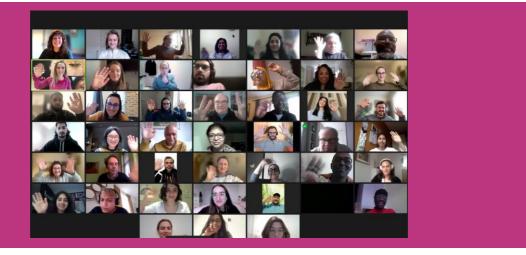
# 15 minute neighbourhoods – Newham Citizens' Assembly Evaluation and Learning Report

2022



# Newham Citizens' Assembly on 15 minute neighbourhoods

**Evaluation and Learning Report** 

Newham Citizens' Assembly on 15 minute neighbourhoods - Evaluation and Learning Report

Democratic Society, April 2022.

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## 1. How we gathered feedback

We asked Members to fill in two online questionnaires: a Starting Questionnaire before the first Assembly weekend began, and a Closing Questionnaire after the final Assembly weekend. We received 25 responses to the Starting Questionnaire, and 30 responses to the Closing Questionnaire<sup>1</sup>. Where open text questions were used, we looked for themes in responses to analyse these.

We also ran a final set of micro group calls with Assembly Members after the final weekend and used these to ask about how Assembly Members had found the process. Assembly Members recorded their feedback on digital post-its during this session using Jamboard. We then looked for themes in their responses.

The results from each of these three activities are shown in turn below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> One extra person filled this in after the deadline but before the form had been closed. We weren't able to include their response in our quantitative results but have included them in qualitative results.

# 2. Summary of feedback

Across the questionnaires and the facilitated discussions in the micro groups, some key points stood out. These are explored in more detail below under the different questions asked.

- By the end of the assembly there was a marked increase in the proportion of Members feeling well-informed about the topic and feeling that Newham Council listens to residents.
- All Members who answered our Closing Questionnaire felt that the Assembly was a good idea and were happy they took part. Many mentioned to us that there were keen to take part again.
- The main things that Members told us they got out of the process were:
  - Learning about their community and about the Council
  - o Coming together as a group and hearing from a diverse mix of other residents
  - Connection with the Council learning more about the Council and feeling that it's listening
- We were keen to learn about the impact of having some returning Members:
  - It was felt that returning Members 'Knew the ropes' this time around. This helped them feel more confident and get more from the process than last time. But it also helped put newer Members at ease and give them some guidance.
  - $_{\odot}~$  It was broadly felt that new and returning Members had an equal say, though there was evidence of a few concerns.
- Members highlighted the approach of the facilitation team as something that played an important role in helping them feel included and welcome. They also praised the approachability and willingness to help of the support team.
- Feedback about different aspects of the process was generally very positive. A partial exception to this was some concern about certain people dominating discussions. Some suggested that more could be done to draw in quieter voices. Some Members also felt that participants with cameras off played a less active role.
- Members enjoyed spending time in small group discussions and were keen to have more of this

   including having longer to develop recommendations. They also wanted more informal
   'watercooler moments'. A number of Members suggested that there should be a chance to come
   together in-person after the end of this assembly, such as a post-Assembly party.
- There was praise from returning Members for the switch to half day Sundays and more spreadout weekends compared to the previous assembly. Suggestions for improving the process included providing more evidence in advance of sessions; and reaching out to underrepresented minorities such as Traveller and Roma communities.
- The tour was well-received, helping members get to know more of their borough, though some were keen to do this in groups in future.

- There was some debate about whether online or offline Assemblies would be better in the future. It was felt that online channels had helped some people attend, avoiding a commute in, though in-person can help with building relationships and having informal conversations. One suggestion was for a hybrid approach with in-person opening and closing weekends.
- Members enjoyed hearing from the Mayor of Newham about implementing recommendations, though in some cases there was concern that actions were already being taken by the Council that Members didn't know about beforehand. It was felt that it would be important to involve speakers and the wider community in the implementation of the assembly's recommendations.
- When asked about how they'd like to stay involved, just over 80% of respondents to our questionnaire expressed interested in working with the Council in the future, over half of members were interested in: being part of an online group; developing the skills they've learnt further; taking part in local community activities; and volunteering.

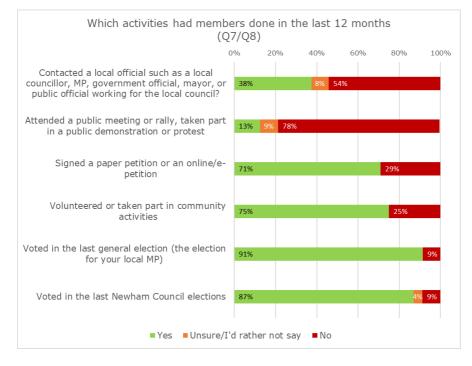
## 3. Starting Questionnaire

Assembly Members were asked to fill this in before the first assembly weekend. 25 Assembly Members did so (14 new members, and 11 returning members).

The results from this questionnaire are below, except for 3 questions which are covered in later sections of this report.

# **3.1 What forms of democratic activity had members participated in before?**

We asked Members to tick which of these activities they'd done in the last 12 months.



Roughly 90% had voted last time there were able, around 75% had volunteered or taken part in community activities, and a similar number had signed petitions. Much lower percentages had contacted a local official or attended a meeting, rally or protest.

## **3.2 Members' hopes and fears at the start**

We asked: 'What are you most looking forward to as a member of Newham Citizen's Assembly?' (Q9).

• 14 comments were about <u>making a positive difference to the community</u>, with statements such as "Making a positive change to the area I live in".

- 10 were about having a voice, using words like "Sharing my opinions" and "Being listened to".
- 7 were about <u>coming together and listening to others</u>. Members talked about listening to other residents and working together. One returning member was looking forward to "Rejoining the team..."
- 2 were about <u>learning</u> more about the topic.

#### 'Is there anything about the process that concerns you?' (Q10)

There were only 12 comments that raised concerns here.

• 4 comments were about whether members' ideas would be listened to by the Council and lead to change. On a related note, one person was concerned about whether recommendations would be feasible.

Other points mentioned by 1-2 people were:

- Members going off-track in group discussions.
- Not being able to bond as well online as in person.
- The length of the walking tour.
- Getting a chance to question policymakers, as well as listen to them
- The time commitment and having enough time.

