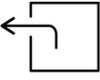


# North Woolwich Heat & Energy Forum

Final report July 2025





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# With thanks

With thanks to the 22 forum members who contributed their time, energy and ideas:

Aina	Gabriele	Richard
Alberto	Iris	Robyn
Arindam	Leo	Samuel
Daniel	Liz	Ste
Deborah	Muhammed	ffi
Dee	Nahid	Tabish
Diane	Oleksandr	Wenbing
Elina		Wenqing



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# Executive Summary

The North Woolwich Heat and Energy Forum brought together 22 residents over five sessions. Their role was to direct, shape, and influence Newham Council's plans for North Woolwich, focusing on ways to create a greener and fairer energy system.

The forum answered the question:

***How can we work together to make sure North Woolwich has heat and energy that is reliable, affordable and green?"***

The forum flipped the usual approach of resident engagement: instead of reacting to plans, residents started with what matters to them, exploring their community's strengths and challenges around heat and energy.

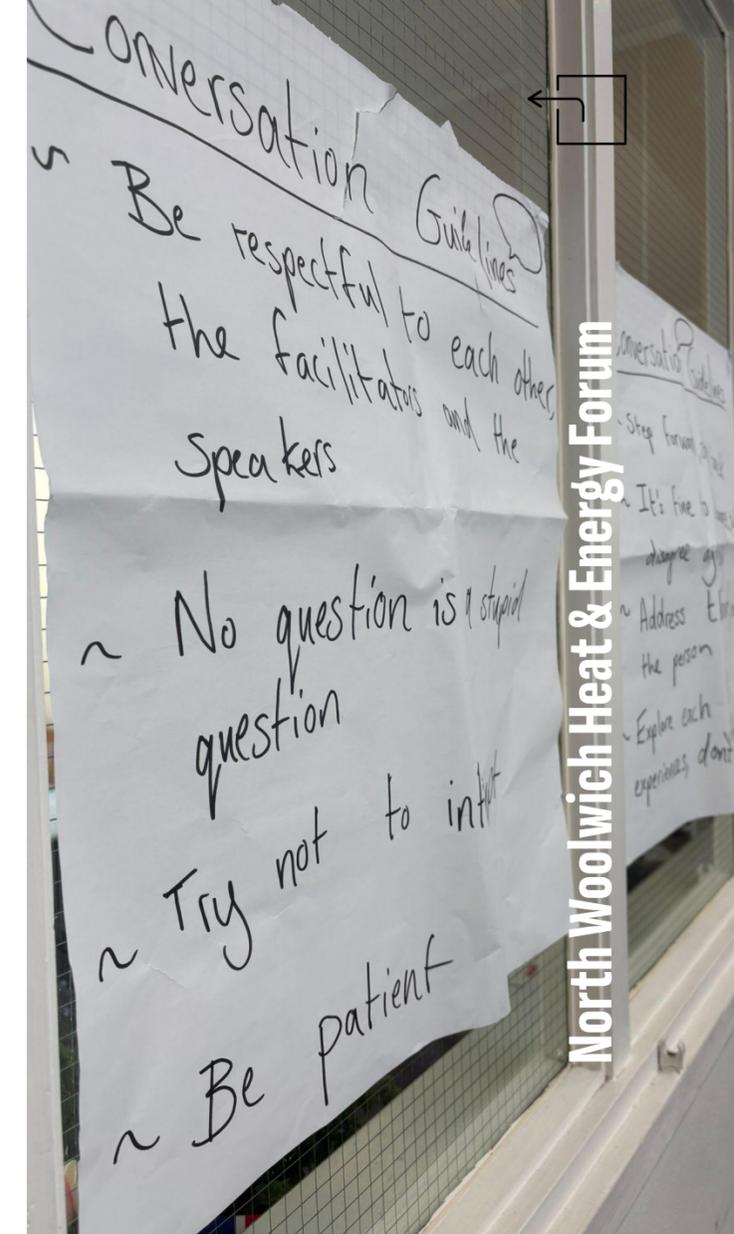
They learned from subject matter experts, explored a range of energy options, and envisioned ways to create a better future.

This report shares the forum's work, including their main recommendations:

- A map of what makes North Woolwich special
- A vision for the future
- Calls to action for how to get there

These ideas will now go to Newham Council. We will also share them with local groups like businesses, universities, and community organisations. The forum's input will inform Newham Council's vision, ambition and workstream for place-based green energy projects in North Woolwich, as part of their [Just Transition Plan](#).

You can see the vision and calls to action on the next two pages.



“

## **In our future vision, North Woolwich is an exemplar of a low carbon neighbourhood.**

- Every home is fit for purpose: properly insulated and energy efficient at a set standard, with modern and affordable equipment like solar panels and smart meters. Grants are available to those who need it.
- The local community actively benefits from a hyper localised renewable energy production, and waste goes to energy, not landfill.
- Everyone is able to heat and power their homes with cheaper electricity, and financial and technical help is easily available to those who need it.
- The air is cleaner and healthier.
- There are community owned and maintained green spaces that use brown (abandoned) land, and which have more trees, areas for workouts, and solar lighting.

- There is a tree planting programme and more trees where they are most needed.
- The foot tunnel is constantly open and the ferry remains free, convenient and runs from renewable energy. It is better monitored, cleaner and has more security and a working lift.
- Managing energy consumption is simple, with a single central system in each home.
- Sports facilities are powered by (non-residential) renewable energy and community owned.
- Heat is harvested from the ground, from the air and from waste.
- There is greener and affordable transport, with reduced high emission vehicles, with more carpooling and dedicated cycle routes.
- Building materials are carefully considered.
- Secure WiFi is free in community spaces in every neighbourhood.
- The power of the river is an energy source. The riverside is an attractive place, like in the Isle of Dogs, and a space that improves the community. River safety is improved to avoid accidents.

”

*(in order of priority from a vote)* <sup>6</sup>



# We are calling for...

*(in order of support from a vote)*

1. **a focus on increasing solar panels in the area**
2. **spreading awareness, support and investment in community facilities to support heat and energy initiatives in North Woolwich**
3. **supporting home energy use reduction by co-funding the costs of installation**
4. **increased involvement in the community from London City Airport**
5. **Tate & Lyle to be a centre for community and a source of heat energy for the local residents**
6. **stronger cross sector relationships (e.g. between the private sector and local community groups) to raise funds and encourage economic investment in North Woolwich**
7. **an education programme to support people to reduce their energy use**
8. **local corporates to use their corporate social responsibility in the community**
9. **the council to incentivise landlords to make homes more energy efficient**
10. **more regular checks on the state of rental stock to make sure it is compliant and energy efficient (for all rented stock, social and private)**



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# Background



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# Project origins

## Why heat and energy?

Heat and energy power our daily lives, but where we get them from and how we use them has a major impact on climate change. They are also not freely available, and bills are continuing to rise and more households are living in fuel poverty. It's communities already facing inequalities who are impacted more by both climate change and increased living costs.

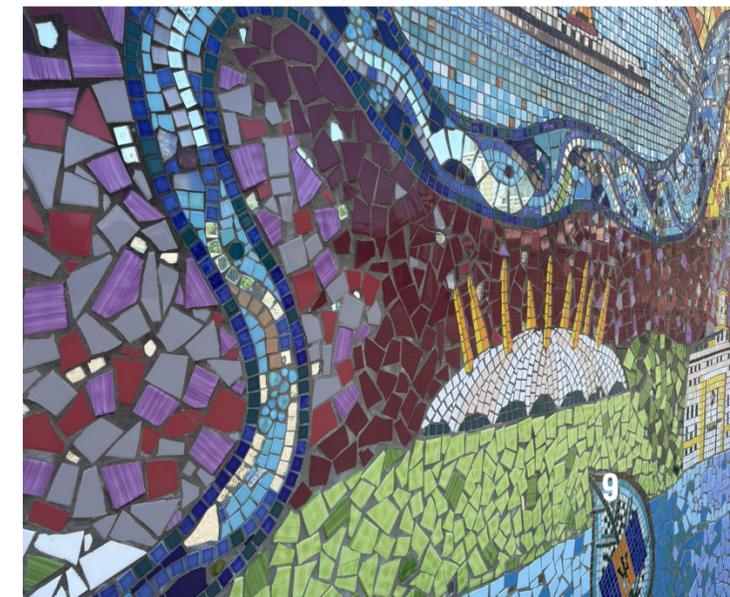
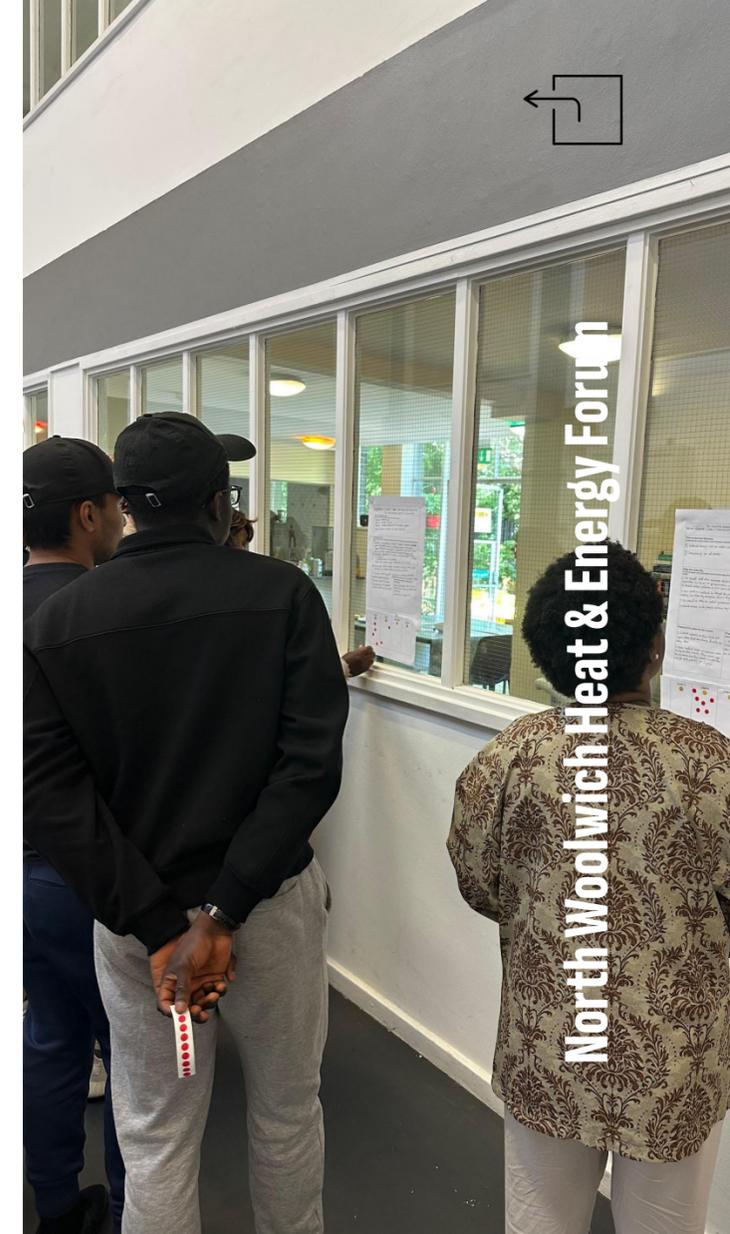
Newham Council has already been working with the public on their Just Transition Plan for a fairer, greener, healthier Newham.

One of the six goals in that plan is that “Our energy system is resilient, equitable and not dependent on fossil fuels.”

