



Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly

Final Report
November 2023



CONTENTS

WESTMINSTER CITIZENS' CLIMATE ASSEMBLY	
MEMBERS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
FOREWORD	8
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	9
Assembly vision and principles	9
Vision for a net zero Westminster	9
Principles for delivering net zero in the fairest way	9
Recommendations	10
Impact	12
On participants	12
On the wider public	12
On the council	12
On policy	12
INTRODUCTION	13
Context	13
Background and principles of a Citizens' Assembly	14
What happened?	15
Climate Assembly days	15
Micro group sessions	15
This report	15
WHO WAS INVOLVED?	16
Delivery leads	16
Advisory group	16
Expert speakers	16
Other stakeholders	17
Assembly members	17

Onboarding	17
Demographics of Assembly members	17
PREPARATION	19
Pre-engagement	19
Micro groups	19
Communication	20
Recording and sharing evidence	20
Creating a welcoming space	20
THE ASSEMBLY PROCESS	21
Assembly member journey	21
Design of the Assembly sessions	21
Assembly process in detail	21
Overview of the Assembly sessions	22
Outputs from the Assembly sessions	23
Day 1: Climate change and Westminster	23
Day 2: Future Westminster – pathways to net zero	25
Day 3: Ideation	29
Day 4: Recommendations	31
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	33
Assembly vision and principles	33
Vision for a net zero Westminster	33
Principles for delivering net zero in the fairest way	33
Final majority recommendations	34
Recommendation 1 (91%)	35
Recommendation 2 (89%)	36
Recommendation 3 (87%)	37
Recommendation 4 (96%)	38
Recommendation 5 (85%)	39
Recommendation 6 (85%)	40
Recommendation 7 (80%)	41



Recommendation 8 (87%)	42
REPORTING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS	43
Climate Leadership Group	43
Full Council	43
ASSEMBLY MEMBERS LEARNING AND EVALUATION	44
Before the Assembly	45
Looking forward	45
Hopes about the process	46
Fears of the process	47
What did this all mean?	47
During the Assembly	48
Day 1 – Karim’s favourite part	48
Day 2 – Judith’s favourite part	48
Day 3 – Nader’s favourite part	48
Day 4 – Rashmi’s favourite part	48
After the Assembly	49
Highlights	49
Lowlights	51
Views on the topic	52
Value of expert speakers	53
Inclusion	53
Rating different parts of the Climate Assembly Process	54
Micro groups	54
Experience of different roles during the Climate Assembly	55
Staying Involved	55
Comparison Data: what changed between the start and the end of the Citizens’ Climate Assembly	57
Climate change and the council	57
Feelings towards affecting change	58
Perspectives on being listened to	59
NEXT STEPS	60
CONCLUSION	61

WESTMINSTER CITIZENS' CLIMATE ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

The members of the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly are a group of 47 randomly selected people, who broadly represent the people of Westminster. They are:

Albert	Francesca	Peter R
Alec	Genevieve	Petya
Aleix	Hala	Rabih
Ali	Ismahan	Rachel
Amadeo	James	Rashmi
Amanda	Judith	Raymond
Anna	Karim	Shamim
Awatif	Kishan	Siddarth
Ayfer	Maria	Simon
Belgacem	Miranda	Sofia
Bryony	Nader	Sonia
Chen Chen	Najaf	Sidney
Clarissa	Nilufar	Veronica
Cyrille	Patricia	Wafa
Daniel L	Patrick	Yu Sang
Daniel G	Peter C	



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone involved in making the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly happen. Our sincere thanks go to every one of the participants, Advisory Group members, guest speakers, facilitators, support and logistics team members, councillors, Directors, and Climate Emergency team members at Westminster City Council.

We'd like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the **University of Westminster**, for their exceptional hospitality provided across both Assembly weekends.

Westminster City Council ¹

Westminster City Council (WCC) commissioned the work and partnered with Involve and Sortition Foundation to deliver the Citizens' Climate Assembly.

Involve²

As the UK's leading public participation charity, Involve develops, supports and campaigns for new ways to involve people in decisions that affect their lives. They have designed and delivered some of the most significant deliberative processes to have taken place in the UK to date. Involve led the design and facilitation of the Citizens' Assembly and compiled this report with support from the council and Assembly members themselves.

The Sortition Foundation ³

The Sortition Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in recruiting and selecting people by lottery to take part in these kinds of events, in a way that is broadly representative of the wider populations. The Sortition Foundation promotes the use of sortition (random selection) in decision making. They were responsible for recruiting people to take part in the Citizens' Assembly. Their aim was to ensure the Citizens' Assembly was broadly representative of the diversity of the population of Westminster.

Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly Advisory Group

An independent advisory group was established to oversee the design and implementation. Their role was to provide advice and guidance to ensure the Assembly plan, evidence and materials were accurate, balanced, and unbiased.

Speakers and subject matter experts

The Assembly heard from a range of subject-matter experts and speakers who shared their lived experience and knowledge during the Assembly sessions. Each of these added important insights into the topics the Assembly was focused on.

¹ [Homepage | Westminster City Council](#)

² [involve | people at the heart of decision-making | involve.org.uk](#)

³ [Sortition Foundation](#)

Wider stakeholder engagement

Involve and the council led four pre-engagement workshops with a range of local stakeholders, to inform the design of the in-person Assembly sessions.

Oguzhan 'Ozzy' Secir, Founder, Illustrator, 2D Animator at Live Doodle

Ozzy live scribed all four in-person Assembly sessions, capturing both the content and activities delivered across both weekends.

Richie Summers

A professional photographer and videographer, Richie attended all four in-person Assembly days to capture images and video clips of the initiative. Richie then pulled video clips together to develop a summary video of the Assembly, which is available on Westminster City Council's YouTube channel⁴

RP Training⁵

Trained First Aiders from RP Training attended the Assembly sessions to provide medical support to attendees who were in need.



⁴ [Citizens' Climate Assembly 2023 Final Summary- YouTube](#)

⁵ [RP Training- Home](#)
 Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly

FOREWORD

In declaring a climate emergency in September 2019, Westminster City Council acknowledged the critical importance of our role in helping to tackle the climate crisis. With the change of administration in 2022, the council recognised the need to accelerate our action to cut emissions and prepare the city for the future impacts of climate change. However, we also accept that we do not have all the answers to achieving this.

Since becoming Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters, it has become clear to me that only through working together and drawing on our collective experiences, ideas and circumstances will we find solutions to tackling the climate emergency that really work. It was with this in mind – alongside the desire to give Westminster residents a more prominent voice in our climate change response – that we set about delivering our first ever Citizens' Climate Assembly.

The Assembly process has surpassed all our expectations. I had the pleasure of attending each in-person session and witnessing the participants' journey over the four days, aided by an incredible range of experts and speakers. It was truly inspiring to see residents from all walks of life come together, build lasting connections, develop their knowledge on the complex and varied issues associated with climate change, and confidently present their recommendations.

I am hugely proud that the Assembly facilitated the unity of diverse voices from across Westminster, to share ideas, perspectives, experiences, and enable us to learn how we can best meet the challenge of the climate emergency together.

Over 100 individuals were involved in planning, designing and delivering the Assembly- many of whom kindly volunteered their time to join us on some very warm weekends over the summer! I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in supporting the Assembly. But, most importantly, I'd like to thank each participant for their honesty, enthusiasm, and dedication to the process. Without them, the Assembly would not have been possible.

Our Assembly members have worked hard to develop recommendations for tackling climate change in Westminster – it's now over to us all as a city to consider how best we can act on them. The council will develop a response to the recommendations, outlining what action is possible for us to deliver directly, or where we may need to work in partnership with city-wide stakeholders, or beyond, to take them forward.

We will continue to work with the Assembly and our wider communities to tackle the climate emergency and through working together, help make our climate emergency ambitions a reality.

Councillor Matt Noble

Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly brought together a randomised group of 47 diverse residents from Westminster across June and July 2023, to develop a set of recommendations in response to the following question:

How can we overcome the main barriers to Westminster becoming a net zero city by 2040 together? How do we ensure this is delivered in the fairest way?