#### 'What do you hope will happen as a result of the process' (Q11)

• All responses here were on a similar theme of the Council acting on issues raised and the Assembly's final recommendations, and these making a positive difference to the community. In a few places more detail was given about being able to hold the Council to account, such as the need for the Council to come back to members with an action plan of what they will do next.

## 3.3 Why did returning members come back?

At the start of the form, we asked our returning members: **'Having taken part in last year's Newham Citizens' Assembly, what made you decide to take part again?'** (Q2)

Of 11 returning Members who responded, 6 comments mentioned the chance to have a voice, and 7 mentioned making a positive difference to the community. Other points mentioned were enjoyment; meeting new people; feeling connected to the community; having a constructive conversation with the Council; and learning more about Council decisions.

"I found the first assembly very empowering and gained lots of insights; it made me feel more connected to an area I'd only recently moved to, and I thought taking part in this assembly would be an opportunity to build on that."

"It was fun engaging and important to me to help make Newham better"

## 4. Closing Questionnaire

After the final weekend we asked Members to fill in a final questionnaire. 30 members did so (13 new members and 18 returning members). The results are shown below. (1 extra person filled it in after the deadline but before the form was closed – we have managed to incorporate their open text responses in these results, but not their numerical responses.)

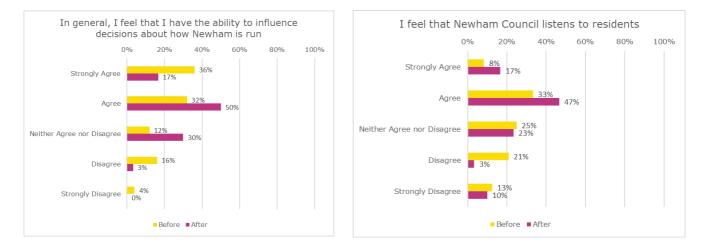
# **4.1** How attitudes towards the Assembly changed between the start and the end

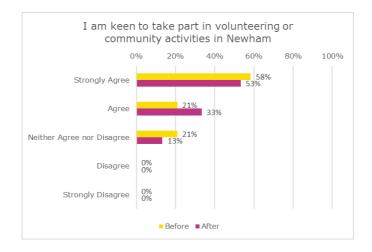
We asked Members how much they agreed or disagree with the same set of statements at the start of the Assembly and at the end. This first section compares these two sets of results.

There was a smaller group of respondents for the Starting Survey (25) compared to the Closing Survey (30), and results were anonymous so we can't tell how much overlap there was between each group of respondents. Nonetheless these results give an indication of how the group's attitudes appear to have changed over the course of the Assembly. Results are shown as percentages of those who completed each question (in some places 1-2 respondents skipped out statements).

#### Assembly Members' attitudes towards achieving change in Newham

These statements were included in Question 6 of the Starting Questionnaire and Question 4 of the Closing Questionnaire.



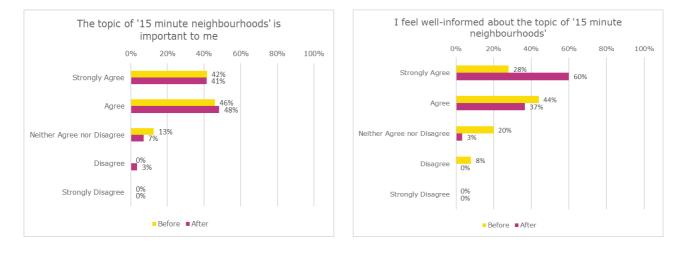


The strongest shift here was towards believing that Newham Council listens to residents. There was also a slight shift towards willingness to volunteer or take part in community activities.

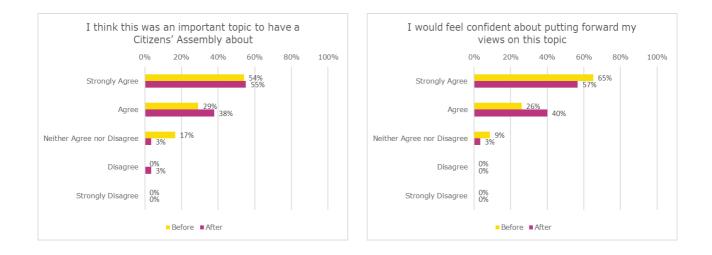
Results around ability to influence decisions showed a more complicated trend. By the end, there was a smaller proportion who disagreed with the statement about this, but also a smaller proportion who strongly agreed with it.

#### Assembly Members' attitudes towards the topic of 15 minute neighbourhoods

These statements were included in Question 5 (Starting Questionnaire) and Question 2 (Closing Questionnaire)<sup>2</sup>.



 $<sup>^2</sup>$  Some statements were moved between questions in the closing questionnaire to help fit others in, so the statement 'I think this was an important topic to have a Citizens' Assembly about' was actually in question 4 in the Starting Questionnaire. There were also some further statements in question 2 of the Closing Survey which are included later in the report rather than here.



The biggest change here was in the proportion of Members who felt **well-informed about this topic**. The share of members strongly agreeing with the statement about this, doubled from just under 30% to 60%. By the end no Members disagree with this statement.

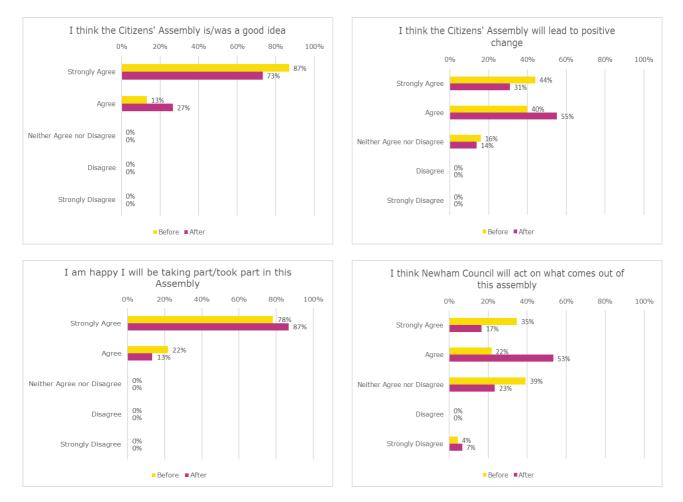
There was little change in attitudes towards the importance of the topic to members, though by the end a slightly increased percentage felt that this was an important topic to have a Citizens' Assembly about. However, 3% of respondents to the closing questionnaire disagreed that this was an important topic to have an Assembly about, and an important topic to them, whereas none of the respondents to our starting questionnaire did.

