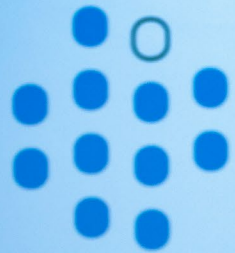


involve



Climate Assembly UK

THE PATH TO NET ZERO

PEOPLE
AT THE
HEART OF
DECISION-
MAKING

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

FIT FOR THE FUTURE
BUILDING A VIBRANT DEMOCRACY
WITH PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF
DECISION-MAKING

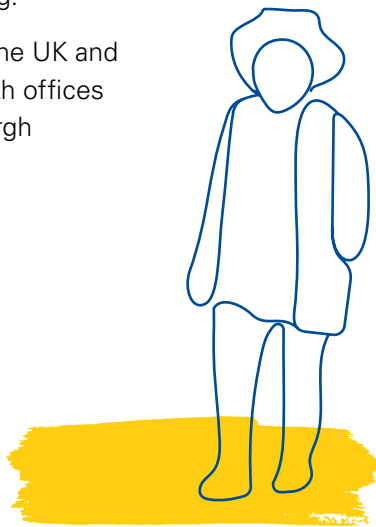
WELCOME

WHO WE ARE

INVOLVE IS THE UK'S LEADING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CHARITY.

We are realistic about the challenges faced by democracy, but optimistic about how to overcome them. We are committed to ensuring our democracies are vibrant and fit for the future by putting people at the heart of decision-making.

We work across the UK and internationally, with offices in Belfast, Edinburgh and London.



WHAT WE DO

WE DEVELOP, SUPPORT AND CAMPAIGN FOR NEW WAYS TO INVOLVE PEOPLE IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES.

Since 2003, we have been working with governments, parliaments, civil society, academics and the public to create and deliver new forms of public participation that re-vitalise democracy and improve decision-making.

Our work is focused in three areas:

- **Making the case** – demonstrating why participation and deliberation are essential features for a healthy modern democracy, and ensuring that those in positions of power and influence understand and support their use;
- **Embedding good practice** – building the capacity of public servants and practitioners, and developing the body of evidence, principles and standards that support participatory and deliberative best practice; and,
- **Pioneering innovation and practice** – encouraging widespread uptake of participatory and deliberative processes, and promoting continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy.

By involving people at the heart of decision-making, we hope to create healthier, more vibrant democracies that are fit for the future.



OUR PEOPLE

WE ARE A SMALL, DYNAMIC TEAM OF 12, COMMITTED TO PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF DECISION-MAKING.

We are experts in participatory and deliberative democracy, public engagement, governance, facilitation, policy-making, research and much more.

We also work closely with a number of skilled associates who enhance our communications, facilitation, project management and research work.

Our board

Our board of trustees bring a vast amount of knowledge and experience from national and local government, parliament, civil society, politics, business and think tanks:

- Ed Cox (Chair)
- Dr Hannah White
- Golam Morshed (Treasurer)
- Kathy Jones
- Claire Ainsley
- Paul Skidmore
- Dame Julie Mellor
- Sharon Squires

OUR THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR STAFF AND ALL THE PEOPLE WE HAVE WORKED WITH THIS YEAR.

We could not deliver our ambitious goals without valuable support from members of the public, politicians, public servants, our funders, our partners and our board of trustees.

Our charitable objectives

We are a registered charity in England and Wales (1130568), and Scotland (SC047314).

Our charitable objectives are:

- 1 To advance education for the public benefit in methods and processes of public participation and democratic practice;
- 2 To promote good citizenship for the public benefit by encouraging and facilitating participation by the public in democratic and decision making processes with an intended outcome of enabling people to develop their capacities, help meet their needs and participate more fully in society.

AT A GLANCE

16 ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS
9 CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES
50+ DAYS OF DELIBERATION
800+ PARTICIPANTS

85%

of participants agree or strongly agree that they feel more confident to engage in decision making as a result of being involved

87%

of participants agree or strongly agree that taking part has made them want to be more involved in other aspects of decision making

70K

Over 70,000 visitors used our online resources

4.5

Average participant rating: 4.5 out of 5

WHERE OUR PROJECTS TOOK PLACE



WHO WE WORKED WITH

PUBLIC SECTOR

Department for Digital, Culture,
Media and Sport

Department for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Greater Cambridge Partnership

Home Office

House of Commons

London Borough of Camden

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local Government

Royal London Borough of
Kingston upon Thames

Scottish Government

Test Valley District Council

Transport for Greater Manchester

UK Research and Innovation

Welsh Parliament

PARTNERS

The Community Foundation
Northern Ireland

Democratic Society

Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Missions Publiques

MySociety

NatCen

Notwestminster

Queen's University Belfast

The RSA

Sortition Foundation

University of Liverpool

FUNDERS

European Climate Foundation

Esmee Fairbairn

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Network for Social Change

Wellcome Trust





FOREWORD

Despite populism seemingly taking an ever tighter grip on democracy across the globe, the last 12 months have marked a time of significant democratic innovation. For the UK, it was the year that the UK caught the “deliberative wave”, with citizens’ juries and assemblies springing up across the country.

I am proud of the role Involve has played in flexing the UK’s ‘civic muscle’ to make our democracy fitter for the future – championing participatory and deliberative democracy, pioneering best practice and industry standards, boosting capacity among practitioners, supporting peer-learning among commissioners, and delivering nine citizens’ assemblies during the year.

Despite this heavy-lifting, citizens’ assemblies are not the only equipment in the Involve gymnasium. They are just one workout for the healthier democracy we want to see, but the interest and excitement they have sparked bodes well for much-needed deeper democratic reform.

2020 MUST BE A FINAL WAKE-UP CALL FOR UK DEMOCRACY’S OWN HEALTH CRISIS

The polarising rise of social media, “fake news” and adversarial politics has left UK citizens feeling disenfranchised and democracy reeling in the dust. Brickbats are thrown but society’s thornier long-term challenges remain largely unsolved. Momentum for democratic evolution has been building for some time, within national parliaments, local governments and civil society. This year saw many of them turning to Involve, keen to explore participation and deliberation as a way to reconnect with citizens and tackle challenging issues with complex trade-offs.

Then Covid hit, slamming the brakes on our activities.

In the months since the pandemic broke, we have had to find new ways to deliberate online, starting with Climate Assembly UK. It has been a time of extreme innovation, with old assumptions challenged and new practices developed. Many of these will likely stand the test of time, long after the pandemic has receded. I am exceptionally proud of the way our people, funders and partners rose to this challenge, and the commitment of our assembly members to see things through.

INVOLVE'S WORK DEMONSTRATES THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING BACK WITH PEOPLE

If Covid has challenged the way in which participation and deliberation often takes place, it has also underscored our fundamental need for it. The pandemic has disrupted almost every aspect of how we live, as well as how our economies and societies function. Our new "Democratic Response to Covid"

project emphasises the importance of involving people in both response and recovery. The realities of Brexit also await and the looming climate crisis stands to have an even more profound impact on our way of life.

Socio-economic disruption on this scale offers a unique opportunity to build back better after the crisis. The work that Involve has done with members of the public during 2019/20 provides our democratic representatives a multitude of practical insights for what better could look like:

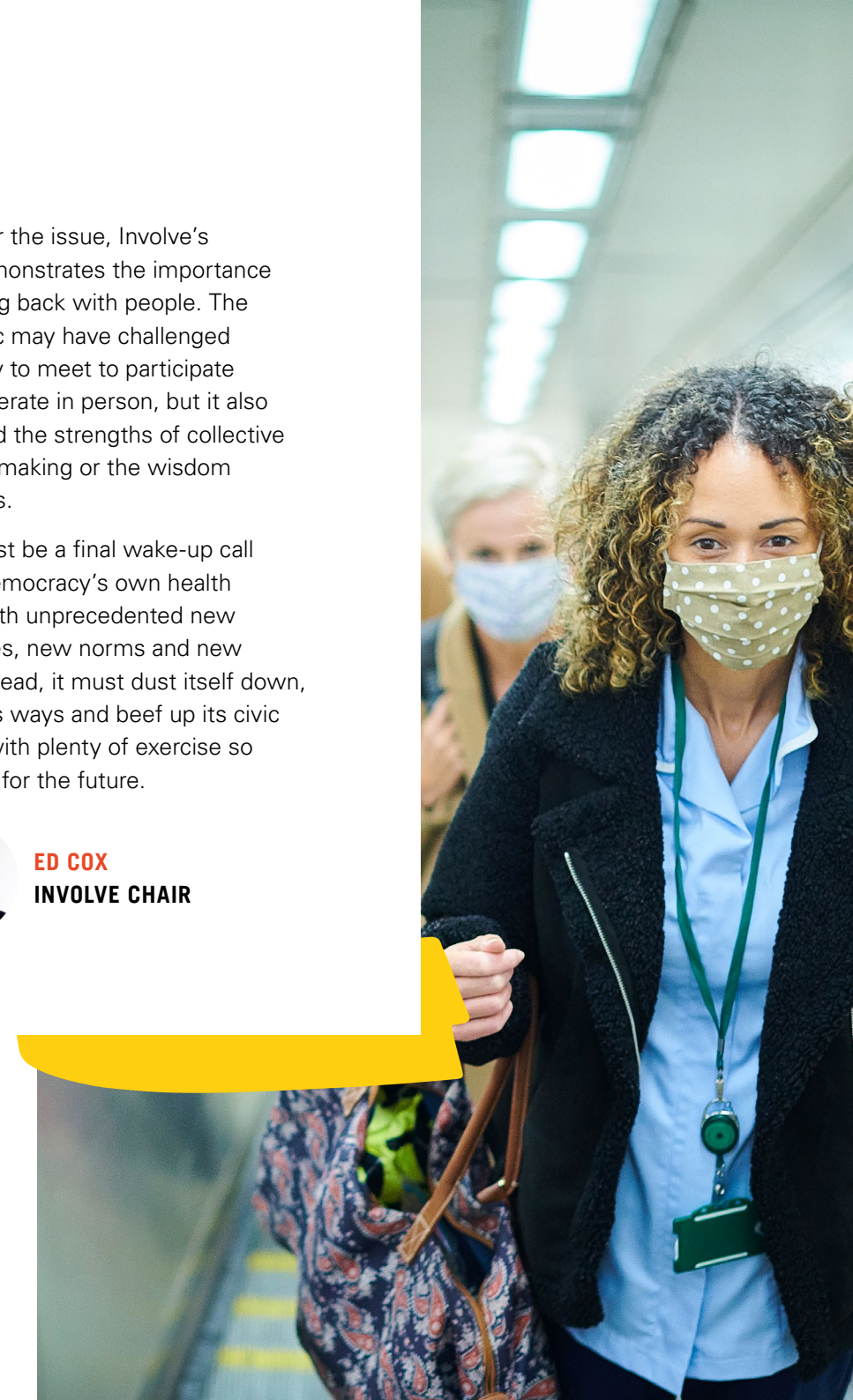
- Climate Assembly UK provided Parliament with a roadmap to achieving net-zero emissions in a way that's underpinned by education, choice, fairness and political consensus.
- A citizens' assembly in Waltham Forest charted new ways to tackle hate and build more welcoming communities.
- Three Innovation in Democracy citizens' assemblies in Cambridge, Dudley and Test Valley provided a vision for the future of city and town centres that are designed around people.

Whatever the issue, Involve's work demonstrates the importance of building back with people. The pandemic may have challenged our ability to meet to participate and deliberate in person, but it also reinforced the strengths of collective decision-making or the wisdom of crowds.

2020 must be a final wake-up call for UK democracy's own health crisis. With unprecedented new challenges, new norms and new values ahead, it must dust itself down, reform its ways and beef up its civic muscle with plenty of exercise so it is fitter for the future.



ED COX
INVOLVE CHAIR





INTRODUCTION

A PERFECT STORM

As we write this report, the world is facing a profound set of crises, the likes of which have not been experienced for generations:

“First, a catastrophic health crisis unleashed by the most devastating pandemic in a hundred years. Second, a global economic crisis, now the worst recession since World War II, leaving millions unemployed and vulnerable around the world. Third, a climate crisis ravaging communities. Fourth, a crisis of inequality, including systemic racism igniting global protests. And fifth, a crisis of democracy, reflecting citizens’ eroding trust in their governments as well as the unfettered rise of authoritarian leaders attacking democratic institutions and civil liberties, spreading disinformation.”¹

UK democracy was already under considerable strain before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, coupled with a growing sense of alienation, disillusionment, distrust and disengagement surrounding its polarising politics. Our political system has been struggling to find answers to many questions of yesterday, let alone address the new challenges of today and tomorrow.

Over half of the British public are not satisfied with the way that democracy works.²

To prevent our democratic institutions from being overwhelmed, a new approach is urgently needed.

STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRATIC DEFENCES

Democracy is not simply a vote every few years. It is our way to build a future that works for everyone.

Democracy should allow us to make best use of what everyone has to offer to tackle the challenges we face. It should enable us to come together, negotiate our differences and create thriving communities. It should ensure everyone has a stake in society and the ability to influence the decisions that affect their lives. And it should support us in making the best possible decisions about the future.

However, to achieve this, we need to revitalise how democracy works.

At Involve, we have a vision of **a vibrant democracy, with people at the heart of decision-making**. We believe that decision-making in the UK needs to be more:

- **Open** – so that people can understand, influence and hold decision-makers to account for the actions and inactions of their governments;
- **Participatory** – so that people have the freedom, support and opportunity to shape their communities and influence the decisions that affect their lives; and
- **Deliberative** – so that people can exchange and acknowledge different perspectives, understand conflict and find common ground, and build a shared vision for society.

**DEMOCRACY IS OUR WAY TO
BUILD A FUTURE THAT WORKS
FOR EVERYONE**



NAVIGATING THE FUTURE: REASONS TO BE HOPEFUL

Despite being realistic about the challenges threatening our democratic defences, we are also optimistic about how to overcome them.

Around the world, we are seeing new innovations and reforms being introduced in order to give people more direct influence and control over the decisions that affect their lives. New digital platforms are involving people in policy development. Entirely new institutions are being designed to give citizens a direct role in democratic decision-making beyond the ballot box.

NEW INNOVATIONS ARE BEING INTRODUCED TO GIVE PEOPLE MORE CONTROL OVER THE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES

These innovations show how democracy can be done differently, and better. In many cases, they have been able to deal with complex and challenging issues in a much more constructive way than is typically achieved by our traditional political institutions.

Here in the UK, 2019/20 was truly the year that the UK caught the “deliberative wave”,³ with 12 citizens’ juries or assemblies taking place⁴ and public interest at unprecedented levels:

- The UK Parliament commissioned its second citizens’ assembly, Climate Assembly UK;
- The Scottish Government commissioned its first two citizens’ assemblies, the Citizens’ Assembly of Scotland and upcoming Scotland’s Climate Assembly;
- The Welsh Parliament commissioned its first citizens’ assembly, the Citizens’ Assembly of Wales;
- The deal to restore the Northern Ireland Assembly and Government included a commitment to 1–2 issues being commissioned per year for civic engagement, including one citizens’ assembly a year;
- Local authorities are increasingly exploring new ways to engage their communities, with a large number running deliberative processes on topics including climate change, hate crime, town centres, transport, and health and social care;

- The UK Government supported local governments to pilot the use of citizens’ assemblies, through the Innovation in Democracy Programme in 2019/20.

These deliberative exercises are a good start to improving the health of our democracies, but we will need to stretch and flex our civic muscles in many different ways to make our democracies fit for the future.

With a mission to **develop, support and campaign for new ways of involving people in the decisions that affect their lives**, we are pioneering democratic innovation in the UK. Our work in 2019/20 makes a compelling case for greater public participation and deliberative democracy.



THIS REPORT

Our annual report summarises our work and achievements during 2019/20. It complements our statutory trustees' report and audited accounts for 2019/20, which you can find on our website.

We've organised the report according to four core ways in which our work has impact:

01 TACKLING COMPLEX ISSUES

Climate change, transport, data and science – this chapter outlines our work to involve the public in tackling issues made complex either by the politics that surrounds them or the nature of the topic itself.

02 BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

The future of Scotland, hate crime in Waltham Forest, the future of democracy – this chapter outlines our work to bring together people with different points of view, develop mutual understanding and create a shared vision for our future.

03 BUILDING PEOPLE POWER

Building safety, in-work poverty and the future of town centres – this chapter outlines our work to involve people in decisions that affect them.

04 REVITALISING OUR INSTITUTIONS

To achieve meaningful long-term change, innovation must become embedded in our democracy. This chapter outlines our work to refresh, revitalise and reform the way our democratic institutions and public services function.