Assembly members were invited to consider the Assembly's question through the following lenses:

- My Westminster- as a city and a place
- My Community- local groups, areas, and neighbourhoods
- My Home- households and individual behaviours

Assembly vision and principles

Assembly members created a vision statement for a net zero Westminster, and a set of key principles for delivering net zero in the fairest way. These outputs provide an important bedrock for the Assembly's recommendations, and the journey to net zero 2040.

Vision for a net zero Westminster

Empower communities and businesses to work together to build a sustainable and resilient environment that fosters a healthier and greener way of life.

Principles for delivering net zero in the fairest way

- *Prioritise climate change actions in the buildings we live and work in*
- *Make our actions transparent, measurable and independent from the political process*
- *Engage and educate the community to enable fair and inclusive decision making*
- *Create incentives for both businesses and citizens to create change*
- *Drive change through equity, inclusivity and co-ordination between all stakeholders.*



Recommendations

Together, Assembly members produced 8 majority, and 5 minority recommendations for the council to consider and take forward. These recommendations are summarised below, along with their respective levels of support as a percentage of agreement.

MAJORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

91%

RECOMMENDATION 1

To fund and support **greening initiatives and projects**. Both in terms of **increasing biodiversity** and developing **green infrastructure** and technologies.

89%

RECOMMENDATION 2

Building and introducing **renewable energy technology** on new and existing infrastructure, while also supporting current initiatives.

87%

RECOMMENDATION 3

Energy efficiency rating on any organisation, whether for profit or not, which owns, manages, or occupies one or more non-residential buildings in Westminster. Provide **incentives** for and assistance in hitting targets. **Publish this data** for transparency for the council website and promote through **WCC communication channels**.

96%

RECOMMENDATION 4

It should be **mandatory** for all types of businesses to ensure that developers **reuse and recycle materials** and **minimise** energy use. This should be complemented by the revised **one-stop circular construction** website, that offers easy access to all.

85%

RECOMMENDATION 5

Make climate action the **top priority** when updating planning policies and documents and giving approvals. Pay particular attention to **prioritising climate action** in listed buildings.

85%

RECOMMENDATION 6

Develop an **educational programme** for the community (including schools) which builds green skills. **Green skills** include; active lifestyle, living sustainably, growing food, recycling, cooking, gardening, and nature.

80%

RECOMMENDATION 7

Recycling needs to be **scaled up** by all stakeholders to include a **wider variety** of waste streams. Information should be provided in simpler, easy to understand language, and multiple languages most appropriate to **Westminster's diverse community** and visitors.

87%

RECOMMENDATION 8

Review, Adapt & Act – We expect WCC to reconvene the citizen's Assembly **annually**, regardless of political affiliation and independent of the election cycle, to account for its progress and to re-state goals in light of any shortfall.

MINORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

76%

MINORITY RECOMMENDATION 1

Create a **WCC climate and related health support team**. A home visit scheme run by WCC that is either **voluntarily requested** or **recommended** by health and other social services. Giving guidance advice and offering **affordable improvements** on **health and climate efficiency**.

76%

MINORITY RECOMMENDATION 2

Ensure WCC '**business community partnership scheme**' is tailored towards achieving **net zero**.

67%

MINORITY RECOMMENDATION 3

Lobby the government to introduce legislation to **limit / restrict** the availability of **carbon credits** to all businesses, whilst also **incentivising** with funding for abiding businesses.

65%

MINORITY RECOMMENDATION 4

Council provided a **carbon calculator** for SMEs (small medium enterprises) with **integrated advice**. Resources (they will use) and that provides measured tax breaks for carbon reductions that **reflects the size and budget** of the organisations.

46%

MINORITY RECOMMENDATION 5

Reprioritise residential and commercial areas to **favour sustainable transport**. **Reduced reliance** on private vehicles in favour of alternatives – walking, cycling etc.

Impact

The initiative not only produced the comprehensive set of recommendations, principles and vision listed above, but, more significantly, demonstrated the wider value of effective partnership working in addressing collective challenges such as the climate emergency.

On participants

The Assembly had a strong and positive impact on the perceptions of Assembly members regarding climate action, their view of the council and how far they believed they could influence decision-making. The percentage of members who agreed with the statement *'In general, I feel that I have the ability to influence decisions Westminster council makes'* increased from 27% to 63% between the first and second weekend of the Assembly.

On the wider public

Through a successful external communications campaign, the level of knowledge of the Assembly across the City of Westminster and beyond is high; this offers a significant opportunity for the public to understand the role of Citizens' Assemblies, and to instil greater public confidence in the democratic deliberative process.

On the council

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly has clearly demonstrated the success of this method of inclusive resident engagement. The council now recognises the value of the approach to supporting wider council ambitions on working in partnership with Westminster's communities to resolve challenging local issues.

On policy

As a citizen-centred process, the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly has fuelled momentum around climate action across the city, by providing the council and city-wide stakeholders, with an informed and inclusive public mandate to deliver effective initiatives to reach net zero by 2040.



INTRODUCTION

Context

Westminster City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, setting out their ambitions to be a net zero carbon council by 2030, and to work with City-wide stakeholders to become a net zero city by 2040.

Westminster's Climate Emergency Action Plan⁶ has been adopted as a framework for guiding the city to net zero by 2040. The Plan aims to accelerate the reduction of carbon emissions across Westminster, through a comprehensive set of actions grouped across five themes:

- Efficient buildings
- Clean and affordable energy
- Sustainable travel and transport
- Reduced consumption and waste
- Green and resilient city

Achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2040 will require ambitious action across all parts of the city, by businesses, cultural organisations, the public sector, communities, and individuals.

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly was commissioned by the council to ensure the needs and views of residents were fully reflected in ongoing work to understand how to promote city-wide action on climate change. Assembly members were able to learn about the key challenges identified through the council's efforts so far and develop ideas about how to enhance current activity, to put the city on a stronger footing to achieve net zero by 2040. They were invited to explore how best to overcome these challenges through the lens of fairness.

⁶ [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)
Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly



Background and principles of a Citizens' Assembly

In recent years, there's been a growing global emphasis on making democratic decisions in a thoughtful and inclusive way. This means encouraging discussions where everyone's voice is heard, so we can make better decisions together.

In this changing world of democracy, Citizens' Assemblies are one approach that stands out. Members of these assemblies talk carefully, look at issues from all angles, and get input from a wide and balanced range of experts and local groups. This helps them come up with well-informed recommendations for decision makers, based on a range of perspectives and insights.

Citizens' Assemblies are a key part of modern democracy because they make sure everyone gets a say, especially those who might usually be left out or not shout the loudest.

There are fundamental elements to ensure that Citizens' Assemblies are robust and trustworthy processes for engaging people in decision-making and tackling complex societal issues. By adopting these principles, Assembly members can contribute to more informed and inclusive policy making.

Key principles for a Citizens' Assembly:

- **Representative** – random selection of people, using demographics to arrive at a representative sample, or 'mini-public.'
- **Inclusive** – careful planning and management to make sure everyone can take part, and that each voice is heard.
- **Independent** – the Assembly operates independently from political parties and special interest groups. Recommendations are not influenced by external factors.
- **Inquisitive and reflective** – with sufficient time for critical thinking, questioning and discussion.
- **Balance of evidence** – learning from a range of people with relevant expertise and experience.
- **Deliberative** – complex issues are explored; different viewpoints are considered, and Assembly members can make well-informed decisions.
- **Transparent** – the process, including how people are selected and how information and material are gathered, is transparent and open to public scrutiny.
- **Well-resourced** – sufficient resources, including appropriate time, financial and logistical support, is provided so that the Assembly can carry out its work effectively.
- **Accountable** – Assembly recommendations are taken seriously by policy and decision makers and lead to meaningful actions.
- **Follow-up and implementation** – there is a plan for how the Assembly recommendations will be implemented into decision-making processes.



What happened?

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly brought together 47 randomly selected residents, reflecting the diversity of Westminster, across June and July 2023.

The Assembly's calling questions were:

How can we overcome the main barriers to Westminster becoming a net zero city by 2040 together? How do we ensure this is delivered in the fairest way?