Members' confidence around putting forward their views shifted in more than one direction. A smaller proportion of Members strongly agreed with this statement in the closing questionnaire, but there was also a shift from 'neither agree nor disagree' towards agreement.

#### Assembly Members' attitudes towards the assembly

There statements were included in Question 4 (Starting Questionnaire) and Question 1 (Closing Questionnaire)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Some statements were moved between questions to allow for others to be added, so the statement 'I think this was an important topic to have a Citizens' Assembly about' was in question 4 in the starting questionnaire but has instead been covered in the section above in this report. There were also some further statements in question 1 of the closing questionnaire which are included in the section below in this report.



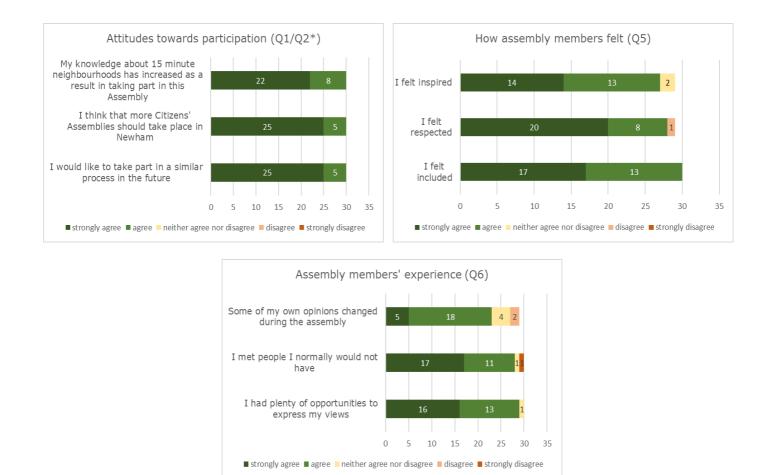
There was universal agreement in the Staring and Closing Questionnaires that the Assembly was a good idea. No-one disagreed that the Assembly would lead to positive change. However, in the Closing Questionnaire, a slightly smaller proportion strongly agreed that the Assembly was a good idea; and that it will lead to positive change.

In both questionnaires all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were happy to be taking part in the Assembly. By the Closing Questionnaire 87% of respondents strongly agreed that they were happy they took part.

Views about whether the Council will act on the Assembly's recommendations were more complicated. The main trends were a shift from Strongly Agreeing with this statement towards Agreeing, and from Neither Agree nor Disagree towards Agree. By the end of the Assembly 70% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the Council will act on what comes out of this Assembly; compared to 57% in these categories beforehand.

## 4.2 How Members felt at the end

In the Closing Survey we asked Members how much they agree or disagree with this set of statements. Results are shown as number of participants selecting each option. There were 30 respondents in total but in places 1-2 respondents missed statements.



All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge of the topic had increased; that more Citizens' Assembly should happen in Newham; and that they would like to part in a similar process in the future.

Similar results were found for the other statements in this section, though one person disagreed about feeling respected, and one person strongly disagreed that they met people they normally would not have. There was less agreement about whether Members' own opinions changed during the process, although 18 people still selected 'agree' in response to this statement, only 5 strongly agreed which was many fewer than other statements in this section.

## 4.3 What did Members gain from taking part?

We asked: (Q3) 'What is the most important thing you gained from taking part in this Citizens' Assembly'.

• The biggest theme was about learning (14 comments). This included learning about the topic, about the council, about what activities are out there in communities, and about learning from a diverse group of other members. One person also mentioned learning about "...critical thinking and unconscious bias"

"Felt I could connect with other people from the borough more, made me think more about what my direct neighbourhood has and what could be improved and how I could get involved in this, and also what is already going on."

• 11 comments were about coming together and listening to others, diversity was an important part of this.

"Hearing from the wide variety of participants and guests. Great to work as a team."

"The opportunity to learn and share different experiences."

"Listened to other people's thought and views on things - different perspective"

• 7 comments were about the connection with the Council. This included learning more about the Council and it's plans and increased trust that it listens to residents.

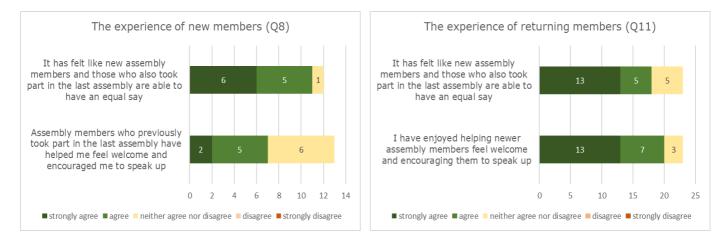
"The knowledge that Newham listens to its residents..."

• There were another 2 comments about having a voice.

"A feeling of contributing with everyone else involved, in a useful relevant process."

## 4.4 Experience of new and returning Assembly Members

In the Closing Questionnaire we asked new and returning Members different questions about their experiences of working together.<sup>4</sup> The results of each are shown below. 13 new Members filled in the Closing Questionnaire compared to 18 returning Members (though not everyone answered all statements).



New Members almost universally felt that they and returning Members were able to have an equal say. The majority of returning Members strongly agreed with this, though there were more returning Members who neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

Only slightly over half of new Members agreed or strongly agreed that returning Members had helped them feel welcome and encouraged them to speak up, though none actively disagreed with this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> There was an error with the branching used for these questions, so one group were able to fill in both questions. However, we were able to remove any results they entered for these questions in order to present the results as intended here.

statement. A little under 90% of returning Members who answered said that they had enjoyed helping newer members.

We also asked each group about what the benefits and downsides were of having some Members come back for a second assembly.

We asked new Members:

(Q9) 'What have been the benefits (if any) of having assembly members from the last assembly taking part again this time?'

