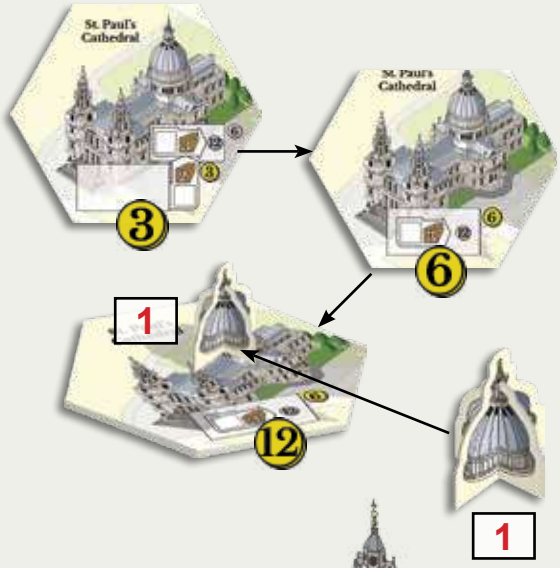


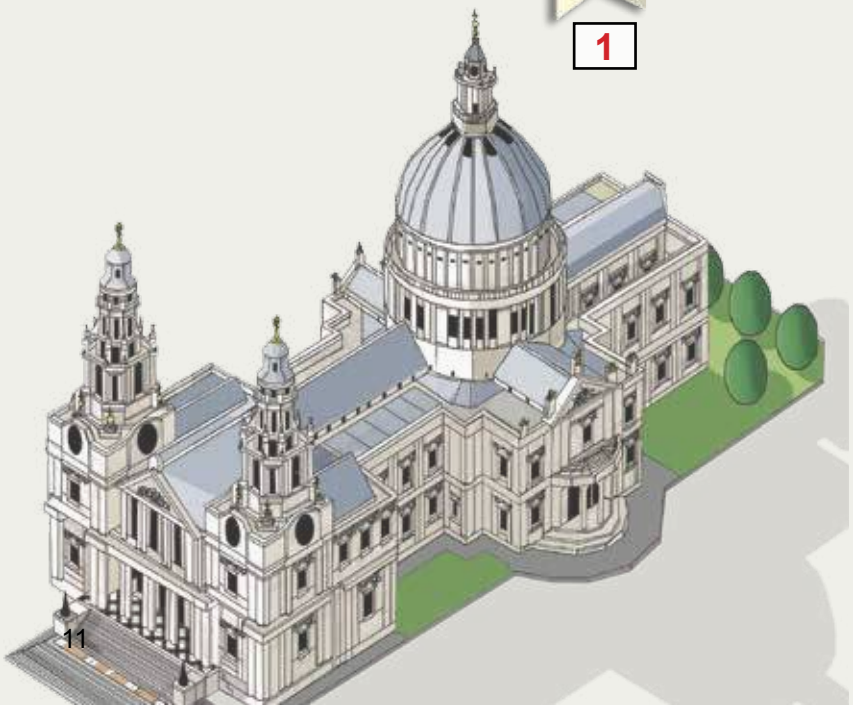
Trafalgar Square





Landmark buildings may be upgraded twice. They score three victory points (3) if they are not upgraded, 6 victory points (6) after the first upgrade and 12 victory points (12) after the second upgrade. To indicate that the tile has been upgraded for a second time place the corresponding 3D landmark building marker onto the tile.





Era 4 Routemaster tiles



All of the **Routemaster** tiles give opportunities to score victory points at the end of the game.



British Museum. The owner scores 2 victory points for each Routemaster tile in their borough, including this tile.

Lord's Cricket Ground



Oval Cricket Ground



ZSL London Zoo



The owner scores 2 victory points for each keyple of the colour indicated that they have at the end of the game. These can be keyples used during era 4 in the player's own borough, keyples which are part of losing bids in era 4 that are returned to the player, or unused keyples.



Madame Tussauds. The owner scores 3 victory points for each set of blue, red and yellow keyples that they have at the end of the game. These can be keyples used during era 4 in the player's own borough, keyples which are part of losing bids in era 4 that are returned to the player, or unused keyples.

National Gallery



Tate Britain



Tate Modern



The owner scores 2 victory points for each skill tile of the type shown that they have at the end of the game.



Victoria and Albert Museum. The owner scores 6 victory points for each set of 4 skill tiles that they have at the end of the game. A set comprises of one of each type of skill tile plus an additional one skill tile of any type.



Natural History Museum. The owner scores 3 victory points for each 3D landmark building marker in their borough.



Royal Festival Hall. The owner scores 3 victory points for each set of 6 different connectors in their borough. (This is the same as 3 victory points for each connector of the type that the player has the fewest of.)



Science Museum. The owner scores 2 victory points for each location or river tile in their borough which has 6 connectors (of any type) placed on it.

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