## Why North Woolwich?

North Woolwich has a rich heritage and sense of community, situated right next to the Thames, with a relatively high rate of multiple deprivation. There is lots of new development in the area which creates a unique opportunity to integrate sustainable heat and energy projects like heat networks from the ground up. This includes the council's Net Zero Neighbourhoods programme, which is retrofitting and renovating housing to be lower carbon.

This made North Woolwich the perfect place for engaging local residents on heat and energy.



# Project origins

## Why citizen visioning?

Net Zero cannot be achieved without public support, but often consultation fails to engage people meaningfully. Instead of selling climate action to people, citizen visioning met them where they already are.

It began with what matters most to forum members - their experience, communities and what makes North Woolwich unique. They then stepped back to look at the bigger picture, learnt about options for a better energy system, and used their knowledge to imagine how we could heat and power our lives differently in the future.

## What did the forum set out to do?

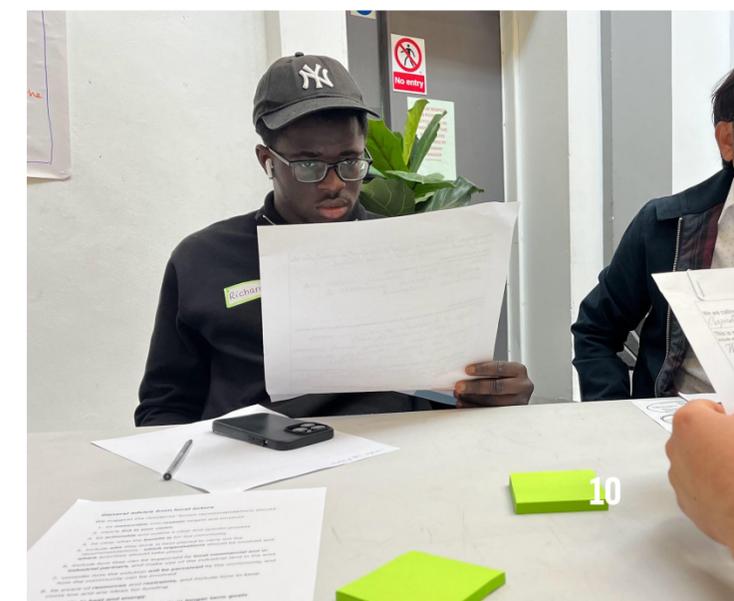
The forum brought together members to answer:

*How can we work together to make sure North Woolwich has heat and energy that is reliable, affordable and green?*

Together, they created

- A map of what makes North Woolwich special
- A vision for the future
- Calls to action for how to get there

This report shares what they recommended.



---

## The question

How can we work together to make sure North Woolwich has heat and energy that is reliable, affordable and green?





# Overview of Citizen Visioning

## Learning

Forum members learnt about the topic from a range of speakers, including those they requested themselves. Topics covered an introduction to climate change, local impacts and solutions. They did futures exercises to encourage critical thinking, creativity and thinking about the future implications of decisions made today.

## Deliberation

Forum members discussed the information they had heard and developed a long list of ideas, weighing up potential ways forward. The council and local actors reviewed these and provided feedback.

## Decision making

Forum members worked together to review feedback from the council and local actors. They then agreed on:

- A map of what makes North Woolwich special
- A vision for the future
- Calls to action for how to get there



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# What we did

Forum members met five times over two months to develop their vision and calls to action. Sessions included a mix of individual reflection, group discussion, presentations and question and answer sessions.

## Meeting One: Building the foundation

### Getting started

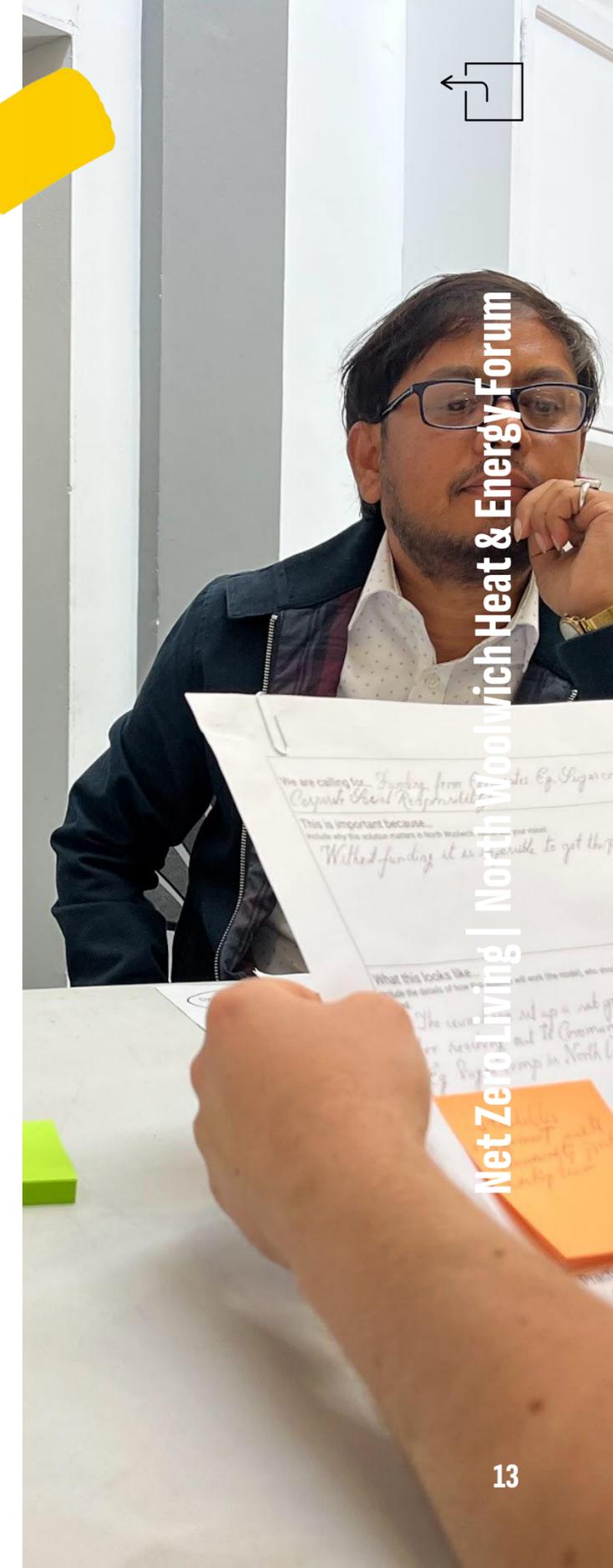
Forum members began by getting to know one another and how the forum would work. Collectively, they agreed conversation guidelines for how they wanted to work together. Jacob Heitland, Director of Climate Action at Newham Council, spoke about why the forum mattered and how the council would respond to their work.

### Exploring North Woolwich

They explored what makes North Woolwich special, reflecting on places that matter to them and drawing inspiration from a mosaic outside St John's Community Centre, that captures features like the riverside, docks and local landmarks. Through interactive exercises, members explored how the area has changed over time. In a futures thinking exercise, they deliberated on the biggest challenges for the next 25 years alongside current challenges today (see [Appendix 1](#)).

### Creating a vision

After learning about current energy systems, they began developing ideas for a vision statement based on what makes the area special and how it is changing.



Net Zero Living | North Woolwich Heat & Energy Forum



# What we did

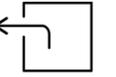
## Visit to see retrofit in action

Between the first and second session there was an optional visit for forum members to IZ Energy warehouse in Barking, to see household energy efficiency and production technology in action.

Five forum members attended this visit. They were taken on a tour of the warehouse and saw examples of different types of insulation, solar panels, storage heaters, and a heat pump.

After the visit, they discussed what they felt were the most important points to take back to the rest of the forum.

These reflections were included as handouts at future forum sessions, and also used when Tony Beer from IZ Energy came as a speaker to the forum.



# What we did

## Meeting Two and Three: Challenges and solutions

### Learning about big issues

Over two evenings, forum members explored the challenges and solutions. Subject matter experts presented on big issues – like climate change, energy inequality and what these mean for North Woolwich. Members also explored who has the power to change things (see [Appendix 2](#)).

### Problem solving for different housing types

They split into groups to dive deep into issues and potential solutions for different housing types (homeowners, private rentals, social housing). Local experts shared information about solutions, from heat pumps to community energy. By the end, the group had created a long list of ideas for solutions to address the identified problems.

### Thank you to all our speakers\*:

- Jacob Heitland, Newham Council
- Rachel Brain, Repowering
- Andrew Kemp, Newham Council
- Ellie Radcliffe, Carbon Co-op
- Mike Medas, University of East London
- Naomi Shraer, Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Robert Prewett, author of Your Home Retrofit
- Fiona Brenner, Living Places
- Gee Sinha, Respace
- Joy Canter, One Newham
- Kristina Roszynski, Green SCIES
- Tony Beer, IZ Energy
- Ruth Chiat, Community Energy Newham
- Rokhsana Fiaz, Mayor of Newham

*\*written in order of appearance*



# What we did

## Meeting Four: Prioritising ideas

**Finalising the vision:** The forum members began with finalising their vision and voting on it. You can see the votes from this in [Appendix 4](#).

**Futures thinking:** They then did a futures exercise to explore innovative and forward-looking ideas beyond the present.

**Shortlisting solutions:** Using criteria they developed together, members prioritised ideas down to ten key solutions (you see the criteria in [Appendix 5](#)). The longlist, and the votes for the final ten are in [Appendix 6](#). These draft solutions were then shared with local actors, involving key stakeholders from the Council, local businesses and subject experts, for feedback.

## Meeting Five: Final recommendations

**Refining the recommendations:** Forum members used feedback from local actors to improve their solutions in small groups, with peer feedback throughout.

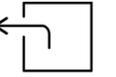
**Voting and prioritising:** To finish, members voted on their solutions and refined the community vision into a final, shorter version (see [Appendix 7](#) for the votes)

**Presenting to decision-makers:** To close forum, they presented their calls to action directly to the Mayor of Newham, and council officers.



North Woolwich Heat & Energy Forum





# Advisory Panel and Actor Group

## Advisory Panel

A group of experts with useful knowledge and experience guided the project from start to finish. They included community leaders, organisations and specialists in energy issues and housing. They ensured forum members got good, balanced information and that recommendations would be useful for decision-makers. Over three meetings, they helped choose speakers, topics to cover, and advised on engaging more people in North Woolwich.

## Actor Session

**Sharing Feedback:** Between meetings four and five, a wider group of local actors, including council officers, housing association staff, and other key players, reviewed the forum's top ten ideas.

**Shaping Solutions:** They shared what would work best and offered guidance to help forum members refine their final recommendations (see [Appendix 3](#)).

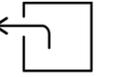
## Thank you to our advisory panel:

- Anthony Poole, Eon Energy
- Beth Day, Raft
- Cat Magill, Living Places
- Fraser Stewart, Regen
- Gee Sinha, Respace
- Joy-Caron Canter, One Newham
- Justine Biggs, Eon Energy
- Robert de Jong, UEL
- Ruth Chiat, Repowering
- Simon Wyke, GLA
- Stuart Connop, UEL
- Tim Peake, London Metropolitan University

---

# Who took part?





# Who took part?

We recruited 22 people to broadly reflect North Woolwich's population. We posted invitations to residential addresses across the whole area, and selected forum members from those signed up.

We gave members of the group a gift of thanks for taking part in all sessions, to make participation accessible to all and in recognition of their time. We provided translators and covered travel and care expenses.