 $\rm (Q10)$  'What have been the downsides (if any) of having assembly members from the last assembly taking part again this time?'

And returning Members:

 $\rm (Q12)$  'What have been the benefits (if any) of assembly members like you having a second chance to take part in the Citizen's Assembly, rather than just taking part once?'

 $\rm (Q13)$  'What have been the downsides (if any) of assembly members like you having a second chance to take part in the Citizen's Assembly, rather than just taking part once?'^5

#### The views of new Members about having some Assembly Members returning:

Benefits:	Downsides:
Most comments were about how returners helped newer Members to understand the process (5 comments) and helped build their confidence (4 comments).	There was only one comment that responded to this, which was a concern about returning Members frequently referring to the topic of the last assembly.
"They knew the ropes and could you put you at ease."	One person raised a hypothetical concern about returning Members dominating discussions but said they hadn't seen this in practice.
"At first, whilst people were still getting their bearings, there were some people who felt more comfortable with the set up and so may initiate conversation/share opinions/have their cameras on which would then encourage new members like	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Due to an error with branching this question was actually asked to both groups, with lots of new Members entering Not Applicable as a result. However we were able to separate out the responses of returning members and have just looked at these here.

myself to say something and contribute more in following discussions."
There were a further 2 comments about it generally being good to have returning Members' insights, or them bringing richer insights.

### The views of returning Members about having some Assembly Members returning:

Benefits:	Downsides:
The largest theme (6 comments) was that taking	Again, there were very few downsides added.
part again meant having a greater understanding	One person said that: "I felt some who had done
of the process this time around. This seemed to	it before dominated and didn't let others speak.".
echo what new Members highlighted. Often this	Another added that people may feel excluded
was linked with feeling more confident and with	because others know each other already, though
being able to help newer Members.	added that they didn't see this themselves.
"Greater familiarity with the process so	Another mentioned "Repetition from facilitators",
you can guide new members and the	and on a similar note another said "I would
process is more streamlined because	advise to try and condense information as much
you've done it before."	as possible."
"I was familiar with the process and therefore knew what was expected and researched the topic further in my own time." Members talked about feeling more confident or empowered the second time around (4 comments, plus 2 further comments listed in the downsides question <sup>6</sup> ). This included feeling more relaxed with a familiar group and being able to get more out of the process as a result of knowing how it works. "Knowing the process, it was easier for me to absorb and process the information and have a constructive discussion with others,"	One person felt that taking part again might mean less flexibility or creativity: "I'd say generally we'd have some preconceived notions about how things should be done on account of our participation in the first assembly, and that perhaps means that one is less flexible in their approach to both issues and processes"

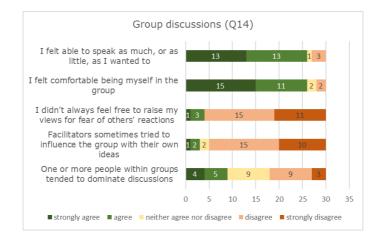
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Several returning Members entered some variation of 'none' when asked to list the downsides. Some went on to emphasise positive aspects. Some of these have been included here in our write-up of benefits.

"Falt more confident in my second time	
"Felt more confident in my second time approaching, recognised familiar faces,	
didn't feel as much nervous as first.	
Enjoyed this one a bit more as well."	
"Increased my confidence to speak up and make my opinions heard"	
and make my opinions heard	
There were also comments about being able to	
guide and support new Members. There were 2	
comments about this, plus 2 responses to the downsides question that were relevant here:	
"No downsides. I think it helped new	
members accept the council would listen to what we said."	
"Sometimes it fell upon us to solicit	
interventions from quiet assembly members but I actually enjoyed that	
added responsibility."	
Other points mentioned included meeting a new	
group, witnessing `the improvements of the citizens assembly', and having a chance to learn	
more about Newham and its community.	

Both new and returning Members answered similarly to questions that were posed to both groups, with no significant number of differing responses.

## 4.5 Facilitation and group discussions

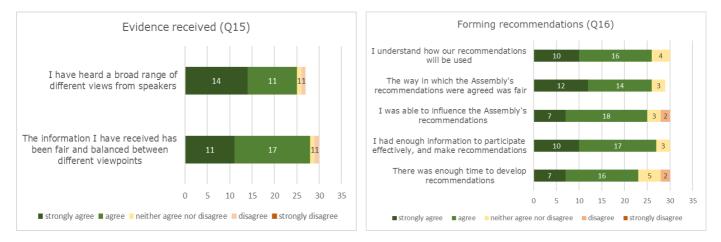
We asked the following questions about the quality of discussions in small groups, and the role of the facilitation team. To avoid providing leading statements and improve the confidence in the results, the format of three statements was flipped, such that we'd hope Members would disagree rather than agree with those three statements.



Respondents almost universally agreed or strongly agreed that they could speak as much, or as little, as they wanted; and that they felt comfortable being themselves in the group. Similar levels disagreed with the statements about not feeling free to raise one's views, and feeling that facilitators tried to influence discussions. However, for all these statements there was a minority who felt the opposite way.

9 out of 30 respondents felt that one or more people within groups tended to dominate discussions. Only slightly higher numbers felt that this wasn't the case.

## **Evidence and Forming Recommendations**



We asked the following questions about the evidence shared, and the process of forming recommendations.

Respondents almost universally agreed with these statements. Though for the statements around forming recommendations there was a small minority (3-5 people) who neither agreed nor disagree with all of the statements. There were two people who disagreed with the statements about being able to influence the Assembly's recommendations, and having enough time to develop recommendations

## **4.6 Inclusion**

We asked: (Q17) **'Were there any issues or barriers that prevented you from taking part fully in this assembly, or made you feel unsafe or unwelcome?'** Out of 30 respondents, 3 answered 'Yes' to this question.

We asked them to provide more detail about the barriers they faced: (Q18) **'If you answered yes to the question above, please can you let us know about any issues or barriers that you faced which impacted on your inclusion.'** One person mentioned personal health issues and medical appoints the other two comments were about having more time to process information and a concern about one person being allowed to dominate group discussions.

"A very substantial amount of data was given by the experts. Where videos were given it would have been useful to view them a first time before they were shown to the group."