Assembly members were invited to consider these questions through the following perspectives:

- My Westminster: as a city and a place
- My Community: local groups, areas, and neighbourhoods
- My Home: households and individual behaviours

Climate Assembly days

During the Climate Assembly days, members were invited to hear evidence from a range of expert speakers, deliberate as a group and create recommendations. Each day was structured around the following focusses:

- Day 1: Climate Change and Westminster
- Day 2: Future Westminster – Pathways to Net Zero
- Day 3: Ideation
- Day 4: Recommendations

Micro group sessions

Alongside the Climate Assembly days, Assembly members joined micro group sessions which provided a chance for small group discussions that supported people to ask questions, raise issues, make new connections and for relationships to grow.

This report

This report sets out how the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly worked, who was involved and what it achieved. It has been written by Involve and Westminster City Council and reviewed by Assembly members and members of the Assembly's Advisory Group, to ensure the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly has been represented as faithfully as possible.

The report highlights the Assembly process, details each of the agreed recommendations, and reflects the wider learning and views of Assembly members.



WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Delivery leads

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly was commissioned by Westminster City Council. The design and facilitation of the Assembly was supported by Involve, a public participation charity specialising in deliberative processes that help involve citizens in decisions that affect their lives.

The selection of Assembly participants was led by the Sortition Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in recruiting and selecting people by lottery to take part in Assembly events, ensuring they are broadly representative of the wider population.

Advisory group

The Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly was overseen by an independent Advisory Group. The role of the Advisory Group was to provide advice and oversight, ensuring the Assembly's design, evidence and materials were accurate, balanced, and unbiased.

Members of the Advisory Group:

- Pancho Lewis, Climate Citizens Project
- Syed Ahmed, Energy for London
- Professor Graham Smith, University of Westminster Climate Deliberation
- Rhona Cadenhead, Former Executive Director, Waltham Forest Council
- Teele Pekh, DD Foundation, Deliberative Democracy Expert
- Jonathan Rosenberg, Paddington Development Trust

Members of the Advisory Group were invited because of their expertise either in climate change, Westminster's local community, or the subject of participatory democracy in general. While the group doesn't have any decision-making powers, it was able to make sure that the Citizens' Assembly considered a range of issues linked to the overarching questions, both within the borough and at a regional, national, and international level.

Expert speakers

The Assembly also brought together subject matter experts from a wide range of academic, private, and voluntary sector organisations to help participants explore some of the biggest barriers and opportunities for local climate action, to share their professional and/or lived experience, and to act as a sounding board for participants as they formulated the Assembly recommendations.



Other stakeholders

A range of stakeholders were engaged with the Citizens' Climate Assembly. These included representatives from local voluntary/community organisations and businesses, council officers from across the organisation, and Cabinet Members.

Assembly members

Assembly members were recruited by the Sortition Foundation via a two-stage lottery, with invites sent out to 10,000 randomly selected households in the London Borough of Westminster. Individuals within households who received the invitation were able to register their interest to participate.

The Sortition Foundation then used random selection to arrive at 51 people who would be chosen as the Assembly members. This stage involved grouping residents based on characteristics like age, gender, and ethnicity to make sure that the final selection accurately reflected the diversity of Westminster's population.

Assembly members received a £360 'Thank You' Gift for taking part, paid as a bank transfer after the final weekend. Payment in vouchers was offered for anyone who was concerned about receiving a bank transfer. Additional costs, such as transport were covered, to reduce financial barriers to participation. Support such as interpretation and childcare were also offered.

Four people withdrew before the first weekend due to personal commitments which meant that 47 Assembly members went through the process rather than the 51 originally aimed for. Hitting the target was therefore 92% successful.

Of these 47 members there were no further withdrawals during the process itself, which means a retention rate of 100% during the event was achieved.

Onboarding

As the Assembly was being delivered in-person, great care and attention was made to ensure that all participants were able to fully take part. During the initial selection process, Sortition Foundation asked about individuals' confidence and individual circumstances.

Staff from the Involve delivery team spoke to each participant before the first session to welcome them to the process, and ensure they had everything they needed to take part, including paid childcare.

Demographics of Assembly members

The infographic below shows the demographic breakdown of the 51 recruited Assembly members.



SEX



AGE



ETHNICITY



DISABLED UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT



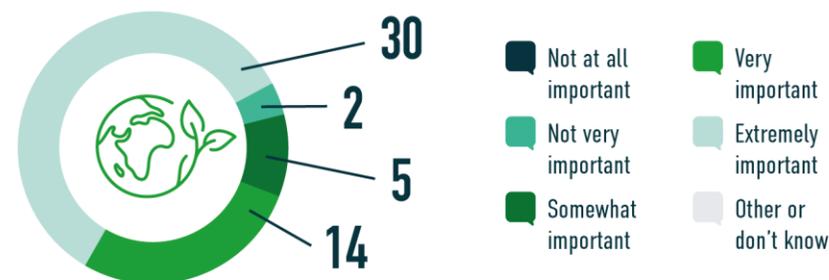
FINANCIAL COMFORT



GEOGRAPHY



CLIMATE OPINION



PREPARATION

Special care was taken throughout the planning, design, and delivery of the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly to make sure the venue, content and activities were meaningful, accessible and impactful for all.

Pre-engagement

Involve and Westminster City Council led four wider engagement workshops with a range of stakeholders. The purpose of each workshop was:

- To raise awareness about the purpose and ambition of the Assembly.
- To explore the barriers associated with reaching net zero by 2040 in the fairest way, from a range of perspectives.
- To allow an opportunity for attendees to input into the Assembly content.
- To allow attendees to make suggestions of expert speakers to contact.

Two workshops were hosted with several representatives from local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, and businesses. This was an opportunity for the wider community and council partners to feed into the design of the Assembly.

An internal workshop was held with a broad cross section of council staff, and then a final workshop was attended by Cabinet Members. These offered an opportunity to find out more about the Assembly process, and its potential long-term impact.

Micro groups

Alongside the two in-person weekends, three 'micro group' sessions were held to give people a chance to get to know each other better in a relaxed space. These were held online, with one occurring ahead of the Assembly, one in between the two weekends and a final session during the week after the Assembly had finished.

This enabled participants to be part of a small group that stayed the same throughout the Assembly. Each group was supported by a facilitator from the Citizens' Assembly delivery team, providing space for asking questions and talking together. Facilitators also used the micro groups to share useful information and provide additional opportunities for reflections and deliberation.

Individual tech introduction sessions were provided for any participant who wasn't confident about using the micro group online Zoom platform.



Communication

A detailed communications plan was created for the Assembly by the council's communications team.

The Assembly's communication goals were to ensure that all audiences- both external and internal – were able to access clear information about the Assembly, its process, goals, and the path that its participants were taking.

A secondary goal was to ensure that all of the content would be accessible as a future documentary record of the Assembly, for transparency purposes and as a point of reference for participants and beyond.

A range of communication channels were used to engage with a variety of audiences. A bespoke section of the website was created as a hub for visitors to learn about the Assembly, and to host content gathered throughout the in-person sessions. Additional council channels were used including newsletters, special bulletins, a range of social media and a wider press release.

Recording and sharing evidence

All the evidence presented to Assembly members throughout the process was recorded by a videographer and uploaded to the council's website. The recordings and other supplementary materials were also shared with Assembly members to access between weekends to refresh knowledge, or to refer to in their own time.

Creating a welcoming space

To ensure Assembly members were able to participate in the learning, deliberation and decision-making phases in a comfortable and inclusive way, careful consideration and planning was taken when agreeing on an appropriate venue for the Assembly.

The delivery team ensured that the venue provided:

- Prayer rooms, accessible at any time.
- A quiet room, for anyone who needed some time out, with support on hand if needed.
- Long lunches and plenty of refreshment breaks, allowing everyone to unwind and connect with each other. Food provided also met a range of dietary requirements.
- Facilitator and support team briefings, which were vital to ensure awareness and understanding of the local context- ensuring the best support was provided for all Assembly members.



THE ASSEMBLY PROCESS

Assembly member journey

Assembly members participated in around 30 hours of learning, deliberation, and decision-making in total. The process was designed by Involve and Westminster City Council, with input from the Advisory Group and stakeholders who attended pre-engagement workshops.

The overall design of the Assembly days took members through three key stages:

- **Learning:** about the basics of climate change, its local impacts and opportunities for change through the lens of fairness.
- **Deliberating:** on all information provided through the learning phase.
- **Decision-making:** agreeing on a final set of recommendations through rounds of voting.