05 FITTER FOR THE FUTURE

Our final chapter sets out our plans for the future based on boosting the advocacy, capacity building, and standards needed to ensure public participation becomes business as usual for UK democracy.



01 TACKLING COMPLEX ISSUES

Many of the challenges we face as a country are highly complex. However, our political system struggles to deal with uncertainty and challenging trade-offs, often preferring crude soundbites and simplistic solutions.

All of our work focuses – to some extent – on issues made complex either by the nature of the topics themselves or the politics that surrounds them. We champion new participatory and deliberative innovations that can better address the complex issues we face.

Examining topics like climate change and the environment, transport and infrastructure, and data and science, our 2019/20 projects repeatedly demonstrate that – when given the time, space and support to do so – people can competently grapple with difficult issues and develop robust recommendations to help guide decision-makers.

Climate Assembly UK developed over 50 recommendations for achieving net-zero that are currently being considered by select committees and government departments. The recommendations of the Camden Climate Assembly have formed the basis for Camden's new climate action plan. The Greater Cambridge Citizens' Assembly has provided a mandate to "be brave, be bold, and take action" and the Greater Cambridge Partnership is now developing measures to tackle congestion and improve public transport based on its recommendations.

A vibrant democracy makes use of people's ingenuity and pragmatism to help solve our most complex challenges.



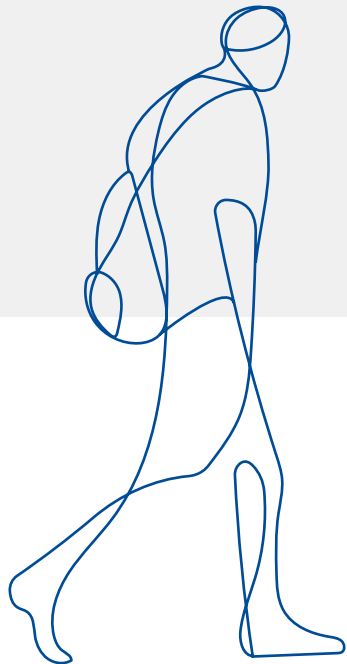


“IT’S A REAL FIRST. WE HAVE HAD FOR DECADES IN THE UK A COMMUNITY OF SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS WHO’VE BEEN BUILDING A PICTURE OF THE CLIMATE SCIENCE AND THE URGENT ACTIONS THAT WE NEED TO TAKE TO DECARBONIZE THE UK AND OUR SOCIETY ... BUT WE HAVE NEVER HAD EVIDENCE LIKE THIS BEFORE. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ... THAT WE CAN SAY WE REALLY UNDERSTAND THE VIEWS OF UK CITIZENS ...

“THIS, FOR ME, IS A REALLY BALANCED AND PROPORTIONATE SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS. IF I WAS A MINISTER I WOULD BE REALLY PLEASED TO SEE THIS. SO THERE’S A REALISTIC PACKAGE HERE AND I KNOW WE AT THE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ARE GOING TO MAKE FULL USE OF THIS IN OUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT AFTER THIS.”

CHRIS STARK, COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT



PROJECT: CLIMATE ASSEMBLY UK



In June 2019, the UK passed a law committing it to reaching 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and pledging to end its contribution to global climate change, the first major economy to do so. Climate Assembly UK was commissioned by six House of Commons select committees to understand public preferences on how to tackle climate change and deliver this net zero target.

108 assembly members – made up of people from all walks of life – met over six weekends between January and May 2020 to hear evidence, discuss and reach recommendations on the UK's path to net zero.

Climate Assembly UK published its recommendations in September 2020. In total, the report contains over 50 recommendations for policy measures designed to meet the net zero target by 2050.

"I feel really lucky to have had the opportunity to take part; to listen and learn about climate change, and explore ways of cutting the UK's carbon emissions to net zero over the next three decades. Even in a year like this, with the country and economy still reeling from the coronavirus pandemic, it's clear that the majority of us feel prioritising net zero policy is not only important but achievable, too. Our report takes into account the wide range of views in the UK and represents a realistic and fair path to net zero."

Sue, Climate Assembly UK member

The report has received considerable media, stakeholder and political attention due to widespread calls for a green economic recovery post-Covid and the government's national and international leadership ambition ahead of hosting COP26. Since its publication, over 800 politicians, civil servants and stakeholders have attended briefings on the assembly's work. The Government has said that it "welcome[s] the report and will be considering its findings closely as we shape our approach to net zero."

"The climate assembly has shown us the benefits of working with a dedicated group. One that's been given time and information to consider complex issues in full."

Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP



The Committee on Climate Change – the government’s independent advisory body – swiftly affirmed it would use the assembly’s recommendations to inform its 6th Carbon Budget and has said it also had plans to conduct more deliberative public engagement in the future. And the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee in the House of Commons has launched an overarching inquiry into the findings of the assembly “in order to review on a regular basis the government’s engagement and interaction with the findings of the assembly and progress in implementing its proposals.”

“This is an extremely important contribution to the debate on how the UK reaches our net zero target and I hope it gives impetus to policy makers to take bold action to reduce our emissions. The range of voices within these pages reflect our population. The fact that assembly members have been able to arrive at clear recommendations whilst respecting each others’ values and experiences sets an example for us all. Participants speak of their learning, how they clarified their views and their respect for each other’s perspectives, even when they didn’t agree. Their voices are front and centre, just as they should be.”

Darren Jones MP, Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee

FIND OUT MORE:

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-should-uk-tackle-climate-change

PROJECT: CAMDEN CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

The Camden Climate Assembly brought together over 50 residents, reflective of the area, to develop an approach for how Camden can best tackle the climate crisis.



The citizens' assembly developed and agreed 17 recommendations for actions that should be taken by residents, community groups, businesses and the council in Camden. These recommendations were based on submissions from the wider community, including residents, businesses and school children.

The recommendations were presented to a full council meeting in October 2019 and received unanimous support from councillors from all political parties. They subsequently set the direction of the Camden Climate Action Plan 2020–2025, which was published in June 2020.

“The citizens' assembly process helped us focus on what needs to be done, and the subsequent consultation allowed us to fine tune the assembly proposals further. We have turned the citizens' proposals into Borough-wide policies and community-led action in this climate action plan. This action plan represents the culmination of this work, and defines the first of two five year plans for how we will move towards zero carbon and address the crisis.”

Councillor Adam Harrison, Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden

FIND OUT MORE:

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/what-can-camden-do-address-climate-crisis

PROJECT: KINGSTON CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON AIR QUALITY

Poor air quality has a major impact on people's health and is estimated to cause between 28,000 and 36,000 deaths a year in the UK. The Kingston Citizens' Assembly on Air Quality brought together 38 residents from across the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames over to develop recommendations on how to improve air quality in the borough.

Across two weekends, the citizens' assembly heard a range of evidence relating to the impact of air pollution and different possible solutions for tackling it. The assembly developed five recommendations and a series of detailed actions that the council, residents and others should take. The recommendations were presented by members of the assembly to the full council in December 2019 at the Guildhall.

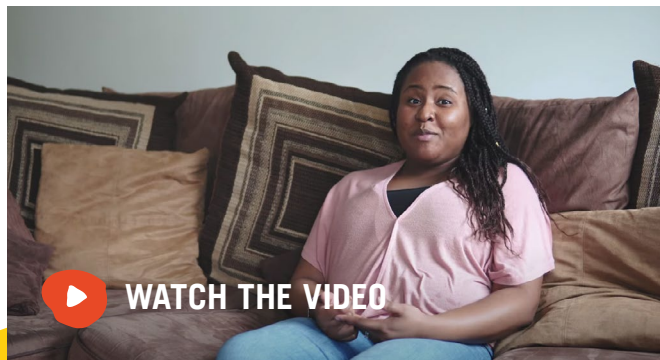
FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-air-quality-be-improved-kingston

TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

PROJECT: GREATER CAMBRIDGE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

The Greater Cambridge Citizens' Assembly brought together 53 residents, selected via a civic lottery, from Greater Cambridge and the wider area for two weekends to make recommendations on reducing congestion, improving air quality and providing better public transport.



"I'm proud to see such a pioneering and innovative form of deliberative democracy being used to shape our plans. The Citizens' Assembly is an excellent example of how local people can actively contribute to tackling the issues that affect them.

"We have heard the call to 'be brave, be bold, and take action' – our response sets out how we will draw on these recommendations to develop long-term plans to transform how people get around, as well as the 'quick wins' we're putting in place to support people and businesses to adapt and recover to the Covid-19 pandemic."