We also asked about what helped people feel included and welcome: (Q19) **'Was there anything we did that was particularly important for helping you take part or feel welcome?'** 

 Most comments were about the quality of group discussions and the role of facilitators. Members talked about how facilitators made them feel welcome and made sure everyone had a say. Alongside this, one Member also highlighted the role that other Members played in helped them take part

"You All have been amazing. Great positivism, motivation, and encouragement from you."

"the facilitators' hard work, but also other assembly members' commitment to the issue - some felt very strongly about certain things (such as safety or cycling) and when that was the case they were able to successfully advocate for their preferred options, leading to debate among members..."

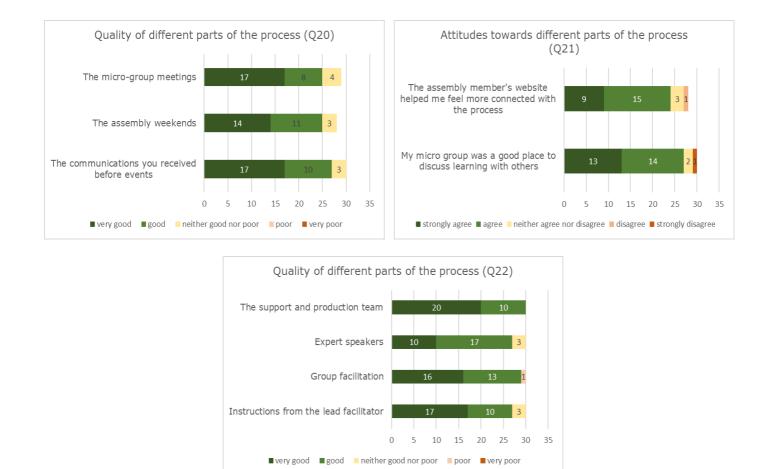
• There were another 6 comments about the organisation of the process and the support team. Members praised their willingness to help, and also talked about receiving IT tools to help them take part.

"The whole process was very well organised and were well supported by the staff."

"I appreciated the reaching out and friendliness of the support staff...when I was having tech issues or wasn't feeling all too well, and the I guess disarming manner of the emails/texts- felt comfortable reaching out which has sometimes been an issue."

### The different types of engagement during the process

We asked Members how they felt about different parts of the process, including the different spaces and type of engagement and logistical support.



Respondents describing parts of the process as good or very good fluctuated around 90% for all aspects of the process. The remaining selected neither good nor poor, except one person who described group facilitation as poor. The support and production team were universally described as good or very good.

Similarly, around 90% agreed or strongly agreed with statements about the Members' website helping them feel connected to the process, and about the micro group being a good place to discuss learning. One person disagreed, and one strongly disagree with these statements, respectively.

## 4.7 Suggestions

At the end of the Closing Questionnaire we asked: (Q25) **'Do you have any final suggestions for how Citizens' Assemblies like this could be improved in the future?'** 

We also asked a similar question in the Starting Questionnaire: (Q3) **'Based on your experiences so** far, (whether you are new to this or have been involved before) is there anything we can do to improve the process of helping members get ready for taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly?'

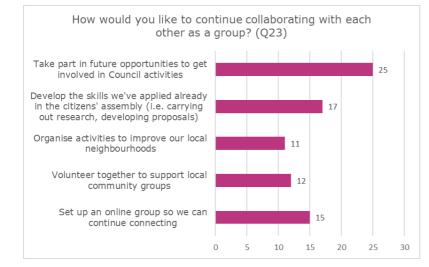
We have combined both sets of results together here, this means that findings are slightly skewed towards parts of the process to do with the build-up to the first Assembly weekends.

- There were 8 comments about providing more information beforehand so that people know what's coming up in sessions and can prepare and do their own research, including giving access to the micro site earlier.
- 7 comments were about the time commitment. Mostly from returning Members praising the change to a half day on Sunday and more spread-out weekends. There were also 2 suggestions of having some sessions as weekday evening calls, and one of doing a half day on Saturday.
- 5 comments were about the quality of group discussions and facilitation, including making sure everyone is encouraged to speak, and having more time in the process for group discussions.
- There were 3-4 comments about:
  - Inclusivity and diversity including calling for an even spread of ages [this broadly was representative, except that the minimum age for participants was set at 16], reaching out to Traveller and Roma communities, and asking whether there was follow-up with those who dropped out.
  - Coming together in-person, such as having a post-assembly party.
  - Issues around using digital technology to take part, including having more tech support, and only allowing people to take part on laptops rather than phones to ensure everyone can use tools like Jamboard.
- There were 5 other comments related to different parts of the how the process works, including having a video showcasing the group's achievements, having a more focussed topic, starting to develop recommendations earlier, and a comment calling on the Council to act on the recommendations. One person also felt that some speakers could have been more relevant:

"Some of the expert speakers felt a little off target when it came to the neighbourhoods in Newham and may have just been a little overwhelming when combined with all the other speakers. Still great speakers and ideas/proposals...but just maybe a little off target!"

## 4.8 Continuing to collaborate

As part of the Closing Questionnaire, we asked Assembly Members about how they would like to continue collaborating with each other. Members were able to select as many options as they liked. There was also a separate question for them to make their own suggestions.



25 of the 30 respondents expressed interest in taking part in future Council activities. Half were interested in setting up an online group to continue connecting, and just over half wanted to develop the skills they'd applied further. Roughly a third wanted to organise activities to improve their local neighbourhoods or volunteer to support local community groups. In addition we asked: (Q24) **'Are there any other ways you would like to continue to collaborate?'** Suggestions made included: taking part in more Assemblies; setting up an online group so Members could connect; keeping the micro site live; meeting face to face; hearing updates on the recommendations; volunteering; taking part in learning activities about the Assembly; and forming a panel that the Council could consult.

"I'd love to get involved further and am available for further comments on how I felt about the assembly process. I'd also like to know more about any progress on our recommendations, and think that setting up an online group on that would be great (last time this was done through emails, which aren't the most engaging means I think)"

"Having a collective of local residents who are passionate and informed about how to improve local neighbourhoods and what is going on or can be done is a strong tool and could honestly, if connections are maintained be used greatly to the councils and neighbourhoods advantage in e.g. setting up community and local events etc and continuing feedback"

## 5. Assembly Members' final Micro Group Reflections

We delivered a wrap-up micro group session after the final Assembly weekend to ask participants to reflect on the Assembly and to share their ideas about how they'd like to be involved in the future and the future of Newham's permanent Citizens Assembly.