Design of the Assembly sessions

Each in-person Assembly session was facilitated by Mel Stevens and Pandora Ellis from Involve. Small group discussions were facilitated by an independent facilitation team from Involve. There was one facilitator for each of the seven small breakout groups made up of between six and eight participants. The seating plan was organised based on demographic data gathered through the recruitment stage, to ensure that the smaller working groups were balanced and broadly representative of the whole Assembly.

Officers from Westminster City Council also supported as notetakers during the Assembly in-person sessions.

Throughout the weekends, the members of the Assembly heard and discussed a range of evidence from other residents, community groups, local and national subject-matter experts, and the council, before developing their recommendations for overcoming barriers to net zero in the fairest way.

Assembly process in detail

Details of each Assembly session can be found on the council's dedicated Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly webpages⁷.

These webpages explain each activity in detail, as well as reference the expert speakers who supported the Assembly sessions. Most of their presentations were recorded and are linked to throughout the webpages.

⁷ [Citizens' Climate Assembly | Westminster City Council](#)
Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly



Overview of the Assembly sessions

Assembly Day		Phase	Purpose
Weekend 1	Day 1 Climate Change and Westminster	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure members are comfortable and understand what's expected of them. To outline the Assembly process and understand why it has been established. To set the context on climate change and the wider challenges it presents. To understand Westminster's context and the work the council has already started. To set out some of the main barriers that need to be navigated to deliver on our net zero goals.
	Day 2 Future Westminster – Pathways to Net Zero	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To set out some of the potential pathways towards achieving net zero emissions. To understand the importance of climate justice and how this is critical to a successful climate action response. To set out some of the practical actions that can be taken from citywide to individual level to tackle the climate emergency. To empower members to consider the future of Westminster and inspire them to explore what needs to be done to achieve our net zero goals. To create a vision for a net zero City of Westminster.
Weekend 2	Day 3 Ideation	Deliberation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a list of ideas for recommendations based on the understanding of barriers and opportunities for climate action set out in Days 1 and 2. To evolve a set of prototype recommendations for testing with a panel of external experts. To collectively agree the set of prototype recommendations to take forward to Day 4.
	Day 4 Recommendations	Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To finalise and agree a set of final recommendations. To present the final agreed recommendations from the Assembly.



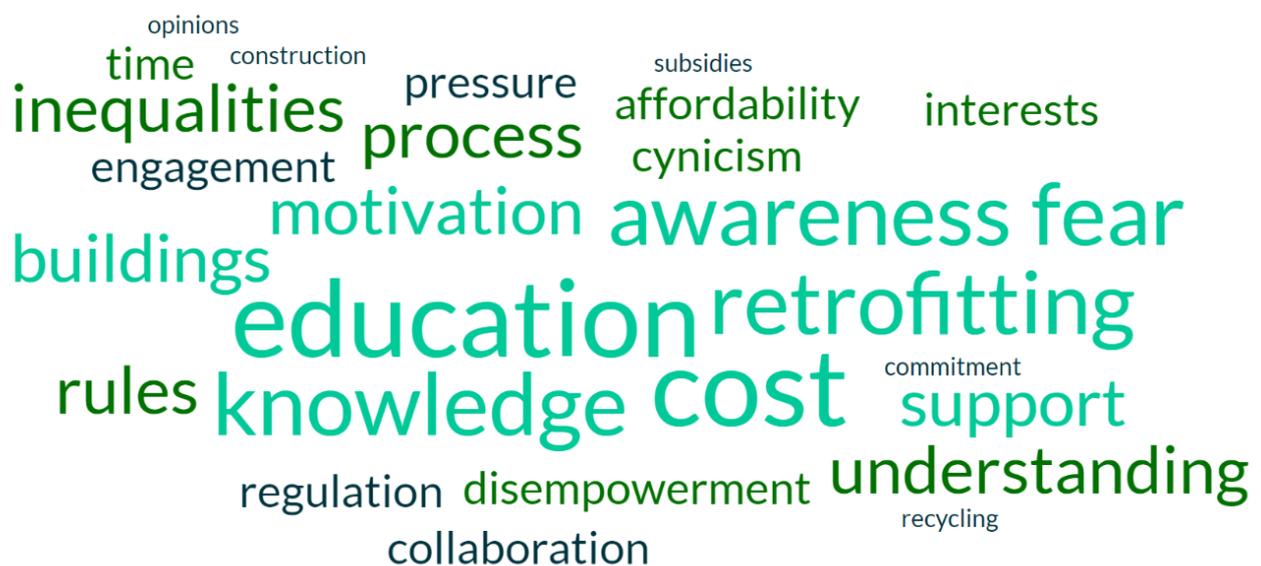
Output: Long list of barriers

Based on the information Assembly members gathered through presentations given by a range of speakers, they worked on their tables to develop a long list of barriers associated with reaching net zero by 2040.



These were explored through the three lenses of My Westminster, My Community and My Home, to help members consolidate their thinking.

A summary of the barriers the identified is displayed below:



Day 2: Future Westminster – pathways to net zero



Output: Principles of fairness

Assembly members heard from some speakers in the morning of day two, to explore climate change through justice. Members were then encouraged to consider key principles for Westminster to reach net zero in the fairest way:

Industry businesses and local government should be targeted to take immediate action to protect and support the most vulnerable

Those who are disproportionately affected need to feel supported through climate education and governmental grants

Prioritise deprived areas and areas with more pollution should be supported

Support schemes (both financial and educational) for the poorest citizens to access green developments (e.g. solar panels, smart meters)

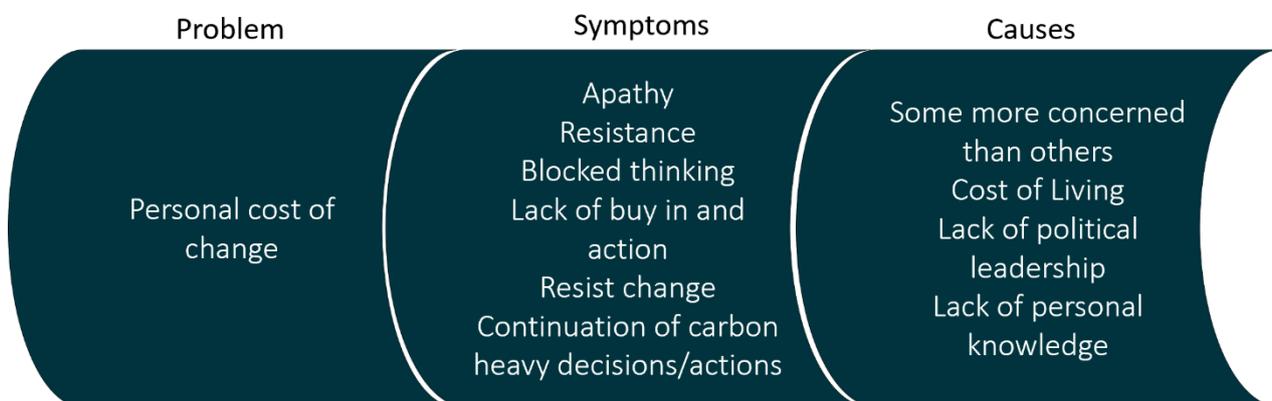
Give power to communities to make informed decisions

Equity to be driven through policy that ensures proportionate contribution from all sectors of society, very importantly the policy must be built by people representing all sections



Output: Root causes maps

Assembly members worked on their tables to decide on a key barrier that had been identified on day one, and to explore this in more detail by considering the symptoms and causes of the problem.



Output: Vision statements

Assembly members heard from a different set of speakers during the afternoon of day two, ahead of mapping out some initial ideas and thoughts for a vision for a net zero Westminster. Members were encouraged to step in the shoes of:

- Children
- Business owners
- Older people
- People on low incomes
- Commuters
- People with disabilities
- Historic buildings and monuments

After developing a long list of ideas for a vision, Assembly members voted on their top three vision statements which they improved between weekend one and weekend two ahead of adopting a final vision statement during the second weekend of the Assembly.

Output: Information requests

Assembly members had the opportunity to complete an Information Request Form, to request further information to be shared with them ahead of weekend two to support their learning.