Clr Aidan Van de Weyer, GCP Executive Board member

The assembly produced a range of recommendations that were presented to the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) in January 2020. The GCP Executive Board provided a detailed response to the recommendations in July 2020, including outlining the initial measures it is taking to deliver on the assembly's vision. It has committed to develop a longer-term package of measures for December 2020 and provide an annual report on how it is fulfilling the assembly's recommendations.

FIND OUT MORE:

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-congestion-be-reduced-greater-cambridge



PROJECT:
**CITIZENS' CONVERSATION
 ON DRIVERLESS VEHICLES**

Working with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), we ran a citizens' conversation on the future of driverless vehicles in Greater Manchester. This was part of a series of citizens' debates on this topic across Europe, North America and Singapore, organised by French organisation Missions Publiques.

57 participants worked together to explore how their lives might be impacted by the introduction of driverless vehicles, identifying their priorities and concerns and how the technology could be regulated, and how their ideas might be put into action in Greater Manchester. We trained TfGM staff as table facilitators, building capacity at TfGM for future deliberative engagement.

The recommendations have informed TfGM's policy making and fed into the global report produced by Missions Publiques, which will guide policy-making at an international level.

"The Citizens' Conversation on Driverless Vehicles in Greater Manchester and the subsequent report have been hugely valuable to TfGM. We are in the early stages of developing our Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs) strategy and related policies where these findings are now being used to inform a set of guiding principles for CAVs in Greater Manchester. We have recently presented the Citizens' Conversation at major industry events such as the Smart transport Conference 2020 and both the findings and method of citizen engagement have been received very well, generating a lot of interest and questions about the event itself and the importance of involving citizens through more interactive methods across the transport planning sector."

Nicola Kane, Head of Strategic Planning, Research and Innovation, TfGM

FIND OUT MORE

[www.involve.org.uk/
 our-work/our-projects/
 practice/what-could-future-
 driverless-vehicles-look-
 greater-manchester](http://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/what-could-future-driverless-vehicles-look-greater-manchester)



DATA & SCIENCE

PROJECT: HOME OFFICE OPEN SPACE

The Home Office Open Space was established in 2018 to provide a space for the Home Office and civil society to have a constructive conversation about the use of data by the National Law Enforcement Data Programme and Home Office Biometrics Programme. Among other things, it's facilitating civil society input into assessing the impact on public privacy, designing appropriate safeguards and shaping codes of practice.

Working as neutral convenors, we coordinated the open space process through regular workshops between civil society organisations and Home Office officials. We are there to ensure participants have a chance to agree or disagree with decisions made and to hold the Home Office accountable for acting on these discussions and decisions.

As a result of civil society feedback through the open space process, the Home Office have reworked their approach to several elements of the technical design of the new LEDS database. Civil society input has also brought about more transparency to this programme, changed the way this work is communicated with members of the public and opened up engagement channels into other Home Office data programmes.

In May 2020, the civil society participants published the first annual report of the process in order to provide transparency about the discussions within the Open Space; identify progress and sticking points from the point of view of CSOs and to hold the Home Office accountable for its commitments from the process to date.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-civil-society-be-involved-shaping-law-enforcement-data

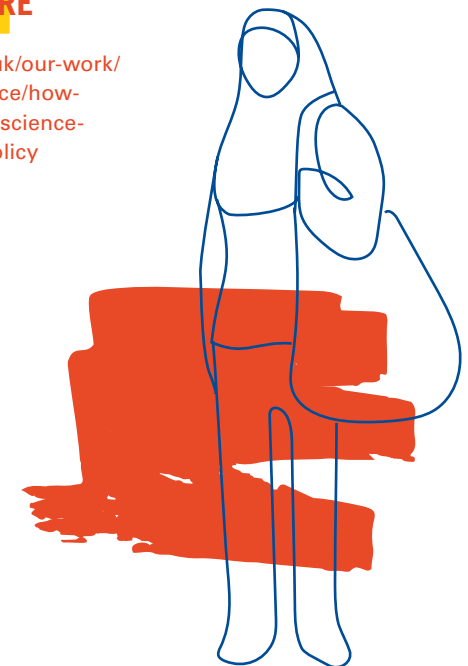
PROJECT: SCIENCEWISE

Since 2016, we have run Sciencewise – an internationally recognised public engagement programme which supports government bodies to commission deliberative public dialogue on science and technology – with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

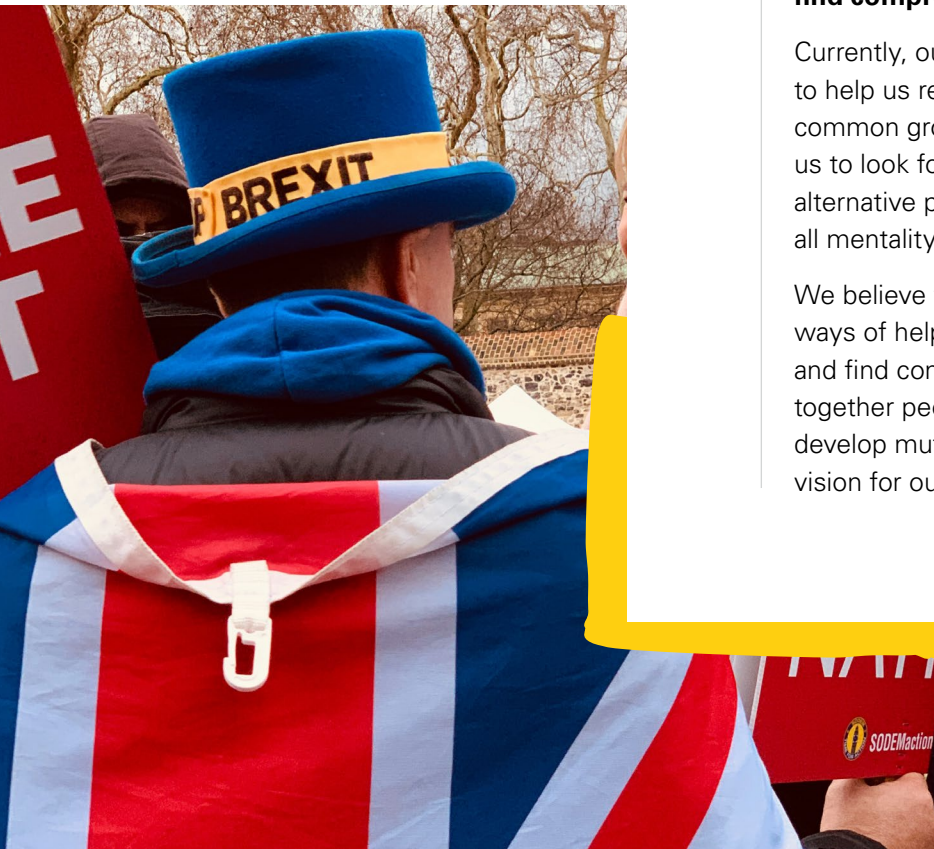
During 2019/20, the programme has supported dialogues to inform and shape government policy on topics such as online targeting, connected and automated vehicles and genomics medicine.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-public-inform-science-and-technology-policy



02 BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER



I mportant decisions about the future of our country often lack agreement and many are kicked into the long grass, due to fear of political and public backlash. Difference and disagreement are essential to a healthy democracy, but we also need to be able to find compromise and consensus.

Currently, our democratic institutions do little to help us reconcile our differences or develop common ground. Instead, our politics encourages us to look for disagreement, dismiss out-of-hand alternative points of view and adopt a winner-takes-all mentality.

We believe that our democracy needs much better ways of helping us to handle our disagreements and find common ground. We need ways to bring together people with different points of view, develop mutual understanding and create a shared vision for our future.

Our work bridges divides between people in many different ways. We have recently brought people together to find common ground on tackling hate crime, on the future of Scotland and on the future of democracy.

Our work shows that – contrary to conventional wisdom – citizens are not hopelessly divided. When people are given the opportunity to work together on a shared task, they build understanding and trust and often find they agree on many more matters than they disagree.

The Waltham Forest Citizens' Assembly brought people from across the community together to tackle the challenging issue of hate incidents in the borough. The Citizens' Assembly of Scotland is developing a vision for the future of the country that is widely supported by all of its members. And both the Citizens' Assembly for Wales and Initiative for Civic Space in Northern Ireland showed the appetite for democratic spaces that bring people together.

A vibrant democracy creates opportunities for people to come together, learn from one another and find common ground.