We asked participants to reflect and share ideas on the following:

- The process as a whole, including the outputs (vision statement and recommendations)
- Barriers to participation, and how (or if) these barriers had been addressed
- How future Citizens' Assemblies should be delivered

Micro group facilitators supported discussions between Members, and encouraged participants to record their thoughts using Jamboard. Members' reflections which were captured on the Jamboard were then collated, and common themes identified.

## **5.1 Reflections on the Assembly process**

Overall, Members were positive about the Assembly process, reflecting that it felt well-organised and that they enjoyed having a half-day on Sundays.

#### "really enjoyed the entire process"

Members enjoyed their time spent in breakout rooms, valuing discussions with their peers. Some members reflected that they would have benefitted from more time spent in breakout rooms, or more informal time for 'watercooler conversations'. Some discussions, especially around the recommendations, felt rushed. Conversations between Members with different experiences and backgrounds supported learning throughout the Assembly process.

"learnt a lot about the process and what's going on in the borough, positive impact on us, we found new friends"

Members felt that facilitators were encouraging, and gave everyone a chance to participate in conversations.

#### "I felt comfortable to say what I thought, it was a welcoming environment"

The Tour was often referenced as a positive experience, although some Members felt that the tour would have been improved if they had been able to join other Members and complete the tours in small groups, rather than by themselves. Members highlighted that the tour enabled them to better understand areas of Newham that they may have not visited before, and supported their understanding of evidence given as part of the Assembly process. "walking tour was a highlight and if possible should be incorporated into future assemblies"

Some Members felt that the Assembly question was too broad, and that a 15 minute neighbourhood is not realistic for a city such as London. While the majority of Members supported the recommendations (with all seven recommendations receiving over 90% support in the final vote), some Members reflected that they would have benefitted from additional time to discuss and refine the recommendations. Members would have also appreciated being given the opportunity to choose which topic they wanted to work on, rather than topics for recommendations being randomly assigned to groups. However, generally all Members felt that the outputs (both vision statement and recommendations) successfully incorporated input from each Member.

"I believe the recommendations were a good representation of the people in the area"

## 5.2 Support and inclusion

Members reflected that there was a lot of cooperation across the groups, resulting in the feeling that all Members contributed to the recommendations.

"all our voices were taken into consideration"

"really happy that everyone's' voices were heard and everyone's ideas respected"

Some Members did not turn their cameras on, which others in the group sometimes found off-putting, but it was noted that these Members were still included by facilitators and did often still engage. Facilitators were mentioned frequently as a positive support mechanism for Members, ensuring everyone in a breakout group was given space to talk and be heard. Breakout rooms were described as a welcoming space for Members.

#### "nobody was ignored or overridden"

Members thought that the Assembly process was both fair and open, although Members reflected that some minority groups (e.g. Roma community) were not represented, despite having a presence in Newham. Members felt that barriers to engagement were promptly addressed, including access to technical support, and childcare payments.

"the assembly was very considerate and inclusive to participants"

"having childcare support was essential, I would not have been able to do it without that"

### 5.3 Council and wider stakeholder engagement

There are concerns from some Members about what action the Council will take as a result of the recommendations, and how much time this is likely to take. Members felt that the response from the Council was largely positive, although there was an emphasis on action already being taken, rather than what might change as a result of the Assembly.

"Great to see the Mayor participating, inspiring, good to see her taking an interest in what our priorities are - and what's already going on. Felt positive to feel like they shared our concerns"

"In the last session when the Mayor & others fed back to us on the recommendations: a lot of that was them saying they are already doing them. There wasn't a clear picture of which recommendations were a new thought, rather than something that they are already doing."

"Pleased with the comments that came from the council, they seemed to be taking on board. They didn't seem negative about anything and receptive to our ideas"

"still feel that council isn't listening"

Some Members also reflected that they would have liked the Council to clarify whether they were only looking for recommendations that could be immediately actioned with existing resources, or whether they wanted more "magic wand" ideas. Clarity around the council remit would have benefitted some Members while developing the recommendations.

Members enjoyed hearing from speakers, and would have liked more time to ask questions while in their breakout groups. Members reflected that it is essential for external speakers and groups to engage with the Assembly process, as the council alone cannot implement all the Assembly recommendations.

"Really enjoyed the Newham community specialists."

Members would like more engagement between the Assembly and the wider community, supporting upskilling and resource building to help the community implement recommendations.

"I feel more engaged with my community than I ever have"

### **5.4 Future Citizens' Assemblies**

Many Members reflected on the type of delivery, with the majority agreeing that online sessions allowed more people to take part (those who have anxiety, or would be unable to travel to in-person sessions due to their career or caring responsibilities).

"For me it would be difficult to attend if it was in person due to having to do night shifts. Zoom made it possible for me"

Some Members reflected that in-person sessions would enable relationship building, and would provide a space for more informal conversations and wider discussion around the Assembly question.

"Doing this online is great but it misses the casual time you get in person where you can chat with people over coffee about different things you have discussed."

A hybrid style was generally suggested for future Assemblies.

"Maybe 1st and last session in-person, it would be nice to meet"

"A mixture of online and in-person. It's hard to give up weekends if you have to commute every day for something like this. Enjoyed that it was online."

Members agreed that more Citizens' Assemblies should take place, although they would like more time between Assemblies, so that the council has time to implement recommendations before Members

draft more, so as to avoid overlap or competing demands for the council. Many of the Members highlighted that they would be keen to stay involved in future Assemblies.

"would definitely attend again!"

## 6. Learning Across Assemblies

As a permanent Citizens' Assembly, there is increased opportunity for learning, evaluation, and comparison. Similar survey questions were utilised across both Assemblies to support effective comparison.

## 6.1 Surveys

36 Members responded to the final survey after the first Assembly, compared with 31 Members who completed the final survey after the second Assembly. Responses were collated and compared for both first and second Assemblies, highlighting any variation or similarity. There was little variation with regards to responses, with Members answering similarly to repeated questions for both the first and second Assembly.