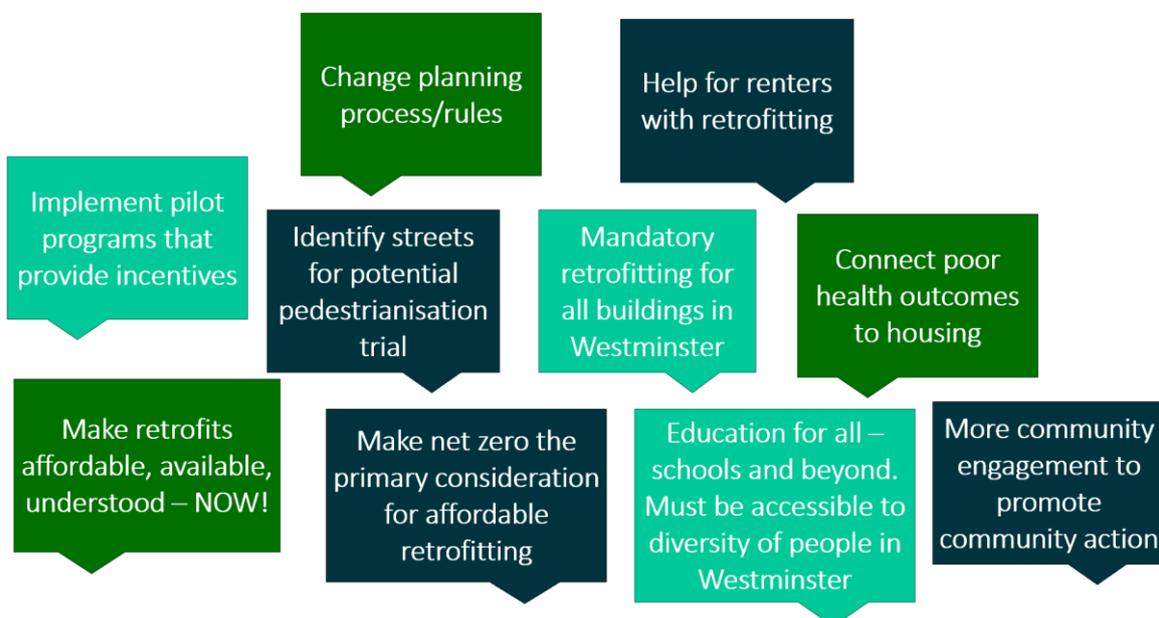


Day 3: Ideation



Output: Long list of ideas

Assembly members generated a long list of ideas for answering the Assembly’s calling question, based on all the information and insights they received during the first weekend.



Output: Creating ideas for testing

Assembly members then used a designed template to turn their ideas into overarching ideas that were suitable for testing with a range of experts. They were able to note down feedback from testing partners, and deliberate on how the insight they were provided would impact on the idea.



Day 4: Recommendations



Assembly members went through a rigorous process of refining their recommendations, reviewing versions of recommendations before voting on their final recommendations to agree on as a group.

They then worked on their tables to prepare the presentation of their recommendations to the council.



FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Assembly vision and principles

Vision for a net zero Westminster

Empower communities and businesses to work together to build a sustainable and resilient environment that fosters a healthier and greener way of life.

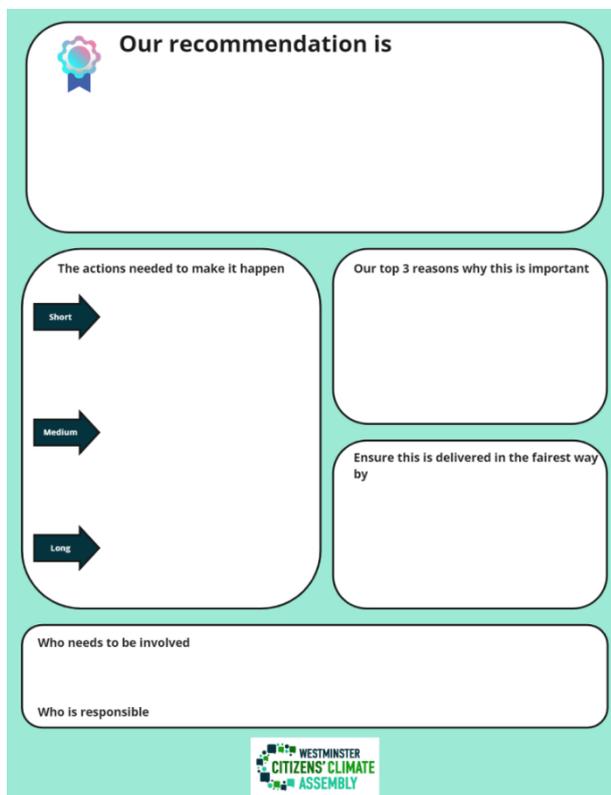
Principles for delivering net zero in the fairest way

- *Prioritise climate change actions in the buildings we live and work in*
- *Make our actions transparent, measurable and independent from the political process*
- *Engage and educate the community to enable fair and inclusive decision making*
- *Create incentives for both businesses and citizens to create change*
- *Drive change through equity, inclusivity and co-ordination between all stakeholders.*



Final majority recommendations

In developing the final recommendations, members were asked to consider all the information they had received throughout the process, and complete various sections within the final recommendation poster template, below.



Our recommendation is

The actions needed to make it happen

Short

Medium

Long

Our top 3 reasons why this is important

Ensure this is delivered in the fairest way by

Who needs to be involved

Who is responsible

WESTMINSTER CITIZENS' CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

Assembly members produced a set of eight majority recommendations, and five minority recommendations for the council and City-wide stakeholders to take forward.

- Those receiving 80% agreement or more, became a majority recommendation.
- Recommendations receiving under 80% but over 40% were recorded as minority recommendations.
- One prototype didn't achieve the required level of support for being either a majority or a minority recommendation so was dropped altogether.

Strong support was given to all eight of the Assembly's majority recommendations, and they are detailed below as originally developed by the Assembly members.



Recommendation 1 (91%)

To fund and support greening initiatives and projects. Both in terms of increasing biodiversity and developing green infrastructure and technologies.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct mapping survey. ● Research regularly if not already conducted. ● More tree planting (faster, easier, less red tape). ● Rejuvenation of areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage full spectrum of experts including (not exhaustive) engineers, charities, finance, tech, science. ● Communicate at public and local level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Change and amend national legislation including new, increase, modify, remove. ● Measure transparently and independently audit including live analytics, test stations and publication of achievements.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health benefits (physical and mental). ● Energy management and reduction. ● Foster sense of community pride and fuels further change encouraging shared cohesion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all areas benefit prioritise disadvantaged areas. ● Subsidise and fully fund the services to make them more accessible to all.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The council (accountable) for policy and execution. ● Charities to direct support and provide expertise including not for profit e.g., education bodies. ● Private sector (small businesses are involved). ● Large enterprises involved due to funding and integrating these. 	<p>The council.</p>



Recommendation 2 (89%)

Building and introducing renewable energy technology on new and existing infrastructure, while also supporting current activities.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining initiatives that promote clean energies (EVs, carbon offset price). • Creating economic incentives to make goals commercially viable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilising public space to generate clean energy (bus stops, footpaths, roofs, solar, roads etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and leveraging new technologies (kinetic...).

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86% of carbon emissions come from buildings. • 11% of carbon emissions come from road transport. • Cleaner air and energy for Westminster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable communities are benefited through the initiatives. • Tackling the cost implications for companies and residents by creating new policies (like subsidies).
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council. • Residents. • Businesses. 	<p>The council.</p>



Recommendation 3 (87%)

Energy efficiency rating on any organisation, whether for profit or not, which owns, manages or occupies one or more non-residential buildings in Westminster, provides incentives for and assistance in hitting targets. Publish this data for transparency for the Council website and promote through WCC communication channels.