The criteria were agreed with Newham Council.

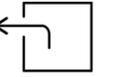
The tables on the next slides compare Newham's population with the final forum makeup.

## How were participants selected?

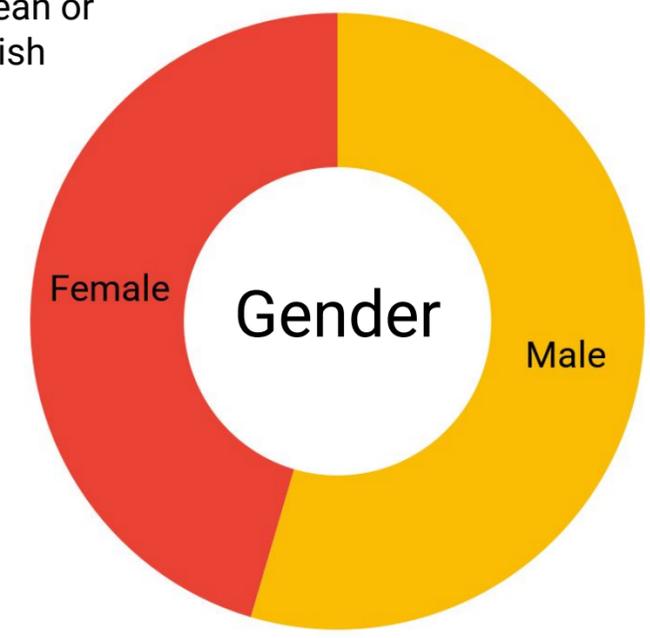
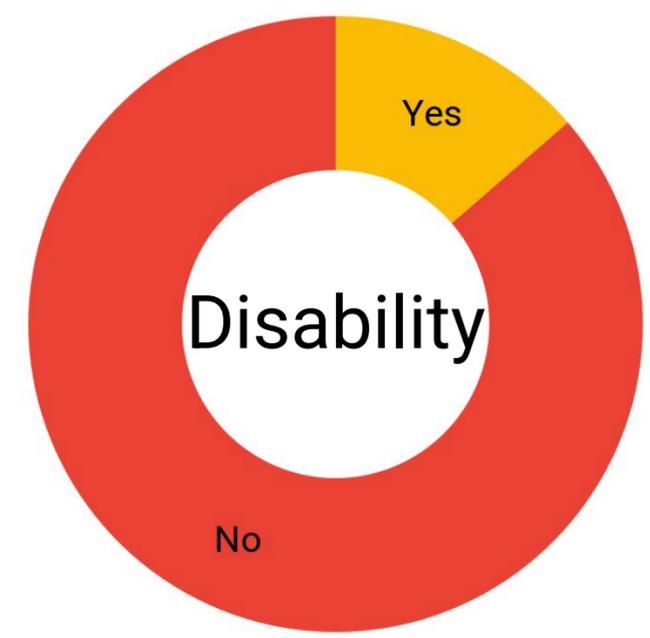
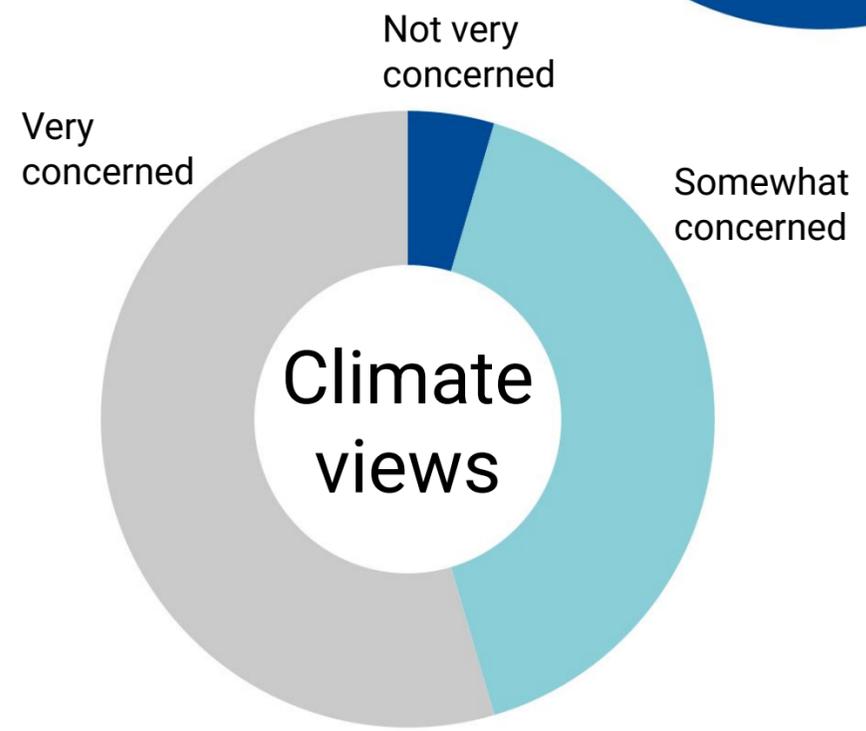
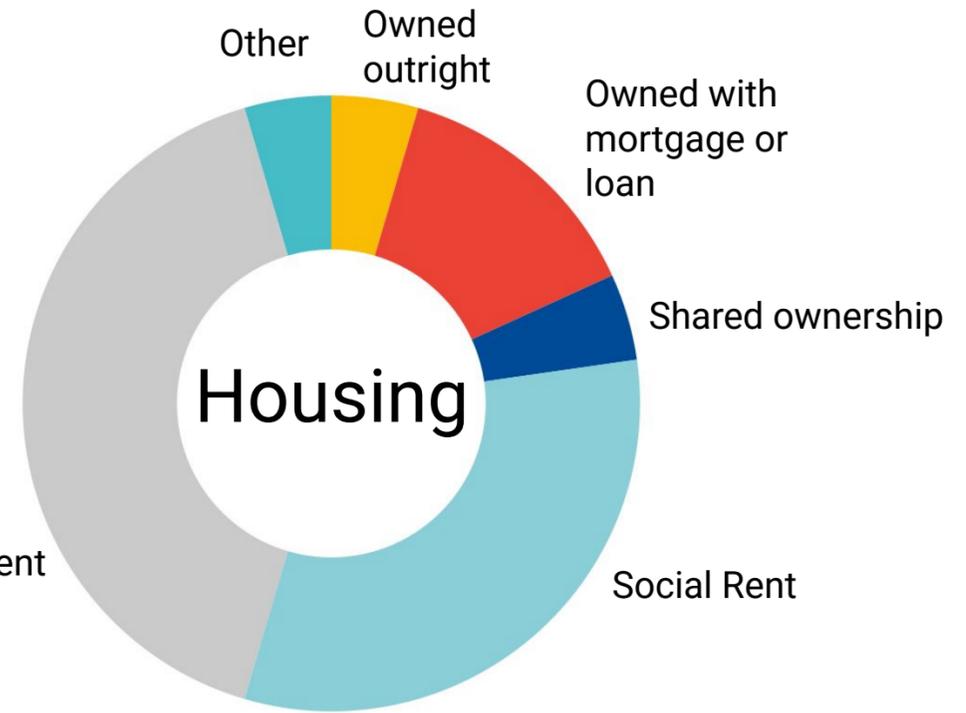
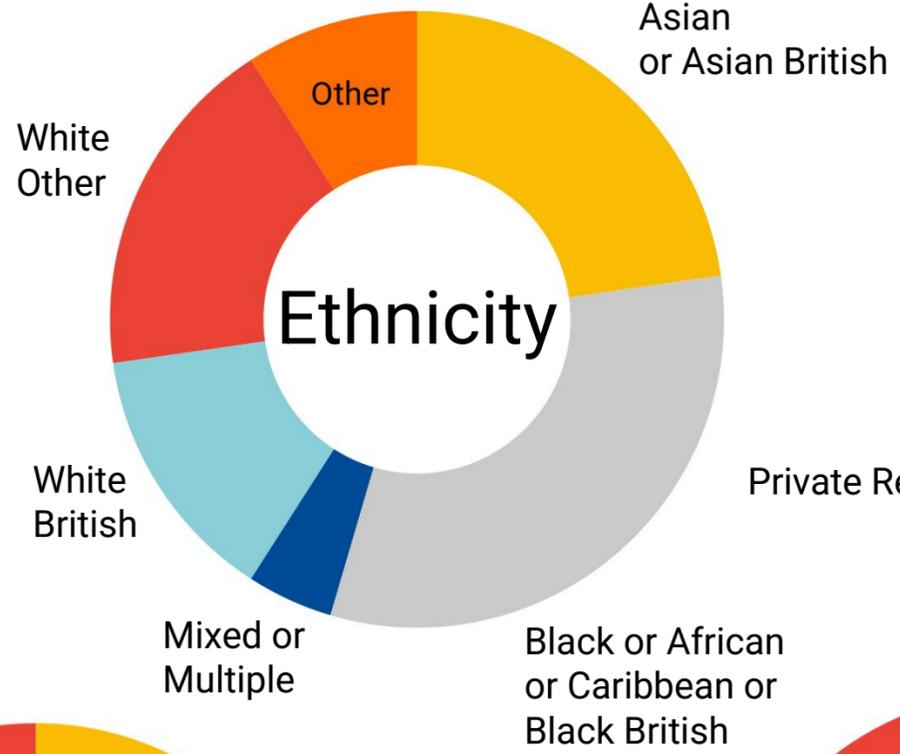
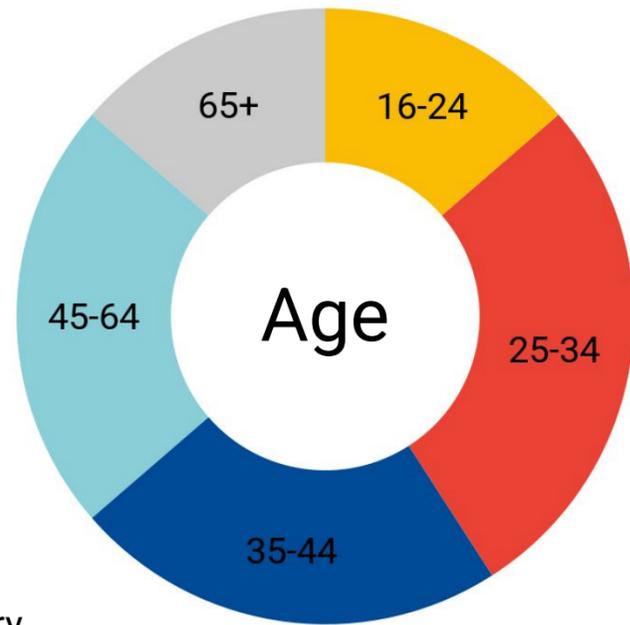
Our partners the Sortition Foundation selected forum members were selected using a type of civic lottery called sortition.

