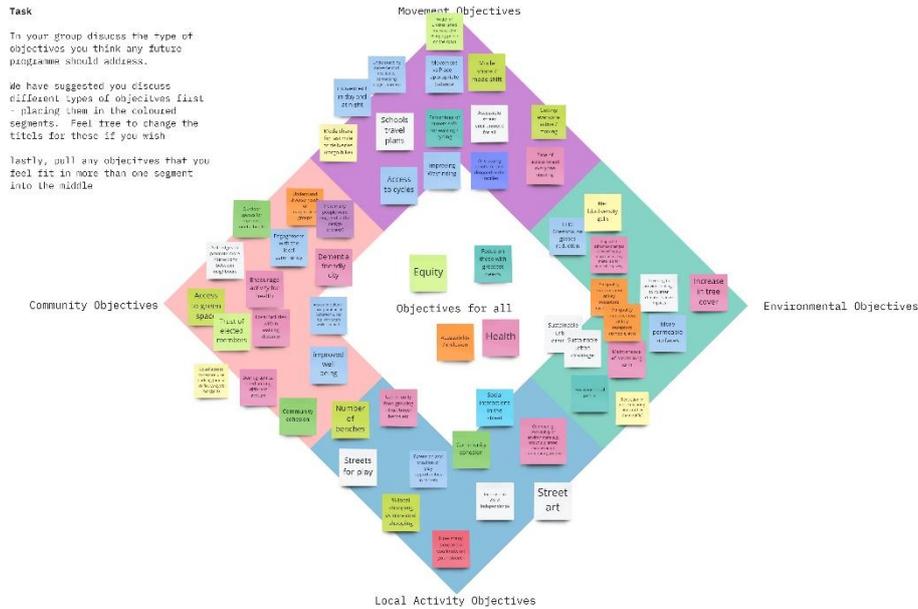


Future Neighbourhood Streets Event Notes

On 2nd Feb 2022 UDL held an event to discuss what any future neighbourhood level street alternation programme in London might look like, in particular what it should aim to achieve and how it should be set up and managed.

169 delegates from 43 organisations including 24 different London local authorities attended.

Here is a summary of suggestions made by delegates during two discussion tasks.



Task 1 – What objectives should any new programme look to meet?

The following lists of aims, targets and measures were suggested by delegates. They have been grouped into themes below.

Movement Objectives

Active travel:

- Make walking more attractive as a travel mode
- Make people understand and agree that active travel and increasing physical activity is a good idea for health/wellbeing, clean air etc
- Active travel routes should be safe and more convenient than driving
- Increase width of un-obstructed footways
- Increase percentage of London streets that are safe for walking/cycling
- Key focus on engagement and behaviour change – e.g. achieving buy in from groups poorly represented in some modes

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Transport Planning:

- Reduction in vehicle miles
- Improving safe and active school travel routes
- Understanding movement of residents, connecting longer journeys
- Movement vs Place – appropriate balance
- Safety during the construction the phase of new transport builds
- All crossing points to have dropped kerbs and tactile paving
- Mode share for last mile of deliveries i.e. cargo bikes
- Supporting EV, Car Club strategy/provision of charging points on the road

Environmental Objectives

Carbon and pollution reduction:

- Environmental credentials from modal changes made clear and recognised by everyone
- Aiming for a net-zero outcome
- Better climate justice
- Better maintenance of assets to use embedded carbon well long term

Green and blue:

- Build in SuDS in any urban realm schemes – smart urban water capture
- Net biodiversity gain
- Increase in tree cover
- Permeable paved streets

User experience:

- Reduction in noise (from traffic)
- Greening to provide cooling – to counter climate change impacts
- Air quality improvement at key receptors i.e. schools

Local Activity Objectives

More things to see and do

- Focus on supporting local SMEs to adapt encouraging higher footfall on local high streets alongside reductions in vehicle usage
- Involving local developers/institutions
- Hosting events on the street
- Improve access to quality space with shelter and seating
- Local food growing – fruit trees/herbs etc.

Improvements for children:

- Give children confidence to walk to school independently
- Child friendly streets – getting people back together again in public spaces and increase in child independence
- Extension and creation of play opportunities in streets
- Improved experience for young people

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Community Objectives

Bringing people together:

- Increase in community cohesion, social interactions in the street
- Foster good relations and social interaction in streets. Measuring the social health of the street.
- Greater sense of ownership - decision making locally Reclaim the street as a community space
- Soft edges to promote more interactions between neighbours
- Understand diverse needs of marginalised groups
- Codesign workshops and ensuring the broadest possible range of views captured, without diluting objectives

Making places work better:

- Community ownership of environment e.g. adopt a planter, extension of community gardens
- Mitigating negative impacts from diverting traffic – understanding those impacts. Holistic approach
- Safety concerns - need to focus on reducing risk for vulnerable road users. Noting the possible impact of reducing street activity on vulnerable groups
- Equal access to secure bike parking (house vs flat vs cycle hangars)
- Access to culture - incorporation of culture in LTNs e.g. Van Gogh walk Lambeth
- Safer environmental schools
- Improved community health – physical and mental

Overarching Objectives

- Target outer London and areas where people still drive to work / school. The higher hanging fruit in terms of mode and behaviour change
- Understanding and mitigating negative impacts of change using a holistic approach, e.g. from diverting traffic
- Monitoring the impact programme may have within certain places
- Knowledge hub is key! Sharing best practice and evidence base on what works
- Look at perspective from young people: future generations
- Foster good relations and address equality duty.
- Reaching out and identifying what an area needs from the beginning so the changes can be discussed in terms of achieving those things (i.e. what Denean said)
- Equity
- Framing/messaging needs to connect with the community
- Improved community health - physical and mental

Task 2 – How should any new programme work?

Funding

- Needs to be scalable: Major schemes + local schemes not just focusing on one scale or the other
- More funding than given in the past needed to support behaviour change and engagement
- Make sure funding is set aside for monitoring and reviewing from the outset
- Local carbon offsetting
- Should work alongside potential funding streams like the carbon tax e.g. ULEZ, LEZ expansion
- Should allow for/encourage match funding for example from S106, CiL or Crowdfunding
- Should consider using green bonds. These can allow boroughs to address equality issues in a way crowd funding doesn't.
- Should have an ongoing bidding process. Small initial pots for engagement which have to be repaid if a trial isn't implemented. A trial can then unlock further funding for permanent construction
- Gateways to unlock further funding, subject to delivery of successful trials
- Funding needed for maintenance should be considered up front, e.g. permeable paving, planters

Governance

- Need smarter more efficient ways of consulting, but requires more effort
- Best practice EqIA – equalities panel e.g. should be used.
- Need to engage decision makers early on and they need to own the scheme
- Needs to prepare politicians and officers for the 'backlash', which is a natural process with a 'shape' it will get worse then better. Patience and courage are needed.
- Learn from Climate Emergency model
- Should be bottom up - engaging local communities and based on good understanding of the place
- Governance groups should consist of local and statutory stakeholders
- Should help us navigate traffic orders and adapting schemes
- Allowance should be made for monitoring and adapting schemes based on feedback
- Prescribing a certain % of funding to be spent on engagement / monitoring / behaviour change
- Input from teams/departments that will take on long term maintenance of schemes is vital
- Greater scrutiny from TfL (or ATE?)
- Encouraging less spend on consultancy services, and greater focus on building capability in house
- Need consistent funding to cover whole lifecycle, including monitoring, evaluation and celebrating success.
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Partnerships

- Need to bring emergency services into the conversation: Need to be joined at the hip.
- Setting up frameworks with shared objectives (for example with emergency services)
- Need to use a knowledge hub approach - requires good monitoring and evaluation
- Need to remove as far as practicable risk of successful JR
- Holistic strategy - i.e. transport, public health, housing/regen
- Engage local businesses SME
- Councillors can be good link to community
- Work with the NHS

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- Schools / parent teacher groups
- Internal partnerships, greater capacity, and buy in from within LAs etc.
- Active travel experts need to be involved at all stages. The average highways engineer doesn't have the right skills and will likely water schemes down (even unintentionally)
- Encouraging less spend on consultancy services
- Utilities companies - explore where there may be opportunities for coordination/collaboration

Timescales

- 3-year minimum programme length - necessary for behaviour change, monitoring etc.
- Engagement from the very start - taking local people on the journey through the programme. Including problem management
- Important to allow time for development (temporary testing) rather than installing a scheme destined to fail
- Ambitious policy targets necessitate short timescales
- Allow time for testing, tweaking, monitoring minimum – 2 years
- 6-12 months engagement & co-design, 18-month trial (with monitoring), then permanent scheme construction
- Ensure monitoring occurs to measure ongoing performance of the scheme
- Quick wins over a short term - to appease community

Anything Else?

- Try to engage with 'hard to reach' communities rather than the usual (often most vocal) suspects
- Disrupting the technocracy - Recognising experimental/ emergent approaches and uncertainty / reconciliation
- Clear communication with public
- Co-design
- Stewardship
- Given engagement focus, specifying a % of the budget to be spent on engagement of marginalised communities?
- Projects/programmes should focus on outcomes and value for money, e.g. less high cost/high spec materials where there is no benefit to the scheme.
- Any opportunities for boroughs/TfL to save money by bulk buying materials or products that are regularly used.
- Funding for all this coordination / engagement / trials?
- Addressing through traffic
- Monitoring - key for future schemes and buy-in