Actions needed to make it happen		
Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and ambitious policy, communication and education directed at businesses. Incentivise businesses that are willing to participate in order to stimulate participation. 	<p>Establish a system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently updates data on a live website for monitoring and accountability purposes. Rates businesses on a scale similar to energy rating used for white goods. Requires businesses to display rating on the premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement and reporting of performance.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial buildings are the biggest polluters in Westminster. Individuals are disproportionately impacted by emissions. Public information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give businesses time to improve and / or prepare for retrofit. Strengthen enforcement for non-compliance.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community; including residents, workers, students, businesses (commercial and SME). The council. 	<p>The council and definition of organisations as listed above in top box.</p>



Recommendation 4 (96%)

It should be mandatory for all types of businesses to ensure that developers reuse and recycle materials and minimise energy use. This should be complemented by the revised one-stop circular construction website, that offers easy access to all.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise website communication and awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate benefits to businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate rules and regulations so that businesses can comply.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring businesses are proactive. • Reduce construction waste. • Preserve resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate amounts that can be used by businesses depending on business type and size. • Continuous monitoring and auditing of website (updated stats). • Enforcement through penalties but encouragement through incentives e.g., public accreditation.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council and communications Team. • Government. • Construction Industry. • Businesses. • Communications Team. 	<p>The council & Government & regulating bodies.</p>



Recommendation 5 (85%)

Make climate action the top priority when updating planning policies and documents and giving approvals. Pay particular attention to prioritising climate action in listed buildings.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Change WCC’s attitude towards heritage challenged buildings. ● Engage public resistance to changing public buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create steering group to advise WCC’s planning dept on updating existing policy to prioritise climate action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure policy change is implemented and regularly updated.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Buildings in Westminster contribute 86% of CO2. ● Westminster has highest proportion of heritage buildings in UK. ● Immediate impact and low cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Steering group including external stakeholders from community and professional experts.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lobby at national government level. ● Climate action steering group. 	<p>The council’s planning department.</p>



Recommendation 6 (85%)

Develop an educational programme for the community (including schools) which builds green skills. Green skills include: active lifestyle, living sustainably, growing food, recycling, cooking, gardening, and nature.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop educational programme (curriculum) Targeted at all ages. ● Gain funding/investment from local business partnerships. ● Promote programme through social media/website/local radio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practical workshops available in community hubs, youth clubs, sports clubs to broaden outreach of educational programmes. ● Involve the wider community through events (e.g., food sharing events with cuisine from all over the world) + networking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get feedback from all ages about how educational event are working. ● Assess and evaluate the impact: event attendance, food growing, parent participation. ● Target every school in Westminster. ● Gardening space at schools for the school community.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skills for the future to help us reach net zero by 2040. ● Increase awareness, positivity, and action. ● Social cohesion behind a common goal. ● To create job opportunities in the green sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involve older people in the community. ● Involve foreign students (ESL) English as a second language. ● All schools- free to take part. ● Support people from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schools/academics/head teachers/trustee/governors. ● Business partners. ● Climate Ed (educational charity). ● MPs/Department of Education. ● Mayor + the council. 	<p>The council.</p>



Recommendation 7 (80%)

Recycling needs to be scaled up by all stakeholders to include a wider variety of waste streams. Information should be provided in simpler, easy to understand language, and multiple languages most appropriate to Westminster's diverse community and visitors.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase collection and capacity: 2x recycling collections per week. • Support repair cafes and initiatives for repair, reuse, and upcycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce schemes to incentivise recycling e.g., bottle deposits and a points-based rewards scheme with vouchers and discounts. • Setup the infrastructure to recycle WEEE centrally. • Incentivise sustainable consumer and business behaviour e.g., refills, reusable products, sustainable packaging that are more affordable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing resources and space equitably across Westminster to parks, households, gardens to process green waste.

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by rewarding consumption waste, landfill, and incineration. • To enable greater understanding and participation in waste, reuse, reduction, and recycling. • Greater resource efficiency, promoting a circular economy including cradle to cradle design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and effort for the comms and education to be equitably divided across Westminster. • Information accessible in multiple ways (e.g., leaflets and website) and accessibility options (e.g., colour blindness options). • Charity support to increase training and support for people with multiple and complex needs that are willing and able to participate.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses, households, blocks- Housing Associations/Estate Managers. • Individuals: Landlords, Tenants, Tourists, and visitors. • The council & Central Government including historic sites. • Charities- especially on repurposing and repair. 	<p>The council & local government. Elected officials at the council & GLA.</p>



Recommendation 8 (87%)

Review, Adapt & Act - We expect WCC to reconvene the Citizen’s Assembly annually, regardless of political affiliation and independent of the election cycle, to account for its progress and to re-state goals in light of any shortfall.

Actions needed to make it happen		
<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Medium Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create future calendar of continuing the Assembly. • Create an action plan of recommendation. • Establish a Citizens’ Climate Assembly committee comprising one representation from all stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the progress of the recommendation of through existing channels (emails, letters, flyers etc. in multi-languages). • Creating the new first draft of the new dashboard including recommendation holder’s mapping progress, outcomes, partners of each recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 360 degree interactive and accessible dashboard covering status of recommendation from ideation to realisation • Regular annual assembly to be made more accountable of every recommendation

Our top 3 reasons why this is important	Ensuring this is delivered in the fairest way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability and transparency for both stakeholder citizens/council. • Continuous performance improvement of recommendations. • Identify deviation, assess their impact, and implement appropriate controls to mitigate them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency is a key aspect of fairness, one single source of truth in dashboard to include end to end recommendation stream map between the council and its partners implementation that particular recommendation. • Dashboard to be implemented on the climate emergency web page and non-digital channel to be accessible and inclusive. • Data accuracy quality- user access training and contextual understanding to making informed decisions.
Who needs to be involved?	Who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible citizens of Westminster, and expert citizens. • The council’s partners. • Head of Councils. • The council’s experts. 	<p>Named councillor.</p>



REPORTING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The delivery of the Assembly was intended to be the start of the conversation, rather than the end. Therefore, it was decided to involve Assembly members in the process of reporting their recommendations to the council.

Climate Leadership Group

7th September 2023

A delegation of Assembly members volunteered their time to officially present their recommendations and support a conversation at the council's quarterly Climate Leadership Group meeting, attended by all Cabinet Members. This marked the official handover of the recommendations to Cabinet.

Full Council

20th September 2023

Following this, Cabinet put forward a motion at Full Council on 20th September 2023, which tasked all Cabinet Members with responding to the recommendations. A volunteer from the Assembly delivered a speech at Full Council, reflecting on their experience in taking part, why the Assembly agreed on their recommendations, and what they hoped would happen as a result of their efforts.



ASSEMBLY MEMBERS LEARNING AND EVALUATION

Evaluation and learning have been an important part of the Assembly process.

By inviting a randomised group of residents to participate in the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly, a range of impactful outcomes have been achieved. Everyone who took part was able to bring their own distinct personalities, views, and experiences to the process, which meant that they were each able to take something different away from their involvement, whether it be an increase in knowledge, or simply making long-lasting connections with fellow residents.

Assembly members were asked to provide feedback before, during and after the Assembly sessions. The range of feedback below captures the wide-ranging significance of diversity, inclusivity, and active engagement, leaving a tangible impact for all.



Before the Assembly

Before the Assembly sessions, all Assembly members were asked to complete the *Have your say survey* at the start of their involvement. This was used to understand members' attitudes towards the topic and the process.

Forty-five people completed the starting survey. Not all members completed all questions and results are shown as percentages of those who completed each question. All numbers have been rounded up or down and therefore may not add up to 100%.

Looking forward

We asked people what they were most looking forward to as a member of the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly. 38 people responded, and comments centred around three themes.

Making a difference to climate change

15 members shared comments relating to this.

"Contributing to see change, in Westminster achieving net zero, at the quickest rate possible".

"Having the opportunity to influence the decisions made about Climate action by Westminster Council".

Being involved in discussions

13 members sharing comments about meeting other residents, being heard, and listening to other people's views.

"Meeting other residents to understand their perspective".

"Being able to be heard and having a positive input on the council's goals".

Learning

Mentioned by 10 members, specifically learning about the topic (knowledge, issues, and ideas) and learning about what the council is doing.

"Finding out what can be realistically done to get the council closer to 'net zero'. I am looking forward to the experts' views on this and the pros and cons of different options".



Hopes about the process

38 people responded when asked what they hoped to achieve through taking part. Some key comments are captured through the themes below:

Affecting change/action

The main theme, mentioned by 25 respondents, highlights participants' hopes to affect change/action.