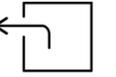
Residents completed a form to express their interest in taking part. From there, we removed personal details and selected a group using a computer program to be broadly reflective of the area in terms of their:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Views on Climate Change
- Type of housing tenure



# Make up of the group at a glance



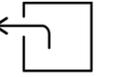


# Recruitment detail (continued)

Age	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
16-24	17%	3-4	3	14%
25-34	31%	6-7	6	27%
35-44	25%	5-6	5	23%
45-64	21%	4-5	5	23%
65+	6%	1-2	3	14%

Housing tenure	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
Owned outright	6%	1-2	1	5%
Owned with mortgage or loan	16%	2-3	3	14%
Shared ownership	4%	0-1	1	5%
Social Rent	34%	8-9	7	32%
Private rent	39%	8-9	9	41%
Other	0.4%	0-1	1	5%

Ethnicity	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
Asian or Asian British	22%	4-5	5	23%
Black or African or Caribbean or Black British	28%	6-7	7	32%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	7%	1-2	1	5%
White British	19%	4-5	3	14%
White Other	20%	4-5	4	18%
Other ethnic group	5%	1-2	2	9%



# Recruitment detail (continued)

Climate views*	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
Don't believe in climate change	0%	0-1	0	0%
Not at all concerned / other / don't know	0%	0-1	0	0%
Not very concerned	5%	1-2	1	5%
Somewhat concerned	40%	8-9	9	40%
Very concerned	55%	12-13	12	55%

Disability	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
Yes	11%	2-3	3	14%
No	89%	19-20	19	86%

Gender	Target %	Target #	Group #	Group %
Female	52%	11-12	10	45%
Male	48%	10-11	12	55%
Non-binary or other	0%	0-1	0	0%

\*Based on survey data from UEL



# The North Woolwich Heat & Energy Forum in numbers

**22**  
**participants**  
*took part, broadly  
reflective of the area  
across demographics*

**1**  
**vision**  
*deliberated on, agreed  
and written in participants' own  
words*

**10**  
**calls to action**  
*for reliable, green and  
affordable heat and energy,  
and written in participants'  
own words*

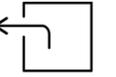
**375**  
**person hours**  
*of learning, conversations,  
deliberation and writing  
recommendations*

**14**  
**speakers**  
*provided information  
and evidence*

---

# Recommendations





# The citizens' forum created...

## A vision

The vision sets out an idea of what the future of North Woolwich could be.

Forum members began developing it in the first session from what makes North Woolwich special. Throughout the meetings, they amended and added to the vision.

## What makes North Woolwich Special

The map sets out what makes North Woolwich special.

The forum reflected on the area, what has changed and their favourite places. These are compiled into a map.

## 10 calls to action

The calls to action highlight the steps the council and local community can take to create real, positive change.'

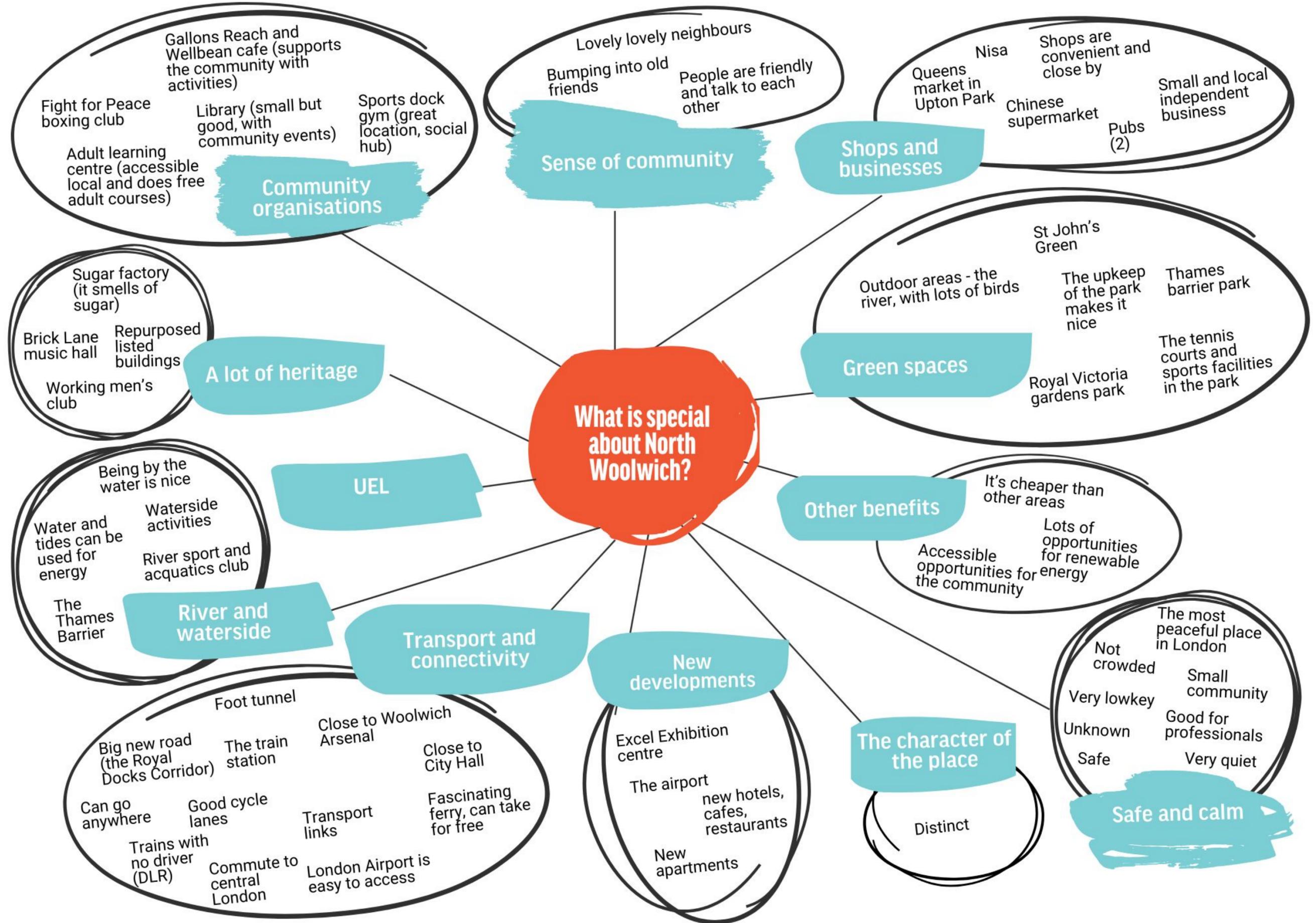
They include:

- a headline call to action
- why it is important
- what it looks like
- practical next steps for the council and local community

The forum came up with initial ideas at the fourth meeting. These were then reviewed at the actor session, before being refined at the last meeting.

# What makes North Woolwich special?





# A vision for the future of North Woolwich





# In our future vision, North Woolwich is an exemplar of a low carbon neighbourhood

*(in order of priority from a vote)*

- Every home is fit for purpose: properly insulated and energy efficient at a set standard, with modern and affordable equipment like solar panels and smart meters. Grants are available to those who need it.
- The local community actively benefits from a hyper localised renewable energy production, and waste goes to energy, not landfill.
- Everyone is able to heat and power their homes with cheaper electricity, and financial and technical help is easily available to those who need it.
- The air is cleaner and healthier.
- There are community owned and maintained green spaces that use brown (abandoned) land, and which have more trees, areas for workouts, and solar lighting.
- There is a tree planting programme and more trees where they are most needed.





- The foot tunnel is constantly open and the ferry remains free, convenient and runs from renewable energy. It is better monitored, cleaner and has more security and a working lift.
- Managing energy consumption is simple, with a single central system in each home
- Sports facilities are powered by (non-residential) renewable energy and community owned.
- Heat is harvested from the ground, from the air and from waste.

- There is greener and affordable transport, with reduced high emission vehicles, with more carpooling and dedicated cycle routes.
- Building materials are carefully considered.
- Secure WiFi is free in community spaces in every neighbourhood.
- The power of the river is an energy source. The riverside is an attractive place, like in the Isle of Dogs, and a space that improves the community. River safety is improved to avoid accidents.

# Calls to action



# We are calling for...

*(in order of support from a vote)*

1. a focus on increasing solar panels in the area
2. spreading awareness, support and investment in community facilities to support heat and energy initiatives in North Woolwich
3. supporting home energy use reduction by co-funding the costs of installation
4. increased involvement in the community from London City Airport
5. Tate & Lyle to be a centre for community and a source of heat energy for the local residents
6. stronger cross sector relationships (e.g. between the private sector and local community groups) to raise funds and encourage economic investment in North Woolwich
7. an education programme to support people to reduce their energy use
8. local corporates to use their corporate social responsibility in the community
9. the council to incentivise landlords to make homes more energy efficient
10. more regular checks on the state of rental stock to make sure it is compliant and energy efficient (for all rented stock, social and private)



# We are calling for a focus on increasing solar panels in the area

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Residents will benefit in the long run
- It's good for the environment and will ensure North Woolwich has green and affordable energy
- In the long run it will save money for the Council and residents
- Solar panels could help balance out emissions for London City Airport, and they should use them where possible
- There will be an option for homeowners to sell electricity back to the energy providers (not other home types)

## What this looks like...

-  Council to push for law change around solar panels
-  The council should offer discounts or loans for installments of solar panels
-  Council to also explore the use of batteries in solar power and heat pumps
-  Utilising the existing funding schemes available, with an option for the community raising the funds for solar panels to be accessible

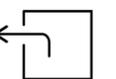
-  People, the council and providers should all be involved in the process
-  A plan to install solar on new 100% council buildings and local community groups to support the council in this
-  Encourage the community to petition and write to local MP, James Asser, this will only work with large numbers not 1 or 2 people

## Practical first steps for the council

- Surveying properties for eligibility
- Setting clear deadlines and dates for actions to happen

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Start a [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/petitions) petition about speeding up solar panel installation and making it cheaper to do



# We are calling for spreading awareness, support and investment in community facilities to support heat and energy initiatives in North Woolwich

(Community facilities are schools, libraries, sports centres, parks, community centres)

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- It promotes community wealth and sustainable development
- Residents will benefit from cost effective and clean energy in community spaces
- Residents will be more aware of the community facilities available
- There are lots of spin off benefits for example, this will bring community groups together, serve as social hubs and give young people something to do. This will support mental health, wellbeing and therefore the NHS

## What this looks like...

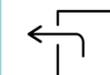
-  Funding for individuals to set up energy related community facilities and businesses (eg. solar energy collectives)
-  Funding for other (non-energy related) community facilities and businesses to be more energy efficient (eg. through heat pumps or community heat pumps)
-  Funding for voluntary community projects, which offer residents skills and education about affordable energy. E.g. giving local organisations and community facilities spaces to use, a way to communicate what they are doing like school talks
-  Council to provide incentives to residents to get involved

### Practical first steps for the council

- Take ideas from this forum to the council so that they can say what is missing
- Council to disseminate information about what already exists to the community through social media, digital and print marketing

### Practical first steps for others in the community

- Residents to visit and participate more in local community facilities
- Residents can volunteer to support community facilities
- Community facilities' staff to consider apprenticeship programmes or courses in heat and energy using government funding



# We are calling for supporting home energy use reduction by co-funding the costs of installation

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Reduces energy use
- Reduces energy bills
- Reduces carbon emissions and climate impacts
- Makes Newham a model of good practice

## What this looks like...

-  Promote insulation in people's homes through a loans programme that is interest free and tax free. Residents pay back in affordable installments and have the available means through reduced energy bills
-  Promote installation of various sensors to raise awareness of energy use. Create smart homes for lights, temperature and humidity. Those that install these should be offered reduced council tax

-  Encourage rain water harvesting through selling or giveaways of water butts/harvesting systems
-  Reduce wider energy use by investing in local food growth. Community initiatives to promote vegetable, herbs, and fruit growth in homes

## Practical first steps for the council

- Set up discount / grant / loans schemes to address the upfront costs of insulation
- Raise awareness of what is already available