“THE IMPACT OF HATE IS FAR-REACHING. INDIVIDUAL’S WELLBEING IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED. THEY CAN BECOME FEARFUL, DISEMPOWERED, ISOLATED AND ANGRY. NOT ONLY DOES THE VICTIM SUFFER, BUT THIS CREATES MARGINALISATION AND DIVISION IN THE COMMUNITY. IT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL UNWELCOME AND UNSAFE AND LEADS TO PRESSURE AND DISTRUST IN PUBLIC SERVICES. WITHOUT ACTION, HATE BREEDS MORE HATE.

“WALTHAM FOREST SHOULD BE A PLACE OF PRIDE, WHERE WE CELEBRATE AND PROTECT OUR DIVERSITY, ONE WHERE WE WORK TO EDUCATE AND UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER IN ORDER TO BUILD A SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITY. INSTITUTIONS SHOULD RAISE AWARENESS, PROMOTE MUTUAL RESPECT AND RELIABLY PROVIDE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION. IT SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES ARE EMPOWERED TO STAND IN SOLIDARITY AND TAKE ACTION TO COMBAT HATE.”

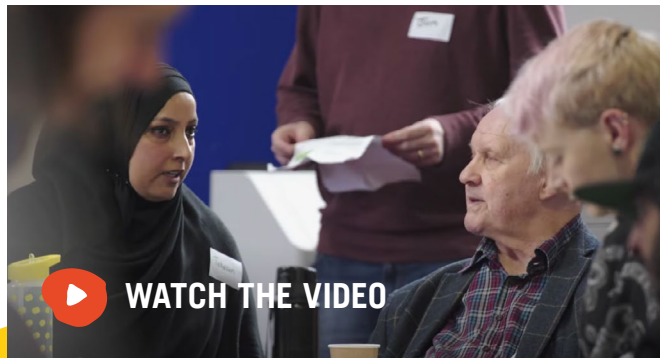
STATEMENT OF THE WALTHAM FOREST CITIZENS’ ASSEMBLY



HATE CRIME

PROJECT: WALTHAM FOREST CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON HATE INCIDENTS

Waltham Forest is a diverse and vibrant borough, but with hate incidents on the rise across London, the council wanted to involve the local community in developing a shared response.



WATCH THE VIDEO

The Waltham Forest Citizens' Assembly brought together 45 residents – selected via a civic lottery to represent the diversity of the Waltham Forest community – to develop recommendations to stop hate and ensure everyone can feel equally welcome and safe in the borough. We worked with the Democratic Society to advise the council, and design and facilitate the citizens' assembly.

"I have gained a lot from this Assembly and I'm confident I will be able to use this to support my community."

Assembly Member

After an opportunity to learn, deliberate and work together, assembly members agreed a joint statement on the impact of hate in the borough and their vision for making Waltham Forest safe and welcoming, backed by a set of six recommendations for the council, community organisations and wider stakeholders to consider.

Members of the Waltham Forest Citizens' Assembly presented their recommendations to the Council Cabinet in July 2020. At the meeting, the Cabinet unanimously agreed an initial £150,000 budget to begin implementation of the assembly's recommendations, including training local residents in how to intervene and assist victims of hate crime.



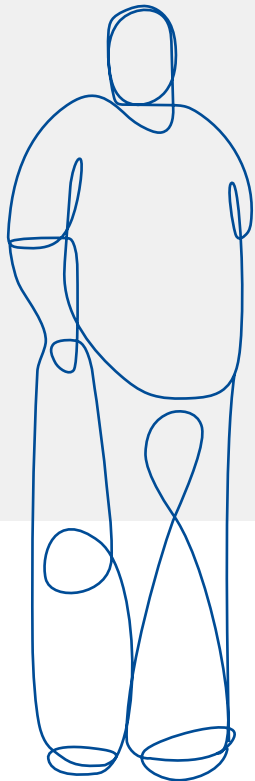
"I had never heard of Citizens Assemblies before and I think it is a great idea; the bottom-up approach. Sometimes things are better when they come from people who have experienced things rather than practitioners."

Assembly Member

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-we-stop-hate-and-ensure-everyone-feels-equally-welcome-and

FUTURE OF SCOTLAND



PROJECT: CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY OF SCOTLAND

In April 2019, Nicola Sturgeon announced that Scotland would establish a citizens' assembly to address the issues: What kind of country are we seeking to build? How can we best overcome the challenges we face, including those arising from Brexit? And what further work should be carried out to give people the detail they need to make informed choices about the future of the country?

The Citizens' Assembly of Scotland met face-to-face four times between October 2019 and February 2020. With the arrival of Covid-19, the remaining sessions of the assembly have been moved online and are taking place between September and December 2020. So far, the assembly has developed a vision for Scotland and over fifty recommendations to politicians.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/what-should-be-future-scotland



DEMOCRACY

PROJECT: CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

In 2019, the National Assembly for Wales – now known as the Senedd Cymru or Welsh Parliament – celebrated its 20th Anniversary. As part of the celebrations, the National Assembly Commission initiated a citizens' assembly to consider the question: "How can people in Wales shape their future through the work of the National Assembly for Wales?"



The Citizens' Assembly of Wales brought together 60 members of the public from across Wales – selected via a civic lottery to be representative of the Welsh population – over one weekend to consider how people could shape their future through the work of committees; budget approval; questioning the government; and setting the National Assembly for Wales' agenda.

"When a letter came through the door inviting me to participate in the citizens' assembly I was intrigued and didn't know what to expect – but after going through the process I came away buzzing, and feeling very positive. Often you can feel very detached from the political process – but it was nice to be included and listened to. The idea of taking ideas to a cross section of the population for discussion really appealed to me – it made me feel that the system is interested in its citizens."

Mark, Citizens' Assembly Member

This was the first citizens' assembly to be commissioned by the National Assembly for Wales and the first to take place in Wales. It developed clear recommendations to inform how the Welsh Parliament should involve people in its work in future.

"I am proud of the work of our first Citizens' Assembly – this was a landmark event and an important step on our devolution journey."

Elin Jones AM, Llywydd of the National Assembly for Wales

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-people-wales-shape-their-future



PROJECT: INITIATIVE FOR CIVIC SPACE

Between January 2017 and January 2020, the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended due to a collapse of power-sharing. There was growing consensus that returning to “politics as usual” would not bridge the disconnect between politicians and citizens, and received wisdom suggested that Northern Irish society remains too divided to be able to engage in effective cross-community dialogue and deliberation.

Following on from the successful Citizens’ Assembly for Northern Ireland that we ran in 2018, we worked with the Initiative for Civic Space and other partners⁵ to convene a one-day citizens’ panel in May 2019 to explore how the Northern Ireland Assembly can build a more inclusive, participatory democracy. The panel was made up of 45 people from across Northern Ireland who were selected via a civic lottery to be broadly representative of the population.

“I liked the fact that I was given adequate information about a topic as well as provided with different opinions. This enabled me to come to an informed decision about issues I knew little about before.”

Citizens’ Panel Member

The outputs of these deliberations demonstrated that a diverse group of people with little or no pre-existing knowledge or interest in the topic, could come together to make considered contributions to the wider debate, putting forward clear preferences and recommendations.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-do-public-think-citizens-voices-can-best-contribute-decision

04 BUILDING PEOPLE POWER

Only 15% of the UK public feel they have any influence over national decision-making. The picture is not much better locally, with only 27% of the public feeling they have an influence over decisions in their area.⁶

Far too often, people feel like collateral in decisions taken far away from them and their interests. As a result, to many people, democracy has become at best an irrelevance and at worst part of the problem.