“For the recommendations formed to influence positive change and decisions in my local community to fight climate change”.

“Positive change and the building of a partnership between the Council and the community to help combat climate change”.

Learning and listening

Three respondents flagged their hopes to learn more and be listened to.

“Getting to understand more about the agenda”.

“That residents views are listened to and actioned upon”.



Fears of the process

We asked people if there was anything about the upcoming process that concerned them. 36 people responded, with a range of concerns, captured through the themes below.

Recommendations not being implemented, and no future communication.

Six respondents mentioned concerns about their recommendations not being implemented, and that they won't receive any feedback on the outcomes of their recommendations.

“We will not be fed back the outcomes/results of the event and that government will not acknowledge what we dedicate our time to. That it simply will be an event that can be politicised as a positive thing rather than actually being used to learn and implement change from”

Not being listened to

Five respondents flagged concerns that their contributions may not be listened to.

“General public concerns will be bypassed”.

“Not being taken seriously by other residents as a younger participant”.

What did this all mean?

Feedback captured from the pre-Assembly survey was analysed by the Delivery Leads and considered when designing the Assembly sessions. This was important to ensure that Assembly members felt comfortable, and their hopes and fears were addressed throughout their participation.

Below is an example of how this feedback influenced the Assembly sessions:

Ensuring participants felt listened to

By fellow participants – Assembly members spent some time on Day 1 agreeing on their ‘ways of working’, which included the development of conversation guidelines to create a safe, respectful space for all. These were displayed through all Assembly sessions for participants to refer to.

By the council – council colleagues were available at each Assembly session to answer any questions or concerns Assembly members had. A council colleague was also on each of the tables across the room, to take notes and anonymously capture the wider insight and comments from participants throughout the activities. This insight has been analysed and shared with relevant colleagues across the council to support the development of projects and initiatives.



During the Assembly

Forty-seven Westminster residents took part in the Citizens' Climate Assembly and were encouraged to speak to council colleagues to share their highlights of each day through several vox-pops.

Day 1 – Karim's favourite part



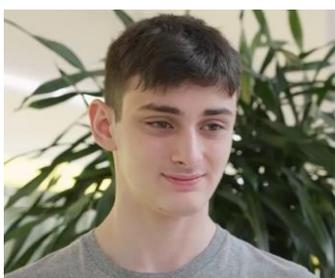
"I think my favourite part was the speaker carousel, because I got to talk to a lot of different experts and a lot of different activists and ask them a lot of questions".

Day 2 – Judith's favourite part



"Everybody came here differently, everybody is from a different community, a different background, a different surrounding... but we all understand that we have to work really hard".

Day 3 – Nader's favourite part



"By including a diverse and very general population in this Assembly, we can come to decisions that benefit all, especially myself as the youngest person at the Assembly, I think it's really great that we are including the people that will be affected by this the most".

Day 4 – Rashmi's favourite part



"Getting everyone together on a table and discussing, that's been a very good learning experience".

"What I've also learned from the last three days is that I think we are talking similar language here... it's a collaborative effort where businesses and individuals need to come together".



After the Assembly

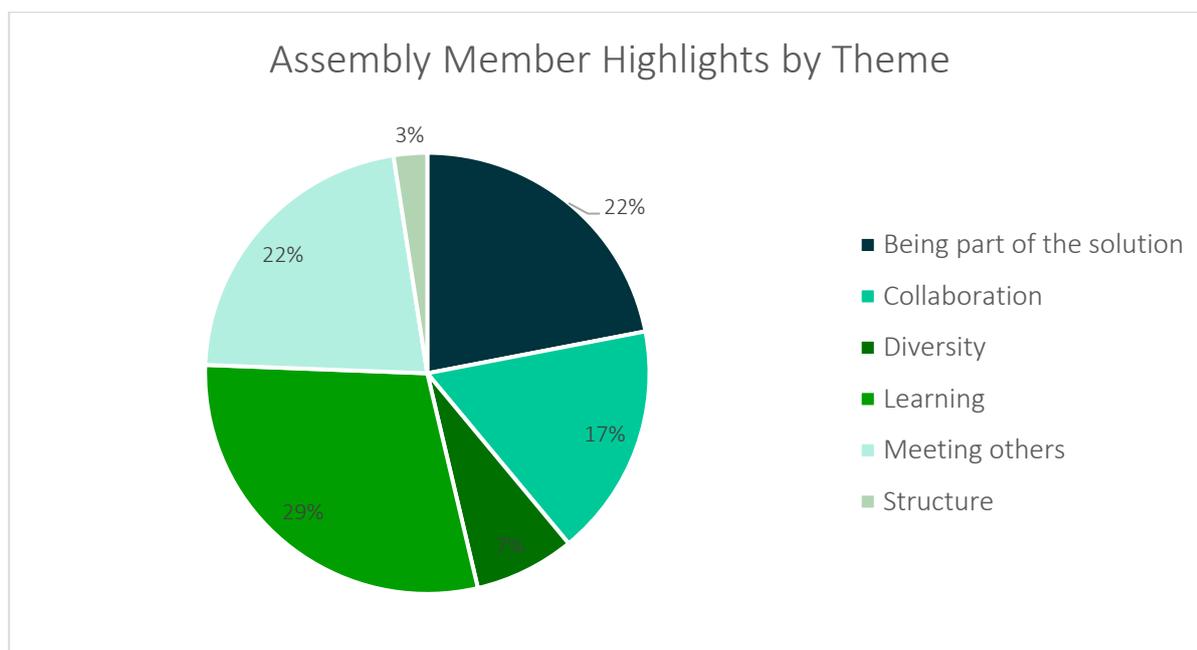
Another *Have your say survey* was sent for Assembly members to complete at the end of the process, asking participants to share their highlights, lowlights, feelings, and suggestions for improvement as well as their thoughts on the different elements of the Assembly process.

41 Assembly members completed the survey. Not all respondents completed all questions and results are shown as percentages of those who completed each question. All numbers have been rounded up or down and therefore may not add up to 100%.

Highlights

What was clear from the range of highlights Assembly respondents shared, was that each participant derived a unique highlight from being involved, which speaks to the broad impact of inviting such a diverse range of people to take part in the Assembly.

Comments from 41 respondents to this question, were themed by the following:



Learning

Twelve Assembly members suggested the value of the **learning** element of the Assembly process as their main highlight.

“The opportunity to learn/hear directly from experts from different fields and disciplines relating to climate change”.

“The knowledge I gained from the experts and presentations”.



Being part of the solution

For nine respondents, a notable aspect of their experience was their contribution to the solution.

“Being able to interact and discuss with many kind and intelligent people, to have great discussions and come up with innovative ways to reach net zero by 2040”.

“Great to have a voice in the process”.

Collaboration

Working together and collaborating with others was a key highlight for seven respondents.

“Seeing people working together and reaching an agreement on ideas to put forward”.

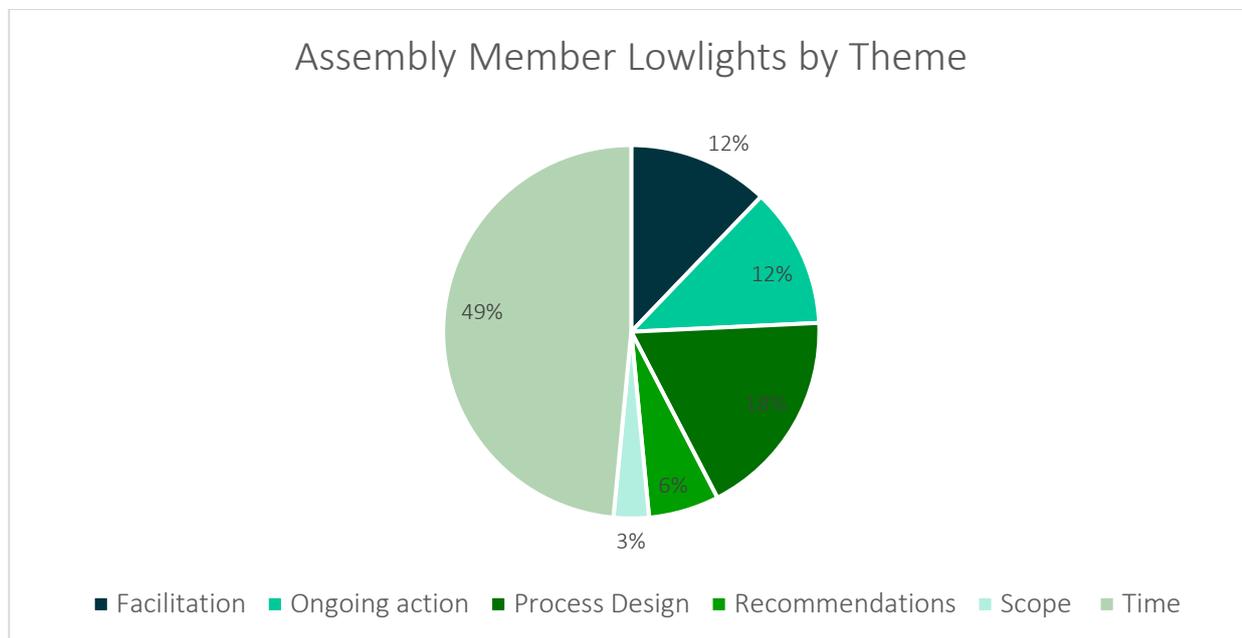
“Opportunity to meet and work with a mix of other residents”.