Common and recurring themes:

- Forming recommendations
  - Members across both Assemblies generally agreed that there was enough time to develop recommendations that they were able to influence recommendations
  - Feedback from both Assemblies indicated that some Members would have liked more time spent with experts to discuss recommendations
- Inclusion
  - Survey respondents across both Assemblies agreed that the process provided a welcoming environment and created space for all Members to speak and participate
- Knowledge and learning
  - Members who responded to final surveys across both Assemblies reflected that they had gained learning and knowledge throughout the process
  - Learning included learning about the topic, learning about the council, learning about the wider community, and learning from each other
- Engagement
  - 100% of respondents across both Assembly surveys agreed that "I am happy that I took part in this Assembly"

## **6.2 Micro groups**

Micro group discussion prompts for the final session after both Assemblies focussed on the delivery of future Assemblies and how Members would like to be involved.

Once again, Members did not greatly differ in attitudes or ideas across the two Assemblies. Common responses included:

- Face-to-face opportunities for engagement
  - Members were in agreement that online delivery enabled some people to take part who would have otherwise been unable, but Members also reflected that an in-person element would have supported greater connection and relationship building
- Clarification around council remit
  - Across both Assembly processes, Members emphasised that they would have liked a stronger stance from the council around what would be possible and what is actionable with regards to the recommendations
- Diversity and inclusion
  - Members across both processes agreed that there was good diversity and inclusion with regards to Members, but were worried that some groups in Newham hadn't been reached (Roma, people who do not speak English)

Across both Assembly processes, Members emphasised that they enjoyed the process and were happy they took part.

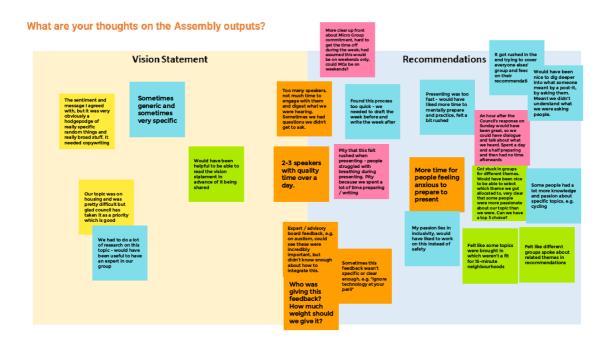
"I'm just so happy it did it, it was a wonderful and amazing experience"

# 7. Appendices

These appendices contain further outputs and information created by the assembly in the order in which they were created:

## 7.1 Appendix 01 – final micro group Jamboards

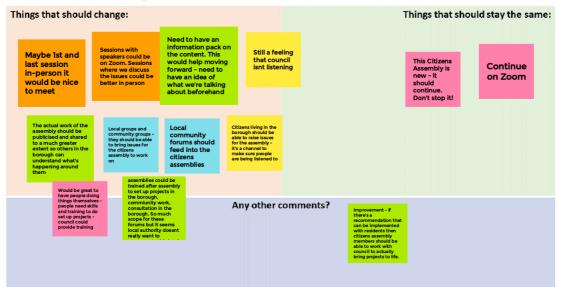
Each Micro Group used the same Jamboard templates to gather their thoughts. These examples come from three separate groups, showing the three different slides that groups were working with.



- What are your thoughts on the Assembly as a whole?
  Did you experience any barriers to taking part?
  Was there anything that helped you feel more comfortable and confident taking part?
  Is there anything else you would like to share?



#### How should the next Assembly be delivered?



## 7.2 Appendix 02 – Starting Questionnaire

Full text of the Starting Questionnaire

# Hearing your views at the start - Newham Citizens' Assembly: 15 Minute Neighbourhoods

Thank you for taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly on '15 minute neighbourhoods'.

This questionnaire helps us understand a bit more about your attitudes towards taking part in this Citizens' Assembly before it gets started. This helps us improve the work we do and improve your experience of the Assembly.

Your responses are anonymous - they cannot be identified as coming from you.

The results will be shared between the Democratic Society who are helping run this Assembly, and Newham Council who commissioned the Assembly, so we can all improve the way we work.

It should take you about 10mins to fill in this form.

\* Required

## Your experience so far

These questions are about you, and your experience so far.

- 1. Is this your first time taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly, or did you also take part in the first Newham Citizens' Assembly last year? Please select: \*
  - O This is my first time taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly
  - O I previously took part in Newham Citizen's Assembly on 'Greening the Borough' last year
  - I'm not sure or would rather not say

2. Based on your experiences so far, (whether you are new to this or have been involved before) is there anything we can do to improve the process of helping members get ready for taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly?

En	ter your answer			

## How you feel about Newham Citizens' Assembly

These questions are about how you feel about Newham Citizens' Assembly.

3. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with these statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think the Citizens' Assembly will lead to positive change	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
l think the Citizens' Assembly is a good idea	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I think Newham Council will act on what comes out of this assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I am happy I will be taking part in this Assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I think this was an important topic to have a Citizens' Assembly about	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

## How you feel about the topic of this assembly: 15 minute Neighbourhoods

These questions are about how you feel about the topic of this Assembly.

4. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with these statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel well-informed about the topic of '15 minute neighbourhoods'	0	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
The topic of '15 minute neighbourhoods' is important to me	0	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I would feel confident about putting forward my views on this topic	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

## How confident you feel about achieving change

These questions are about how confident you feel putting forward your views, and how confident you feel about your ability to achieve change.

5. Please say how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, I feel that I have the ability to influence decisions about how Newham is run	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I feel that Newham Council listens to residents	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I am keen to take part in volunteering or community activities in Newham	0	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

## Learning more about you

6. Please let us know which of these activities you've done in the last 12 months?

	Yes	No	Unsure/ I'd rather not say
Contacted a local official such as a local councillor, MP, government official, mayor, or public official working for the local council?	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0
Attended a public meeting or rally, taken part in a public demonstration or protest	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0
Signed a paper petition or an online/e-petition	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Volunteered or taken part in community activities	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0

## 7. Please let us know which of these activities you've done last time you had a chance?

	Yes	No	Unsure/ I'd rather not say
Voted in the last general election (the election for your local MP)	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Voted in the last Newham Council elections	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0

## Your hopes and fears for this process

These questions are about your hopes and fears at the start of Newham Citizen's Assembly.