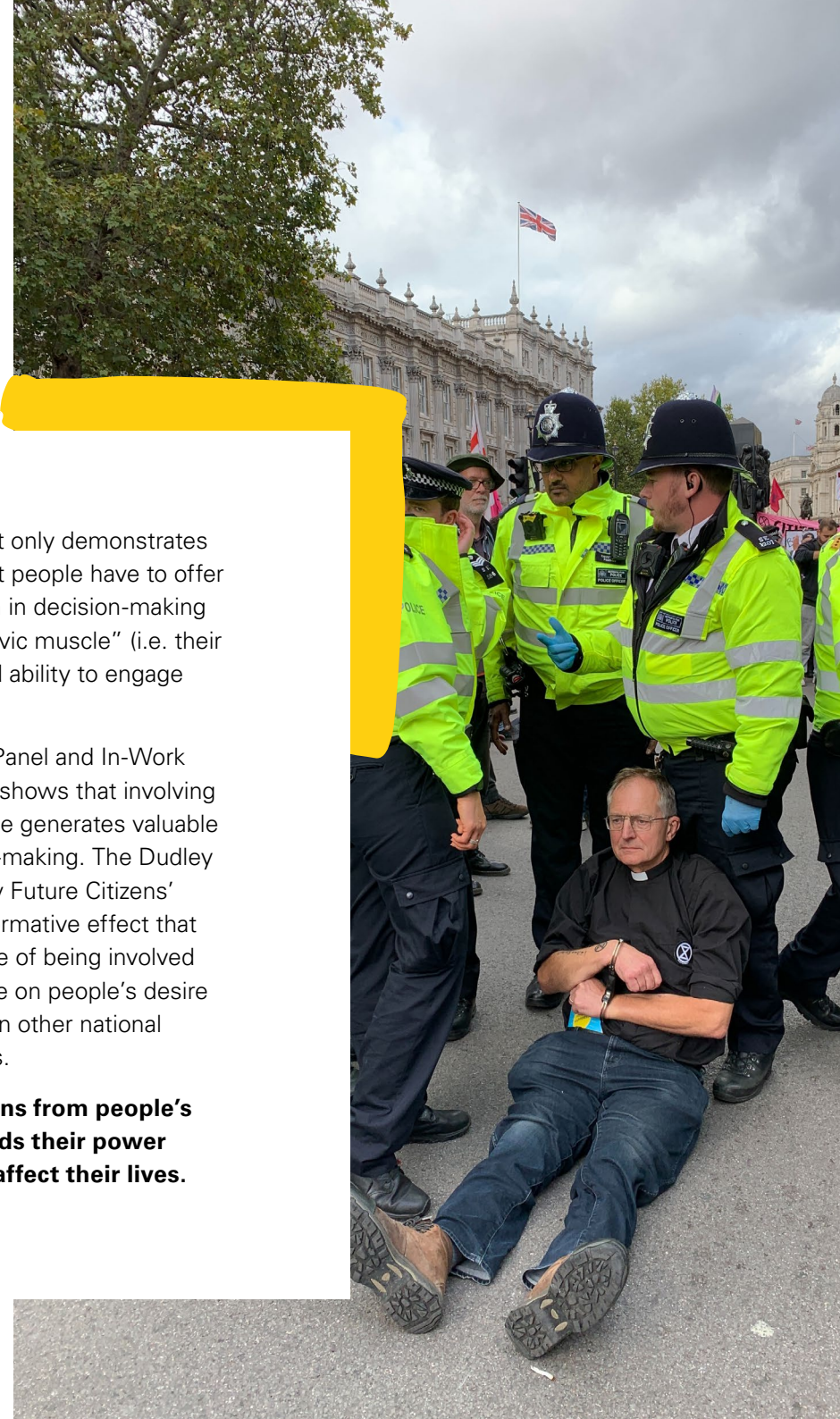
We believe that everyone should be able to influence the decisions that affect their lives. Sometimes this is about ensuring a diverse group of the public can input into decision-making. Other times, it is about people with particular knowledge and lived experience being able to shape decisions that impact on them.

Our work gives people the confidence and power to influence the decisions that affect their lives, including on building safety, in-work poverty and the future of local town centres.

Our work in these areas not only demonstrates the wisdom and insight that people have to offer but also that involving them in decision-making can help build their own “civic muscle” (i.e. their confidence, willingness and ability to engage with democracy).

The Residents’ Reference Panel and In-Work Poverty co-design process shows that involving people with lived experience generates valuable insights for effective policy-making. The Dudley People’s Panel and Romsey Future Citizens’ Assembly show the transformative effect that having a positive experience of being involved in decision-making can have on people’s desire and ability to get involved on other national and local community issues.

A vibrant democracy learns from people’s lived experience and builds their power to shape the issues that affect their lives.



“[P]ARTICIPATION IN THE CITIZENS’ ASSEMBLIES HAD A POSITIVE EFFECT ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE ASSEMBLY PARTICIPANTS. FOR PARTICIPANTS, THE EXPERIENCE PROVIDED THEM WITH GREATER AWARENESS OF THEIR COUNCIL’S AIMS AND WORK, AND THERE WERE EARLY SIGNS THAT PARTICIPATION HAD INCREASED THEIR SENSE OF PERSONAL EFFICACY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL. IT HAD SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THEIR STATED DESIRE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN OTHER ASPECTS OF LOCAL DECISION MAKING.”

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE INNOVATION IN DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME⁷





BUILDING SAFETY

PROJECT: RESIDENTS' REFERENCE PANEL

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) asked Dame Judith Hackitt to carry out an independent review of building regulations and fire safety. It concluded that the regulatory system was not fit for purpose for a number of reasons, including residents often finding it very difficult to engage with those responsible for the safety of their homes or to hold them to account when things go wrong.

The Residents' Reference Panel was commissioned by MHCLG to strengthen residents' voice within the policy making process by hearing from the experiences, priorities and perspectives of residents living in high rise buildings. It was designed to act as a sounding board for policy development. We designed and ran four panel meetings between October 2018 and July 2019, which included residents with a range of experience of living in high rise buildings and policy officials from MHCLG.

"It feels like I've been contributing back to society by being part of this."

Residents Reference Panel Member

The panel's recommendations fed into the government's June 2019 consultation on the future of building safety regulation, and the Department published its response to the consultation in April 2020. In particular, the panel's recommendations helped to shape the role of the new Building Safety Regulator.

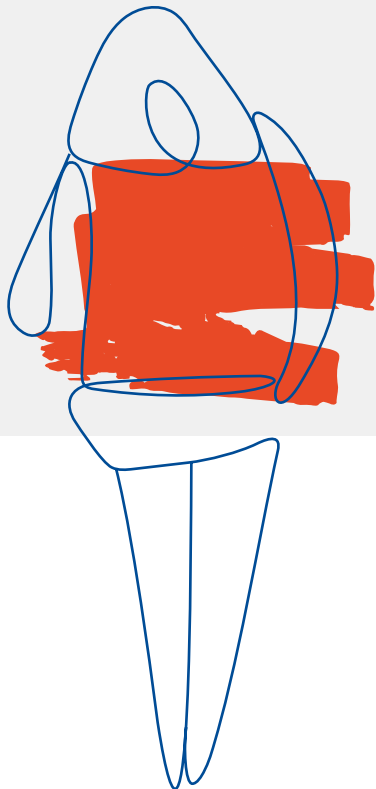
"It was excellent to participate in. To have people share their thoughts and to be heard for something that matters and can really start a change."

Residents Reference Panel Member

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-residents-help-shape-building-safety-policy

IN-WORK POVERTY



PROJECT: IN-WORK POVERTY CO-DESIGN PROCESS

Before the pandemic, the labour market had seen record employment rates, yet rising levels of working families living in poverty. During the year, we continued our work with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and a group of individuals experiencing in-work poverty to co-design solutions to the issue of in-work poverty.

Over the course of 2019/20 we delivered a number of workshops to explore lived experience of the issue, identify and prioritise key issues and are now co-designing advocacy plans for the new year.

Made up of people with lived experience of in-work poverty and staff from JRF, the core group worked together over numerous workshops, in-person and online, throughout the year to share expertise and explore solutions to the issue from different angles.

The main advocacy work will be completed in 2021, and will be co-designed by the core group and an Advisory Group of key stakeholders.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/research/how-can-lived-experience-help-co-design-solutions-work-poverty



FUTURE OF TOWN CENTRES

PROJECT: DUDLEY PEOPLE'S PANEL

As part of its 'Forging a Future for All' vision, Dudley Council brought together 50 residents, selected by a civic lottery, from around the local area in November 2019 to form a citizens' assembly called the Dudley People's Panel.



The citizens' assembly was asked to give recommendations to the council in response to the question: "What can communities and the council do together to make Dudley and Brierley Hill town centres places that are vibrant, welcoming and somewhere we are proud of?"

"I think I have gained the ability to actually take time to look and explore what is happening locally."

Citizens' Assembly Member

The council has said that the recommendations will play a vital role in informing decision-makers about residents' opinions on the challenges and solutions facing Dudley and Brierley Hill town centres.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/what-should-future-dudley-and-brierley-hill-look



PROJECT:

ROMSEY FUTURE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

The Romsey Future Citizens' Assembly was formed to discuss the future of Romsey's town centre. It brought together 42 residents – broadly reflecting the population of Romsey and the surrounding parishes – over two weekends in November 2019 to develop recommendations for Test Valley Borough Council and its master planners.