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Local business help with the distribution and sale of discounted sensors and smart meters
- Installation companies need to be engaged and on board



# We are calling for increased involvement in the community from London City Airport



Council action



Community action



Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- It helps ensure local businesses are committed to the wellbeing of the local community
- Helps contribute to the local sense of community
- Keeps channels of communication between communities and business open
- Helps with cultivation of green spaces

## What this looks like...

 Increased activity and involvement from the airport in local community schemes for young people, students and the elderly

 Schemes could include increased use of brownfield sites (vacant places that have previously been developed) and development of green spaces, extra funding for equipment for local schools, funding for local businesses, local fete in the park

 Funding would come from the airport sponsorship funding



## Practical first steps for the council

- Use climate forums with local businesses to increase pressure on the airport
- Invite a member of local community to these business forums to sit in and pitch ideas
- Appoint a dedicated council officer to liaise with the airport

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Make voices heard, increase pressure on the airport for some changes
- Form a community forum and appoint representatives to communicate with Newham Council and London City Airport



# We are calling for Tate & Lyle to be a centre for community and a source of heat energy for the local residents

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Residents live close by and are therefore stakeholders in the local community
- To achieve the goal of reducing pollution (emissions) for the benefit of the local environment
- To support the mental wellbeing of the community
- It'll be reliable because Tate & Lyle has been around for a long time

## What this looks like...

-  This work is based on sustainable processes and long term benefits
-  Tate & Lyle energy networks (eg Ectogrid) connect to new build properties going forward. Manage disruption to local communities by developing in stages, providing advanced warning by being transparent

-  Tate & Lyle contribute energy to the local community
-  Tate & Lyle contributes a greater amount towards sustainable/ renewable energy in terms of local authority funding
-  EON, Tate & Lyle, Populo, local community and residents should be involved and work together to provide renewable, clean energy for local people

## Practical first steps for the council

- Advertise to the community the existing and future project partnerships with Tate & Lyle.
- Council to do a feasibility test before starting any heat networks, to avoid HS2 scenario

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Community advertising about the existing and future projects through word of mouth, eg, with local businesses



# We are calling for stronger cross sector relationships (e.g. between the private sector and local community groups) to raise funds and encourage economic investment in North Woolwich

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Creates opportunities for additional funding for retrofitting, solar panels, more sustainable tech etc
- Encourages local communities to build wealth for themselves
- The community should be involved in delivering energy products for this area

## What this looks like...

-  Private public partnerships to co-deliver energy projects (retrofit, solar panels, more sustainable tech)
-  Retrofitting companies to partner with council to provide expert advice for North Woolwich area
-  UEL to be a research and development partner
-  Council support for community projects owned by local people (community investment) to create local wealth

## Practical first steps for the council

- Develop a strategy for how it can look like and work
- Identify community assets that can be used for projects
- Getting residents buy-in to community owned projects.
- Showcase real life examples and benefits to the community, including case studies of successful partnership (Net Zero Neighbourhood)
- Identify key stakeholders in North Woolwich. Sell the ideas to companies, so that they want to be involved

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Form community groups to raise awareness, discuss and change ideas
- Invite energy experts to share practical knowledge
- Community voluntary groups (e.g. One Newham) should meet with representatives from the private sector and council
- Turning charity organisations into knowledge hubs



# We are calling for an education programme to support people to reduce their energy use

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- It will help people save money on bills
- It will promote green skills and boost employment
- It will help people to change behaviour

## Practical first steps for the council

- Identify funding sources (business sponsors, grant funding, charitable trusts)
- Form network of providers (schools, UEL, energy companies)
- Advertise with leaflets, social media, council newsletter, public display signs

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Schools create curriculum module
- Companies to offer apprenticeships
- Excel exhibition centre to act as a venue and sponsor
- Tate and Lyle to offer support as part of their corporate social responsibility

## What this looks like...

 Develop a programme of training that includes academic courses, apprentice training, short courses and workshops, and special courses for mature people

 Secure funding from organisations like the GLA, financial institutions (HSBC), UKRI match funded with UEL and council, sponsorship/gift aid from Tate and Lyle

 Set up a network of organisations and providers, including colleges, universities, community centres like the Royal docks Learning & Activity Centre, businesses, schools, adult education institutions, libraries, Tate & Lyle, Excel, London City Airport, other businesses

 Offer incentives for participants. For example, council tax discount, travel discount, vouchers for energy saving equipment, offer free online courses



# We are calling for local corporates to use their corporate social responsibility in the community.

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Without funding it is impossible to get local projects off the ground

## What this looks like...

-  The council can set up a sub-group of local community organisations to reach out to companies and oversee how this money spent. E.g., working with Tate & Lyle to provide financial aid or support, as well as with the airport and other small businesses.
-  Part of this will also be using existing contributions from housing developers and making sure these are spent as the community want

## Practical first steps for the council

- While there's no specific legal requirement from the part of the councils in UK, they can set up a board to initiate CSR as mandatory in North Woolwich and guide how it is spent
- The developers and companies need to know that the nature of the CSR fund spending can be stipulated by the local community

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- Campaign to increase awareness amongst the existing and new organisations about their responsibilities towards the environment and the local community



# We are calling for the council to incentivise landlords to make homes more energy efficient

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Reduced energy costs for renters because their homes will be more energy efficient
- It will increase collaboration and transparency for all parties

## Practical first steps for the council

- Educate tenants on their rights and inform them about any changes directly affecting them
- When landlords accept council or government funds to improve their property they should sign an agreement that they cannot increase the rent of the property for 2 years

## Practical first steps for others in the community

- When tenants leave a property, landlords and tenants should check that they are up to energy standard, then sign an affidavit to confirm the property is up to energy standards

## What this looks like...

 The council should raise awareness about tenants' rights and where they can get information by having an information page on their website, flyers / letters sent to tenants' houses

 Give grants to landlords to retrofit the properties in ways that benefit tenants' homes, with a condition that any disruptions don't negatively impact tenants, that they don't increase rents, and they don't sell their houses immediately

 The council to lobby the national government to reduce energy costs for renters

 Educate tenants on the benefits of having long term changes to their houses, including bill reduction



# We are calling for more regular checks on the state of rental stock to make sure it is compliant and energy efficient (for all rented stock, social, and private)

-  Council action
-  Community action
-  Collaborative action

## This is important because...

- Houses that are not up to standard will be brought up to a higher EPC rating faster
- Regular checks will mean a faster turnaround times for houses that are not up to standard
- It will give the council a clearer view on the private rental stock

## What this looks like...

-  Upskill existing employees for house checks or on the phone checks with the renters
-  Have a council hosted portal for everyone to check their EPC and the last date the house was checked. Give people the ability to request checks online and offline so everyone is included

## Practical first steps for the council

- Make sure to have updated information
- Set up portal
- Prioritise houses that have not been checked for 3-5 years (try to get feedback from renters)
- Bring the houses up to living standards while improving efficiency in a timeframe of 6 months to 1 year from the check

## Practical first steps for others in the community

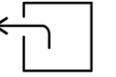
- Renters should be able to provide feedback on how the check was
- Landlords to give feedback when tenants change on the state of the houses or any changes good or bad. If bad, the council should try to help landlords with grants or solutions



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# Insights





# Participant experience

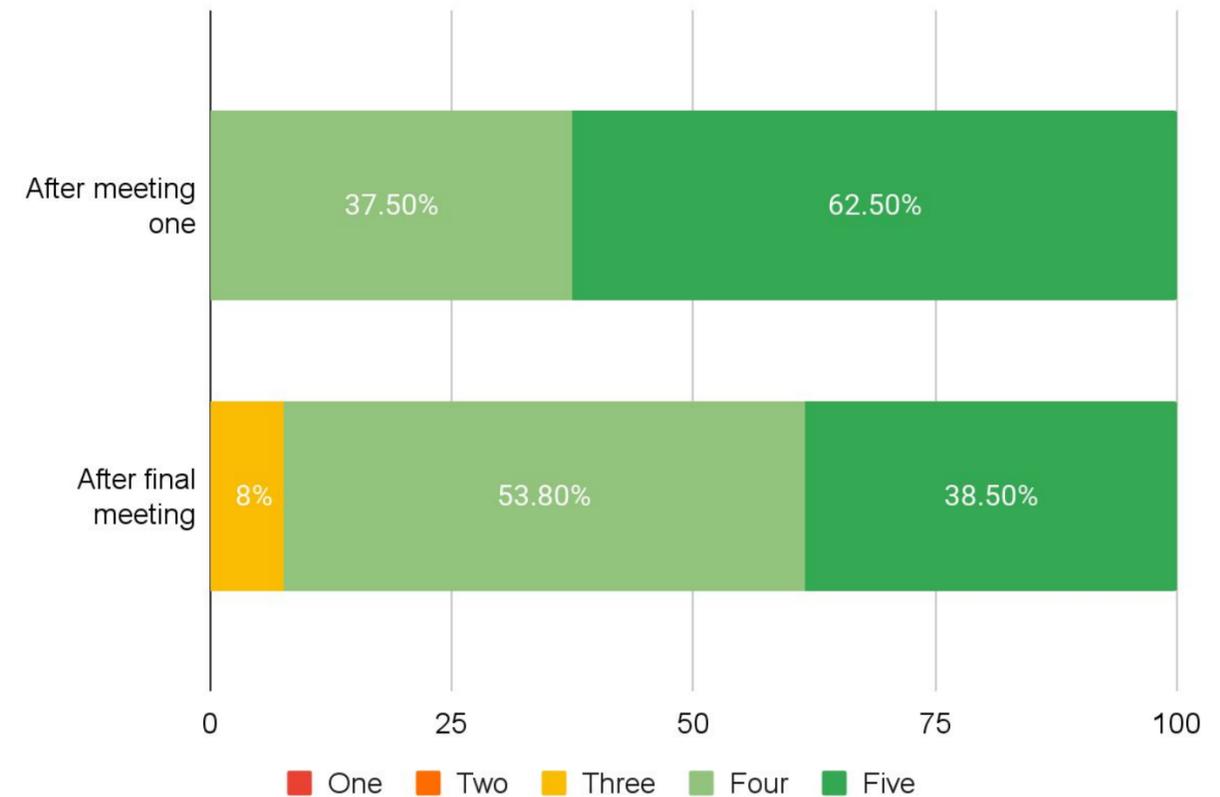
“I am happy I attended the meeting because in previous years North Woolwich seemed isolated. The Forum seems to provide a missing link and a real sense of belonging to this part of the borough”

“An excellent combination of people, humour, exercises and on top of that a long term bond among residents.”

People rated their experience of the forum sessions well, with an average rating of 4.3 out of 5 after the first meeting, and 4.6 out of 5 after the final meeting. They liked the effort and organisation, presence from the council, and learning a lot. Members mentioned new connections and made a group to stay in touch with one another afterwards.

In terms of things to improve, participants felt it would have been helpful to receive more information beforehand about what to expect and the factual content shared by speakers. Some activities needed more time, and they would've liked to have more conversations with the council.

How would you rate today's session?



# Hopes for what happens next

*"I feel privileged to have taken part and given my input as a person from North Woolwich for 46 years"*

When asked how they felt about the engagement process, forum members said it felt *positive, good, and they felt satisfied.*

They hoped that their recommendations will be acted upon, with some concerns about whether it would happen and how long it would take. One person wrote they were concerned *"the implementation will take a long time or won't be done at all"*.