### 8. What are you most looking forward to as a member of Newham Citizen's Assembly?

Enter your answer

### 9. Is there anything about the process that concerns you?

Enter your answer

10. What do you hope will happen as a result of this process?

Enter your answer

## 7.3 Appendix 03 – Closing Questionnaire

Full text of the Closing Questionnaire

# How was it? Newham Citizens' Assembly on '15 minute neighbourhoods'

Thank you for taking part in Newham's citizens' assembly on '15 minute neighbourhoods'.

This survey helps us understand what it was like for you taking part, and how we can do things better in the future.

Your responses are anonymous - they cannot be identified as coming from you.

The results will be shared between the organisers Democratic Society, and with Newham Council who commissioned the event, so we can all improve the way we work.

It should take you about 10mins to fill in this form.

# How you feel about the assembly as a whole

These questions are about how you feel about the assembly as a whole.

### 1. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with these statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think the assembly will lead to positive change in Newham	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I think this Assembly was a good idea	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I think Newham Council will act on what comes out of this Assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I am happy I took part in this Assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I would like to take part in a similar process in the future	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I think that more Citizens' Assemblies should take place in Newham	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

### How you feel about the topic of this assembly: 15 minute Neighbourhoods

These questions are about how the feel about the topic of this Assembly.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
l feel well-informed about the topic of '15 minute neighbourhoods'	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
The topic of '15 minute neighbourhoods' is important to me	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I would feel confident about putting forward my views on this topic	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
l think this was an important topic to have a Citizens' Assembly about	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
My knowledge about 15 minute neighbourhoods has increased as a result in taking part in this Assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

## Your attitudes now the assembly has finished

3. What is the most important thing you gained from taking part in this Citizens' Assembly?

Enter your answer

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, I feel that I have the ability to influence decisions about how Newham is run	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I feel that Newham Council listens to residents	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I am keen to take part in volunteering or community activities in Newham	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

## What was it like to take part

5. Please say how much you agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I felt included	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I felt respected	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I felt inspired	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I had plenty of opportunities to express my views	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
I met people I normally would not have	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Some of my own opinions changed during the assembly	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$

\* Required

## A bit about you

7. Is this your first time taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly, or did you also take part in the first Newham Citizens' Assembly last year? Please select: \*

O This is my first time taking part in Newham Citizens' Assembly

- O I previously took part in Newham Citizen's Assembly on 'Greening the Borough' last year
- I'm not sure or would rather not say

7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This question was used to create branching with new and returning members being directed towards 2 different blocks of questions which are both shown underneath.

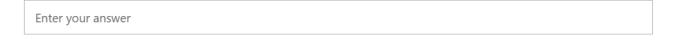
## Questions for New Assembly Members

These questions are about how it worked having some Assembly Members returning for a second time.

8. Please say how much you agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Assembly members who previously took part in the last assembly have helped me feel welcome and encouraged me to speak up					
It has felt like new assembly members and those who also took part in the last assembly are able to have an equal say					

9. What have been the benefits (if any) of having assembly members from the last assembly taking part again this time?



10. What have been the downsides (if any) of having assembly members from the last assembly taking part again this time?

Enter your answer

### Questions for Returning Assembly Members

These questions are about how it worked having some Assembly Members returning for a second time.

11. Please say how much you agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have enjoyed helping newer assembly members feel welcome and encouraging them to speak up					
It has felt like new assembly members and those who also took part in the last assembly are able to have an equal say					

12. What have been the benefits (if any) of assembly members like you having a second chance to take part in the Citizen's Assembly, rather than just taking part once?

13. What have been the downsides (if any) of assembly members like you having a second chance to take part in the Citizen's Assembly, rather than just taking part once?



## The breakout group discussions

These questions about the breakout group discussions.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
One or more people within groups tended to dominate discussions					
Facilitators sometimes tried to influence the group with their own ideas					
I didn't always feel free to raise my views for fear of others' reactions					
I felt comfortable being myself in the group					
I felt able to speak as much, or as little, as I wanted to					

# The evidence you received during the assembly

These questions are about the evidence you received during the assembly.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The information I have received has been fair and balanced between different viewpoints					
I have heard a broad range of different views from speakers					

# The assembly's recommendations

These questions are about how the Assembly made it recommendations.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
There was enough time to develop recommendations					
I had enough information to participate effectively, and make recommendations					
I was able to influence the Assembly's recommendations					
The way in which the Assembly's recommendations were agreed was fair					
l understand how our recommendations will be used					

### Inclusion

We want everyone to be included fairly and equally, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic background, sexuality, disability, neurodiversity or other identity. These questions are about whether you faced any barriers or issues that we should know about.

- 17. Were there any issues or barriers that prevented you from taking part fully in this assembly, or made you feel unsafe or unwelcome?
  - O Yes

🔵 No

18. If you answered yes to the question above, please can you let us know about any issues or barriers that you faced which impacted on your inclusion.

Enter your answer

19. Was there anything we did that was particularly important for helping you take part or feel welcome?

Enter your answer

## How you rate different parts of the assembly

These questions are about the different parts of the assembly process

20. How would you rate the quality of these different parts of the assembly, across the assembly as a whole?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neither Good nor Poor	Good	Very Good
The communications you received before events					
The assembly weekends					
The micro-group meetings					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My micro group was a good place to discuss learning with others					
The assembly member's website helped me feel more connected with the process					

## How you rate different roles within the assembly

These questions are about the different roles within the assembly team

22. How would you rate the quality of these different parts of the assembly, across the assembly as a whole?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neither Good nor Poor	Good	Very Good
Instructions from the lead facilitator					
Group facilitation					
Expert speakers					
The support and production team					

## Continuing your collaboration

23. How would you like to continue collaborating with each other as a group?

Set up an online group so we can continue connecting

Volunteer together to support local community groups

Organise activities to improve our local neighbourhoods

Develop the skills we've applied already in the citizens' assembly (i.e. carrying out research, developing proposals)

Take part in future opportunities to get involved in Council activities

24. Are there any other ways you would like to continue to collaborate?

Enter your answer

### Final comments

25. Do you have any final suggestions for how Citizens' Assemblies like this could be improved in the future?

Enter your answer