"Taking part in it, particularly at a time when national politics was so fraught, and there was such a feeling of disenfranchisement, that to take part in local democracy that's really deliberative and think this is what it should be like, get involved and make a difference."

Citizens' Assembly member

The recommendations of the citizens' assembly helped to inform the development of the Romsey Master Plan, which was unveiled in August 2020. Both were presented to the full council in September 2020, with the council both approving the Masterplan and endorsing the recommendations of the citizens' assembly. Council Members also resolved that, in addition to the Masterplan, the citizens' assembly recommendations should be used to shape the next Local Plan and refresh of the Romsey Future Vision.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/what-should-future-romsey-town-centre-look

RESOURCES

CHECK OUT OUR FREE RESOURCES ON PARTICIPATION AND DELIBERATION!

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Our Knowledge Base has lots of free guidance on planning participatory processes, getting started with digital engagement, evaluating the impact of participation, how and why people participate and much more.

[ACCESS IT](#)

METHODS LIBRARY

Our methods library outlines over 50 different participatory and deliberative methods, including what they are, when they should be used, their strengths and weaknesses and what they cost.

[ACCESS IT](#)

DIGITAL TOOLS DATABASE

Our digital tools database includes a range of online tools to enable participation, collaboration and discussion.

[ACCESS IT](#)



05 UPDATING OUR INSTITUTIONS

The public continue to support democracy as a way of governing, but a majority are dissatisfied with the way democracy works.⁸ We need to update our institutions so that they support a healthy, vibrant democracy.

Our case studies from previous chapters demonstrate the enormous potential of democratic innovation to tackle complex issues, bring people together and build people power. Individually and collectively, they show that openness, participation and deliberation can not only enhance effective decision-making but make our democracy work better for the public and decision-makers alike.

However, to achieve meaningful long-term change, these innovations must become part of the fabric of our democracy. We have made good progress in revitalising, refreshing and reforming our democratic institutions and public services and the way they function so they are fitter for the future.



BUILDING CAPACITY



PROJECT: ENABLING PEER LEARNING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As part of the government's Innovation in Democracy Programme (IiDP), we partnered the RSA (The Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce) to establish a peer-to-peer network for local authorities across the UK to learn about participatory and deliberative democracy and share ideas and best practice with each other.

The network met twice during the course of the programme, including at the Innovating Local Democracy Conference in Manchester in January 2020. Since the end of the government programme, Involve has continued to convene this valuable network, meeting online to explore topical issues like how participation and deliberation can be used in the Covid-19 response and recovery.

FIND OUT MORE:

[www.involve.org.uk/get-involved/
local-authority-peer-learning-network](http://www.involve.org.uk/get-involved/local-authority-peer-learning-network)



PROJECT:
**FACILITATING LEARNING
 AMONG PRACTITIONERS**

Following the dramatic rise in interest in citizens’ assemblies during 2019, we began convening a network of UK practitioners with the aim of building capacity and understanding of the practice of deliberative democracy, as well as facilitating peer-to-peer support and collaboration amongst this growing community.

Supported by a grant from the Network for Social Change, the practitioners group has developed best practice standards and principles for the effective delivery of citizens’ assemblies. Following the Covid-19 lockdown, the group has continued to meet online to discuss a range of topical themes, including new online approaches for deliberation.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/get-involved/deliberative-democracy-practitioners-network

PROJECT:
**SUPPORTING CIVIC INNOVATION
 IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

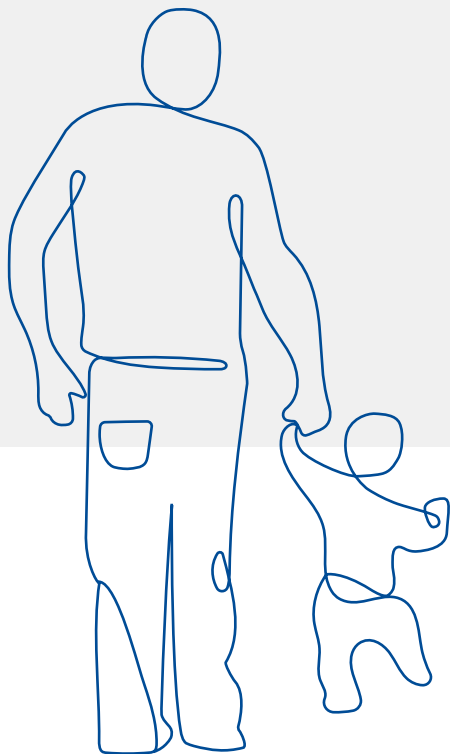
We have been supporting the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland in the initial stages of their new Civic Innovation Programme, which offers grant funding, training, mentoring and other support to civil society organisations with new ideas for involving the public in decision-making.

Following the first stage of the programme, 14 teams were awarded seed funding to develop civic innovation ‘prototypes’. Our role has been to develop an online knowledge-base of methods and case studies to support the teams’ learning, to provide feedback to each of the teams as they developed their ideas, and to provide mentoring.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/guidance/how-can-new-civic-initiatives-put-people-centre-decision-making

EMBEDDING CHANGE



PROJECT: EMBEDDING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The agreement to restore Stormont in January 2020, after three years of deadlock, contained a commitment to enhance civic engagement and, notably, an annual institutionalised citizens' assembly.

Following on from the first Citizens' Assembly for Northern Ireland that Involve ran in 2018, our work continues to advocate greater civic innovation and more participatory government in Northern Ireland. Since the restoration of the Assembly, we have been engaging with the Executive on how best to deliver on these commitments.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/opinion/new-decade-new-approach...-new-hope-democracy-northern-ireland-0

PROJECT: DEVELOPING THE SCOTTISH APPROACH TO PARTICIPATION

Since 2018, we have been working with the Scottish Government to develop a new Participation Framework for Scotland. This will explain why participation is vital to the Scottish approach to government, alongside a suite of practical tools to help civil servants explore and initiate greater civic participation within their own policy areas, for different purposes, and at different points in time.

During 2019/20, over 100 civil servants were involved in workshops to learn about the Framework and beta-test aspects of the guidance under development. Civil society groups contributed key guidance concerning inclusion and access. We have also provided advice to more than 10 policy teams within government planning and/or commissioning participatory engagement activities, and work has begun on a business case to support the establishment of a dedicated participation support team within government to improve the way participatory activities are delivered in the future.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/guidance/how-should-public-servants-involve-public-their-work

DEVELOPING NEW INSTITUTIONS



PROJECT: DESIGNING A CITIZENS' CONVENTION ON UK DEMOCRACY

Democratic institutions in the UK and around the world are struggling to respond to profound changes in our society. In return, the public are feeling disconnected from decision-making and cynical about the values and motivations of decision-makers.

The Citizens' Convention on UK Democracy aims to initiate a UK-wide conversation on the state of our democracy and governing institutions. In partnership with the Democratic Society and the Citizens' Convention on UK Democracy, we developed a Citizens' Convention User Manual outlining the design and process for a two year citizens' convention that would harness a mixture of participatory and deliberative methods to support a national conversation.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/guidance/how-can-citizens-drive-reform-our-democracy

PROJECT: DEVELOPING A PUBLIC OBSERVATORY ON ALGORITHMS

Data analytics and algorithms are increasingly being used by public services in the UK to categorise citizens, allocate services and predict behaviour. The Just Algorithms project aims to strengthen governance around their use.

Following a review of existing work on algorithms and public observatories by the University of East Anglia, we have convened stakeholders from inside and outside government to explore establishing an observatory of public perspectives and views about the use of algorithms and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the delivery of public services.

The research has looked at the extent to which the civil society community is already engaging with the issue, and the existing literature on how well such observatories work. The project, which will be reporting its findings later in 2020, follows on from work that we have been doing for some time now on the use of data.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/research/how-can-we-improve-governance-algorithms-used-deliver-public-services

06 FUNDING AND FINANCES

THIS CHAPTER SUMMARISES OUR FUNDING AND FINANCES FOR 2019/20. IT COMPLEMENTS THE DETAILED BREAKDOWN IN OUR STATUTORY TRUSTEES' REPORT AND AUDITED ACCOUNTS, WHICH YOU CAN FIND ON OUR WEBSITE.

INCOME

We raised a total of £1.86 million in 2019/20, a significant increase of income over the previous year.