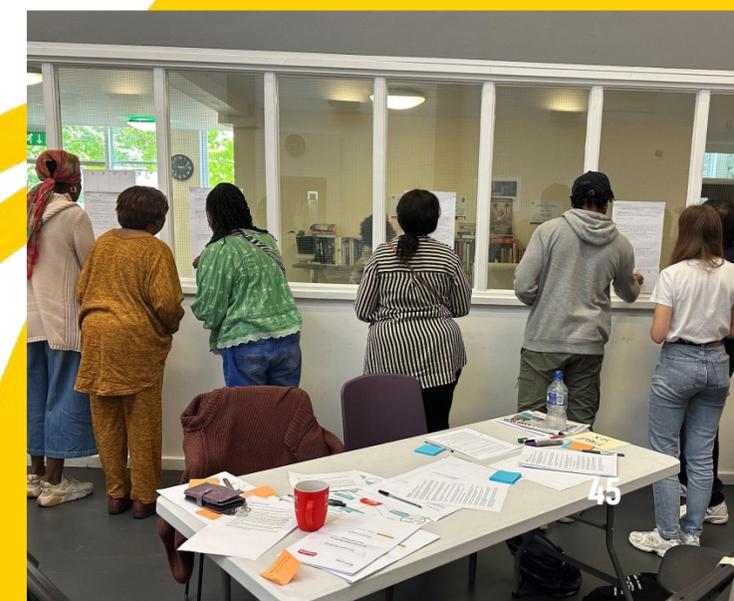
When asked for impacts they hoped for their household, they said about improving energy efficiency of flats, more solar panels, community Wifi, better engagement in future and better policy. In the community they hoped for businesses to engage on environmental issues, cleaner air, safety, more energy efficient homes and reduced energy costs.

*"It is a good thing that this often overlooked part of Newham has been chosen to discuss and suggest solutions to the current subject of heat and energy."*

*The sudden current rise in the cost of energy and heating is a cause for alarm to many residents in the country especially in Newham which is among the low income part of the country struggling with affordability."*



North Woolwich Heat & Energy Forum

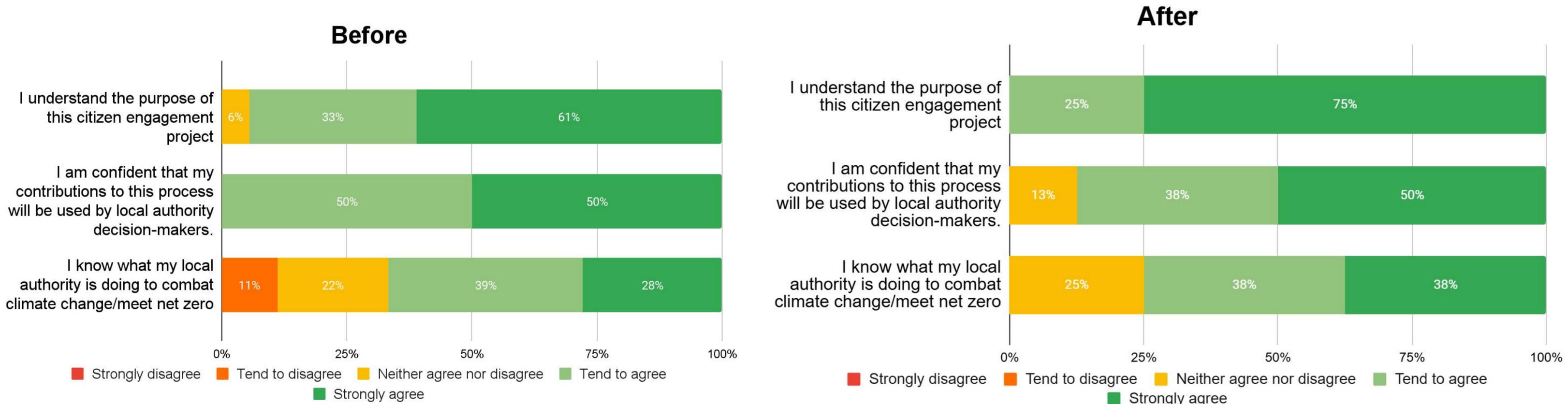




# Before & After

Forum members were asked their thoughts on citizen engagement and local climate action, before and after the forum. The results for those forum members that gave their views are below. The terms were explained in the survey.

A higher percentage knew more about what the local authority was doing, and the purpose of the project. However, there was a slight change in confidence in the outcomes of the process being used. This chimes with their comments.



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# Appendix

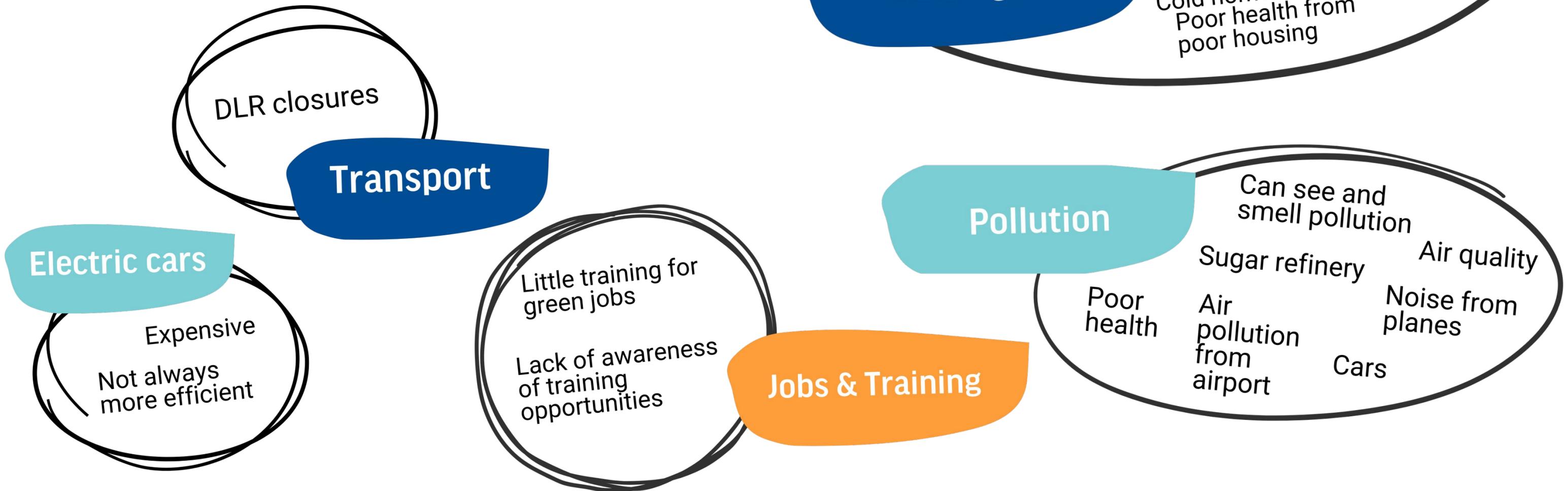


# Appendix 1: Problems



# Problems in North Woolwich

These problems were collated at the first meeting from members' reflections of what isn't working in the area and potential future challenges. They fed into the later discussions of ideas and solutions.



# Problems in North Woolwich



## Planning

Planning system is not creating green neighbourhoods

Lack of funding and resources for maintenance

## Resources

Wrong side of barrier - flood risk  
Rising sea levels  
Vulnerable people - children, elderly  
Heat  
Everyone is impacted

## Impacts of the Climate Crisis

Lack of awareness  
Few choices  
No discussions  
Public aren't involved in decisions before they are made

## Involving the Public

Not renewable  
Wasting energy - eg on lights in daytime

## Energy

Not enough  
Allotments are hard to access and use

## Green spaces

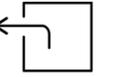
## Waste and Recycling

Lack of awareness  
Less efficient than other boroughs  
Pests  
No culture of recycling  
Flies  
No food waste collection  
Not using parks green waste

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# Appendix 2: Who has the power to change things?





During the evening meetings, members discussed who would have the power to change things in North Woolwich. They heard from the council, and from One Newham, before mapping out different actors.

- Ministry of local government and communities
- Parliament
- Big investors (including big pharma)
- GLA (the mayor)
- King Charles (trust, law, upskilling)
- Ofgem (energy regulator)
- Energy providers (British Gas, EDF, EON, n power)
- Academics (Research and collaboration)
- Local MP (James Asser)
- Voters as a collective
- Larger scale residential groups
- Local planning
- Local councillors
- Residents
- VCS and Charity groups (depending on focus)
- Trade unions
- Local business (and nice to have)
- Local communities
- Pressure groups (activists), Climate action (orange)
- EU regulations

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# Appendix 3: Principles from the local actor Session



# Principles from local actors

After the forum members selected their top 10 solutions, these were presented to a group of local actors. Their feedback was collated into principles for the forum to consider while drafting their final calls to action.

You can see more information on this in the [Background section](#).

The next page outlines their feedback in the form of principles for writing the calls to action.



# General advice from local actors

We suggest the residents' forum recommendations should...

1. be **measurable** with **realistic** targets and timelines
2. clearly **link to your vision**
3. be **actionable** and outline a clear and specific process
4. be clear what the **benefit is** for the community
5. include **who** they think is best placed to carry out the recommendations - **which organisations** should be involved and **where** activities should take place
6. include how they can be supported by **local commercial and/or industrial partners**, and make use of the industrial land in the area
7. consider how the solution will be **perceived by the community**, and how the **community can be involved**
8. be **specific to heat and energy**
9. include both **quick wins** and medium or **longer term goals**
10. consider how **future decisions** on that issue should be made, and who should be involved in this
11. think about **who is liable** if things go wrong
12. build on what **already exists**
13. be aware of **resources** and **restraints**, and include how to keep costs low and any ideas for funding



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# Appendix 4: Vision (with votes)



# Vision

At the final meeting, forum members prioritised their vision. They voted as tables on which parts of the vision were most important. Each table had 5 votes in total, which they decided upon as a group.