Our funding is a mix of consultancy and grant income, with a relatively small amount of donation, training and investment income.

Total income in 2019/20: £1,862,914.

SPENDING

We spent a total of £1,705,798 in 2019/20. Breakdown:

- **Project expenditure:** £1,176,451
- **Staff costs:** £439,303
- **Overheads** (rents, ICT, governance, audit, etc.): £90,044

TOTAL INCOME

2018/19
£1.063 MILLION

2019/20
£1.862 MILLION

CONSULTANCY

£1,148,937

DONATIONS

£6,135

GRANTS

£705,494

INVESTMENTS

£248

TRAINING

£2,100

FUNDS AT THE START / END OF THE YEAR

We started 2019/20 with a £241,016 surplus of funds brought forward from the previous financial year (£96,015 in restricted funds and £145,001 in unrestricted funds).

We ended 2019/20 with a significant increase in our carried-forward funds: a total of £398,132 was carried forward into 2020/21 (£86,534 in restricted funds and £311,598 in unrestricted funds).

WHO FUNDED US

We believe in being transparent about the sources of our funding and purposes behind it. The following table sets out all of the funding we received during 2019/20 over £5,000.

CONSULTANCY AND TRAINING INCOME IN 2019/20

FUNDER	AMOUNT	WHAT THE FUNDING WAS FOR
UK Research and Innovation	£219,218	Sciencewise
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	£130,453	Innovation in Democracy programme
House of Commons	£126,667	Climate Assembly UK
Welsh Parliament – Senedd Cymru	£70,772	Citizens' Assembly of Wales
London Borough of Redbridge	£67,671	Community engagement in Gants Hill and Seven Kings
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	£67,489	In-work poverty co-design process
The Scottish Government	£65,633	Citizens' Assembly of Scotland
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	£57,900	Citizens' Assembly on Air Quality
Transport for Greater Manchester	£44,623	Citizens' conversation on driverless vehicles
Northern Gas Network	£40,692	Northern Gas Network citizens' panel
London Borough of Waltham Forest / The Democratic Society	£39,367	Waltham Forest Citizens' Assembly on Hate Crime
Home Office	£35,393	Home Office Open Space Coordinator
The Scottish Government	£22,917	Participation Framework
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	£21,657	Residents' Reference Panel
Carnegie UK Trust	£21,299	Citizen engagement strand of the Scottish Government's Digital Ethics programme
DEFRA / National Centre for Social Research	£19,977	DEFRA Environment Plan
University of Liverpool	£19,804	Initiative for Civic Space, Northern Ireland
London Borough of Camden	£12,650	Camden's Climate Assembly
Scottish Government / The Democratic Society	£12,034	Citizens' Assembly of Scotland
London Borough of Camden	£10,000	Distributed dialogue on data, Camden
Government of Jersey / New Citizenship Project	£9,863	Citizen engagement projects for the Government of Jersey
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	£6,466	Civic Innovation subject expert
The Scottish Government	£5,450	Distributed dialogue on data, North Lanarkshire
University of East Anglia	£5,000	Artificial Intelligence stakeholder platform

GRANT AND DONATIONS INCOME IN 2019/20

FUNDER	AMOUNT	WHAT THE FUNDING WAS FOR
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	£62,500	Unrestricted grant
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	£230,000	Innovation in Democracy programme
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	£200,000	Climate Assembly UK
European Climate Foundation	£160,000	Climate Assembly UK
Wellcome	£45,270	Distributed dialogue on data
Network for Social Change	£7,724	Practitioners Network





07 LOOKING AHEAD

Democracy is at a crossroads. Populists are increasing seizing upon discontent with the current system to win support for their regressive agendas. This context is an urgent and immediate threat to liberal democracy. But it also creates an opportunity and imperative for change.

There is an urgent need to nurture the emerging green shoots of interest in ways of strengthening our democracy, to make it fitter for the future, through greater openness, participation and deliberation.

OUR FUTURE PLANS

Although we have made good progress towards increasing and improving the practice of open, participatory and deliberative democracy, we know that more work needs to be done to translate this positive progress into long term sustainable changes to our democratic norms and institutions.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING TO ACHIEVE

During 2019/20 we refreshed our strategy to further focus our work. We identified six new criteria for success to guide our work in creating healthier more vibrant democracies and achieving long term political and democratic reform:

- 1 Democratic norms** – Participation and deliberation are recognised as essential features for a healthy modern democracy by the public, society and decision-makers;
- 2 Political support** – People in positions of power and influence across society and the political spectrum understand and actively support the use of participatory and deliberative decision-making;
- 3 Frequent use** – There is frequent use of participatory and deliberative processes supported by the right resources (people, budgets) both inside and outside of political institutions;
- 4 Evidence and practice** – There is an accessible and well-communicated body of evidence and practice that demonstrates the impact of our vision and how to achieve it;
- 5 Clear standards** – There are clear principles and standards that support good practice in delivering and embedding participatory and deliberative processes, which are widely understood and followed;
- 6 Democratic innovations** – There is continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy and related practice.

HOW WE PLAN TO ACHIEVE IT

In order to achieve this, we're refocusing what we do around three core areas:

- 1 Making the case** – demonstrating why participation and deliberation are essential features for a healthy modern democracy, and ensuring that those in positions of power and influence understand and support their use;
- 2 Embedding good practice** – building the capacity of public servants and practitioners, and developing the body of evidence, principles and standards that support participatory and deliberative practice; and,
- 3 Pioneering innovation and practice** – encouraging widespread uptake of participatory and deliberative processes, and promoting continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy.

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

The current context of the Covid-19 pandemic makes involving people in decision-making more challenging, but all the more important. Here are a few things to look out for from us over the next year.

COVID-19 AND DEMOCRACY

Involving people in the Covid-19 response and recovery is vital. We'll be publishing think pieces from a range of different perspectives on participation, democracy and Covid, as well as supporting public authorities with advice and guidance on how to engage citizens in the current context.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/guidance/what-role-should-public-play-covid-19-recovery

ONLINE DELIBERATION

The Covid-19 pandemic has required rapid innovation in online approaches to participation and deliberation. Involve has led the way, smoothly transitioning Climate Assembly UK online and we have since developed a number of successful fully online deliberative processes. We are not just learning from our own experiences but also from those of others, and are convening meetings of our practitioner and local government networks to support peer learning and advance best practice.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/news/practitioners-network-session-pandemic-practice-progress

CLIMATE

We believe that the public has a vital role to play in addressing the climate emergency. The policy decisions that need to be taken will impact on everyone's lives, and therefore people must be involved in helping to shape them. The conclusion of Climate Assembly UK has only strengthened this conviction and during 2020/21 we will continue our work to involve people in tackling the climate emergency. We are already helping deliver Scotland's Climate Assembly, which will meet online between November 2020 and March 2021.

FIND OUT MORE

www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-should-scotland-tackle-climate-change



LOOKING AHEAD

GET INVOLVED!

We're committed to transforming how our democracy works, but we know we can't do it alone.

Here are some ways that you can get involved:

JOIN ONE OF OUR NETWORKS;

SIGN-UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER;

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA;

DONATE TO US;

CONTACT US IF YOU NEED ADVICE, WANT SUPPORT OR ARE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE.



ENDNOTES

- 1 Sanjay Pradhan, Open Government Partnership <https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/opinion/building-more-vibrant-and-inclusive-democracies-how-meet-challenges-covid-19>
- 2 YouGov (2020) Is Western Democracy in Crisis? (Fieldwork Dates: 11th October – 14th December 2019) <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/international/articles-reports/2020/02/02/western-democracy-crisis>
- 3 OECD (2020) Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the deliberative wave <https://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-citizen-participation-and-new-democratic-institutions-339306da-en.htm>
- 4 Involve (2020) Citizens' Assembly Tracker <https://www.involve.org.uk/citizens-assembly-tracker>
- 5 The Citizens' Panel was funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs as a joint project between the Initiative for Civic Space, the Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Liverpool and the Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice at Queen's University, Belfast
- 6 Hansard Society (2019) Audit of Political Engagement 16 <https://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/publications/reports/audit-of-political-engagement-16>
- 7 Renaisi (2020) Innovation in Democracy Programme Evaluation <https://renaisi.com/2020/06/29/innovation-in-democracy-evaluation-report/>
- 8 YouGov (2020) Is Western Democracy in Crisis? (Fieldwork Dates: 11th October – 14th December 2019) <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/international/articles-reports/2020/02/02/western-democracy-crisis>