In our future vision, North Woolwich is an exemplar of a low carbon neighbourhood:

Every home is fit for purpose: properly insulated and energy efficient at a set standard, with modern and affordable equipment like solar panels and smart meters. Grants are available to those who need it. (6 votes)

The local community actively benefits from a hyper localised renewable energy production, and waste goes to energy, not landfill. (5 votes)

Everyone is able to heat and power their homes with cheaper electricity, and financial and technical help is easily available to those who need it. (4 votes)

The air is cleaner and healthier. (3 votes)

There are community owned and maintained green spaces that use brown (abandoned) land, and which have more trees, areas for workouts, and solar lighting. (3 votes)

There is a tree planting programme and more trees where they are most needed. (2 votes)



# Vision

The foot tunnel is constantly open and the ferry remains free, convenient and runs from renewable energy. It is better monitored, cleaner and has more security and a working lift. **(2 votes)**

Managing energy consumption is simple, with a single central system in each home. **(1 vote)**

Sports facilities are powered by (non-residential) renewable energy and community owned. **(1 vote)**

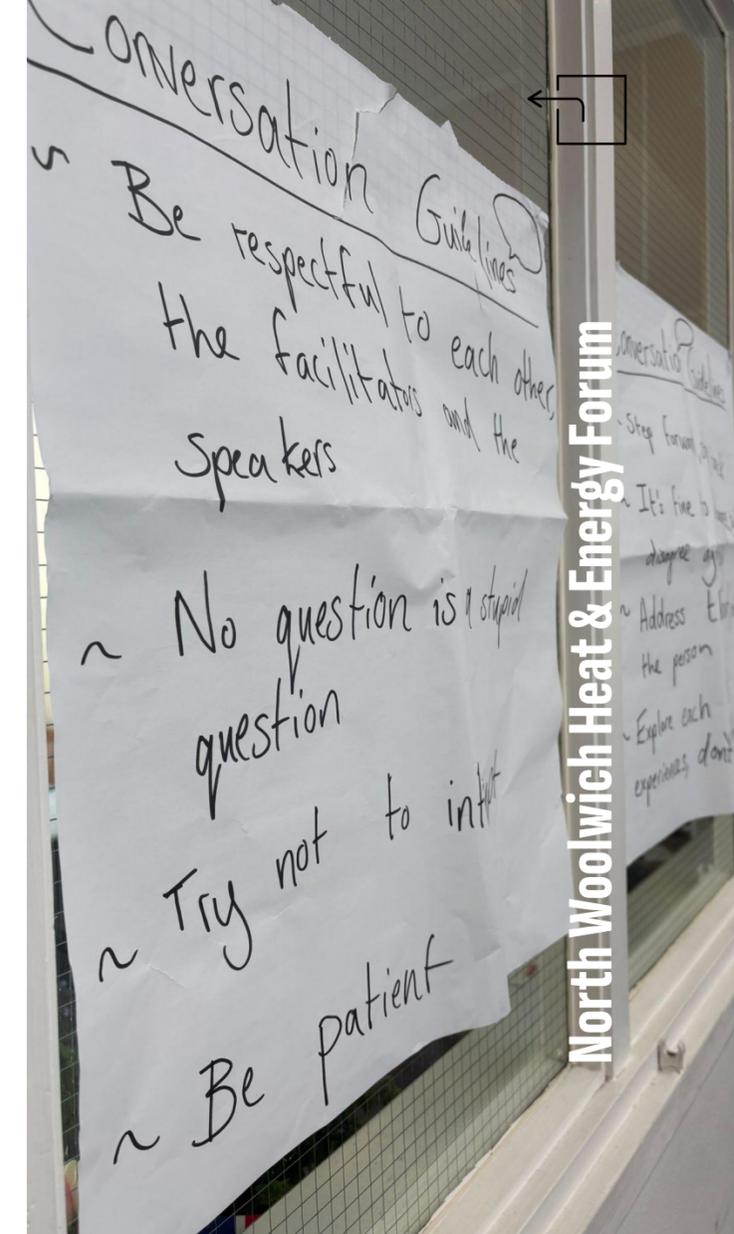
Heat is harvested from the ground, from the air and from waste. **(1 vote)**

There is greener and affordable transport, with reduced high emission vehicles, with more carpooling and dedicated cycle routes. **(1 vote)**

Building materials are carefully considered. **(0 votes)**

Secure WiFi is free in community spaces in every neighbourhood. Energy will be cheaper and dependent on people's circumstances. **(0 votes)**

The power of the river is an energy source. The riverside is an attractive place, like in the Isle of Dogs, and a space that improves the community. River safety is improved to avoid accidents. **(0 votes)**



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# Appendix 5: Criteria of what is important





# Principles from local actors

At the fourth session, members reflected on and decided what criteria were most important to them. They suggested ideas for criteria, and then prioritised these as a group.

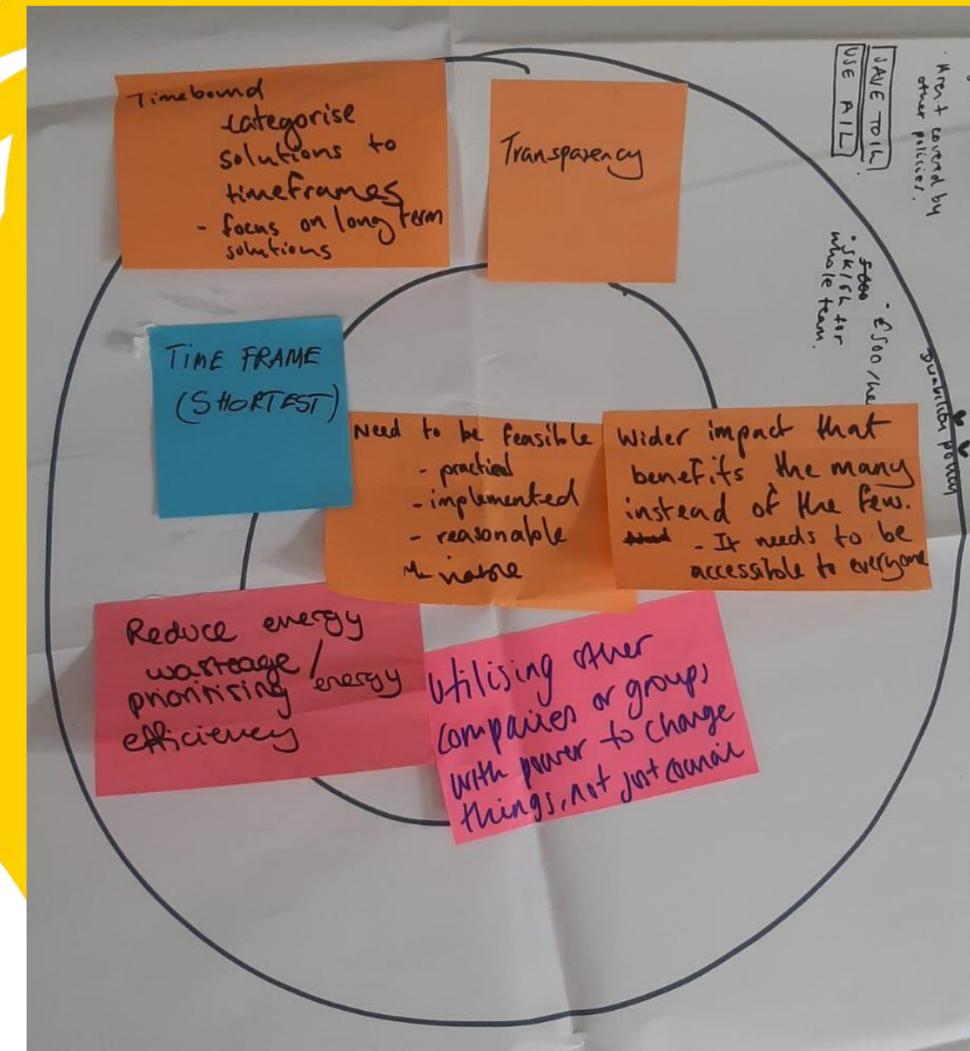
These criteria were:

*Inner circle (most important):*

- Needs to be feasible, meaning that it is Practical, Implemented, Reasonable and Viable
- Utilising other companies or groups with the power to change things, not just the council
- There is a wider impact that benefits the many instead of the few. It needs to be accessible to everyone
- Reduce energy wastage and prioritising energy efficiency

*2nd circle (less important, but still important):*

- Shortest time frame
- Timebound: We should categorise solutions to timeframes and focus on long term solutions
- Transparency



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# Appendix 6: Longlist of draft solutions before selection



# Top 10 Solutions

Towards the end of the fourth meeting, members had come up with a long list of potential solutions. These were voted upon in the session. The solutions are early drafts of the calls to action, before they added more detail to them.

**15 votes:** Educational programs for people on reducing energy use, for example:

- Council initiatives, materials and programmes to train the public on DIY, how to save money, any tricks etc
- Educate the kids for the future
- Have local speakers in community centres like St John's, existing community groups and One Newham to educate on how to be energy efficient.

**13 votes:** Focus on economic investment in the area to increase resource and funding for solar panels, heat pumps, and green infrastructure in homes.



# Top 10 Solutions

**13 votes:** Focus on increasing solar panels in the area. For example,

- for new flats to have solar panels that are owned by the block
- government investment in solar panels for council owned homes
- the council to push the national government to invest in solar panels for council homes

Solar panels should also be used to run ferry services, for street lights and parks. These would minimise expenses, stop anti-social behaviour and help with accessing sport facilities.

**9 votes:** Council to support and invest in social infrastructure for community wealth, for example:

- Opportunities for residents to be upskilled, eg., Jobs, skills, training
- Supporting individuals to own local energy related businesses
- Residents can join voluntary community energy projects to be upskilled and get affordable energy.

**8 votes:** Regulation and laws for landlords renting properties, for example:

- to provide timeframes for solutions
- link energy costs and efficiency to licensing in rental properties
- stop costs being passed onto renters, for example through government subsidies, regulation or increasing community action around cost increases.



# Top 10 Solutions

**8 votes:** North Woolwich has the advantage of water power, which can be used to power heat networks.

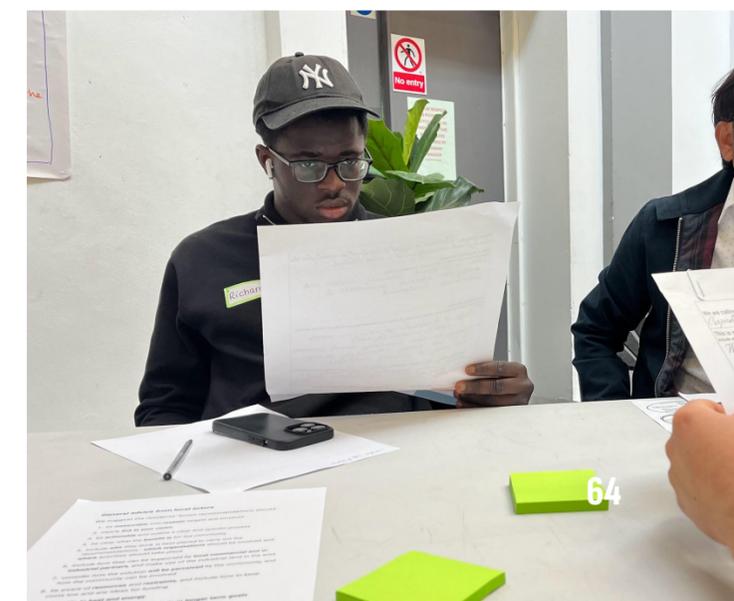
**7 votes:** Do a borough check on all social homes to ensure they are compliant. If they are not, take steps to rectify and ensure that all meet the standards that ensure all residents have the ability to have affordable running homes.

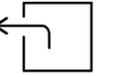
**7 votes:** Use heat networks as a way of collectively getting waste energy from places like the underground or supermarkets, to lots of houses. This could use available grants to be cost effective.

**7 votes:** Require the airport to reduce emissions or offset by planting trees locally.

**6 votes:** Work with Tate and Lyle, so they can be:

- a centre for community
- a source of heat energy from waste for local residents, which could heat the whole of North Woolwich.





# Other Solutions: Not selected

**4 votes:** Use alternative financial models like community owned assets and funds. For example:

- Community co-ops could be used to fund local retrofitting funds
- Using pension funds to invest in local energy
- Community owned assets and profits
- Council building to generate funds that go back to the community fund.

**4 votes:** Support home energy use reduction via sensors, smart meters and insulation. For example:

- The council should work with and co-fund smart meter companies to install them
- Promoting smart meters and colour coding to raise awareness of energy use

**3 votes:** Council to survey potential brown space to convert to recreational space and begin to understand community interest in maintaining spaces.

**3 votes:** Engage with and raise awareness with people living in social housing, for example:

- Using social media
- Creating a website with information on what you can or can't do in social housing, and if you need licenses or permissions for improvements.



# Other Solutions: Not selected

**3 votes:** Using gyms, school playgrounds, streets etc to generate energy, for example through energy tiles

**3 votes:** Council to have more communication with people that is clear, concise and inclusive.

Including:

- The benefits of making these changes
- Transparency about where money is spent now and business run within the council
- A council campaign to change habits and behaviour (eg not leave lights on, using kettle)
- Raise awareness of financing schemes like Living Places

**Examples of what this could look like are:**

- Annual or monthly newsletter offering support and information; Local newspapers and social media; Quarterly or biannual communications from the council; A regular event at a particular location; Leaflets; Community newsletters or magazines monthly; Green markets

**3 votes:** Building on this forum, with a forum for local tenants to discuss issues in rented housing with the council. The council should provide funding for all forums.



# Other Solutions: Not selected

**2 votes:** Have different prices at different points for energy in the day and night to even out energy usage

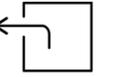
**2 votes:** Simplify the retrofitting process for homeowners. For example, the council provides support for homeowners to understand options and finance retrofitting. Insulate homes first before thinking about higher tech options

**2 votes:** Council to make a public commitment about energy efficiency for new homes. For example:

- On the standard of materials used
- On insulation
- On a C energy rating as a minimum
- On new flats having heat pumps and solar panels owned by the block.

**1 vote:** Make energy bills similar and easier to read. For example, explaining usage, i.e. today you used 1500 kw which is the equivalent of 6 street lamps.

**1 vote:** Clear labelling of bins so less energy is used for recycling.



# Other Solutions: Not selected

**0 votes:** Independent advisors paid for by the council to support residents interested in energy efficiency.

**0 votes:** Encourage good landlord behaviour by:

- grants to upgrade homes
- Increasing awareness and providing checklists for landlords.

**0 votes:** Council to review building materials in existing homes. Old builds to be brought to standard grade C by introducing double glazing, and wall, loft and roof insulation.

**0 votes:** Heat banks in community centres.

**0 votes:** Share case studies and examples of where this has been done before. For example:

- Show examples of people who have done the work to their homes and share that where residents can see
- Learning from other countries
- Council social media to share case studies, workshops and information

**0 votes:** Docking station and facilities for cycling that are safe areas

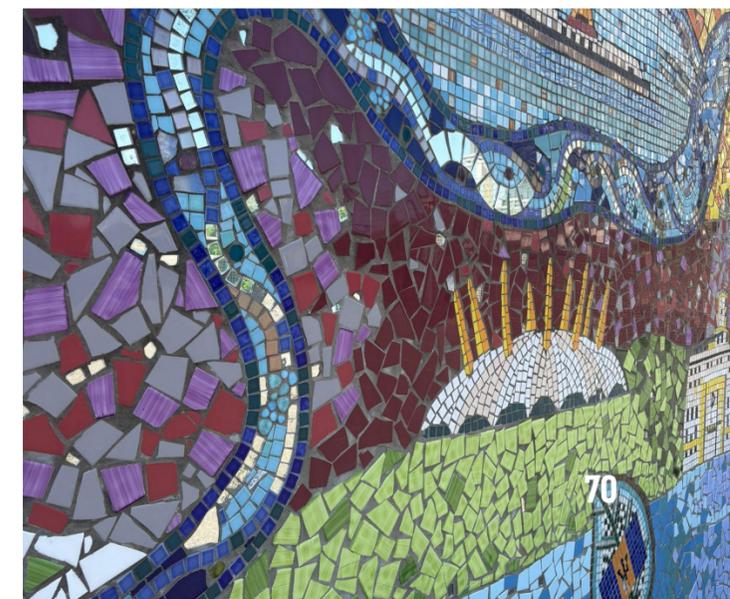
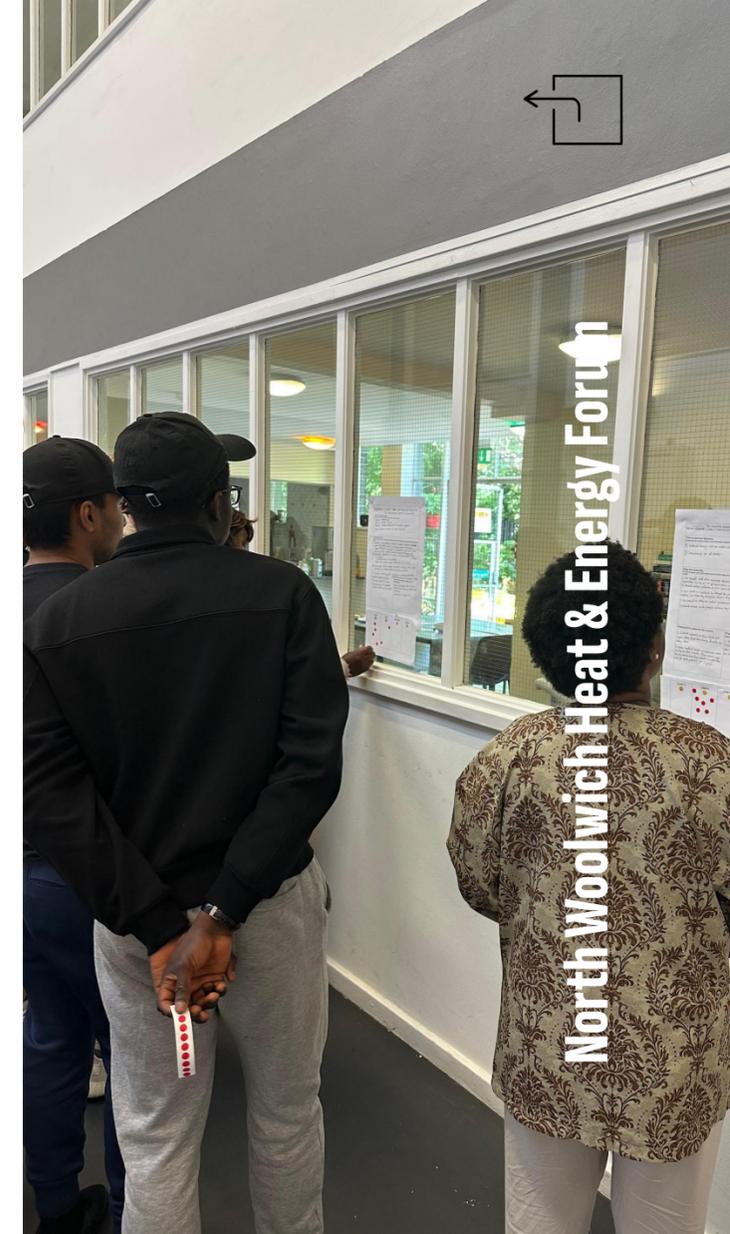
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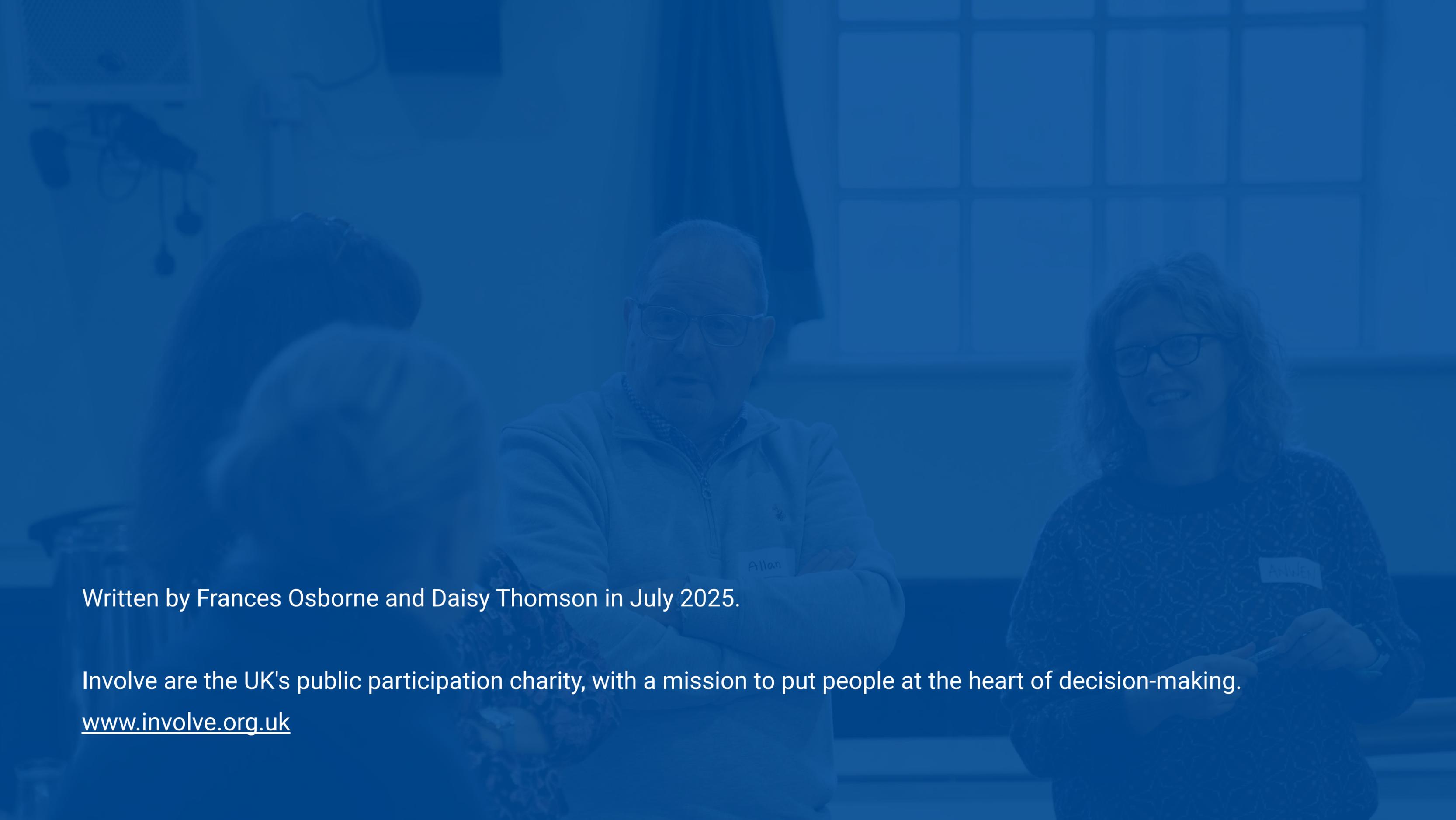
# Appendix 7: Votes on calls to action



Calls to action	Love it 😊	Like it 🙂	Live with it 😐	Loathe it 😞
Increasing solar panels in the area	18	4	0	0
Supporting home energy use reduction by co-funding the costs of installation	12	19	0	0
More regular checks on the state of rental stock to make sure it is compliant and energy efficient	1	13	4	0
An education programme to support people to reduce their energy use	8	13	0	0
Increased involvement in the community from London City Airport	11	10	1	0
Stronger cross sector relationships to raise funds and encourage economic investment in North Woolwich	9	10	0	0
Tate & Lyle to be a centre for community and a source of heat energy for local residents	10	6	4	0
Spreading awareness, support and investment in community facilities to support heat and energy initiatives in North Woolwich	14	8	0	0
The council to incentivise landlords to make homes more energy efficient	5	14	1	1
Local corporates to use their corporate social responsibility in the community	6	12	2	0

*Please note there are some inconsistencies in the total number of votes on each recommendation, so some do not total to 22 votes.*





Written by Frances Osborne and Daisy Thomson in July 2025.

Involve are the UK's public participation charity, with a mission to put people at the heart of decision-making.

[www.involve.org.uk](http://www.involve.org.uk)