Lowlights

There were 33 responses from Assembly members who kindly shared their lowlights.

These comments were themed into the following categories:



Time

A key issue that Assembly Members flagged, were feelings around not having enough time to either digest the information provided during weekend one, or to deliberate and agree on the recommendations throughout weekend two.

“Some stages of the Climate Assembly felt rushed as we had to quickly get through them”.

“Not having enough time to process so much information”.

“Not having enough time to sufficiently formulate a robust action plan of recommendations and requests that addresses existing barriers and concerns regarding fairness/equality. Also, the little information we had on the council’s capabilities to implement/influence certain recommendations before we made them”.



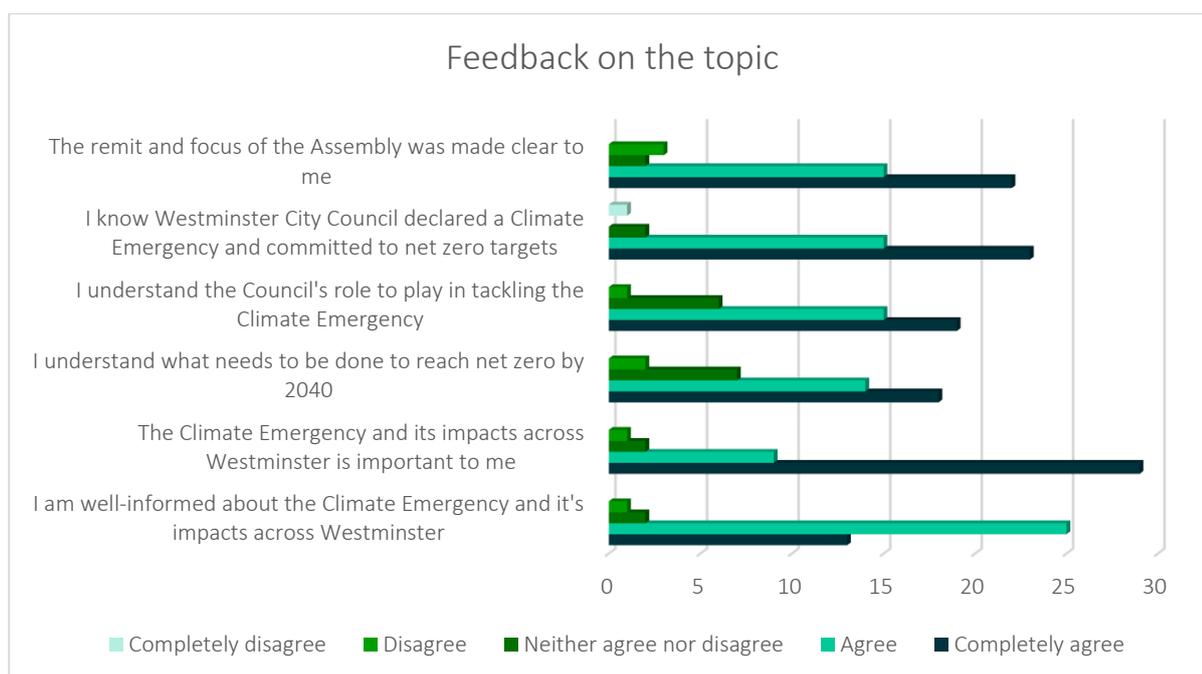
This feedback is really valued and has become an integral component of our learning from this experience. In future we will seek to build in more time for participants to hear from experts, ask questions and enhance their learning. Additionally, we need to provide more time for members to have thoughtful deliberation before reaching their recommendations.

Nonetheless, the fact that a significant concern from Assembly members was the lack of time provided for various activities, underscores the deep commitment of Assembly members to this process.



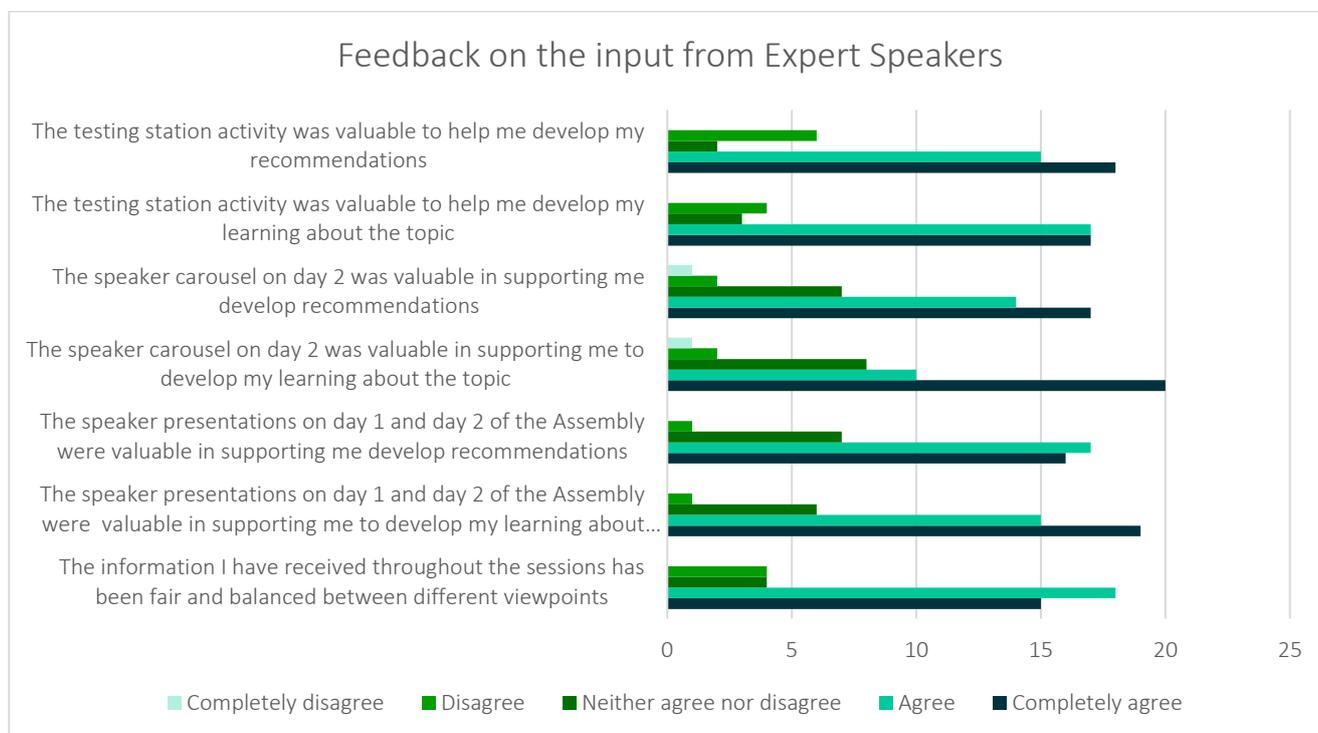
Views on the topic

Taking part in the Climate Assembly, increased members' engagement with the climate emergency and their role in achieving net zero.



Value of expert speakers

The input from experts was valuable for supporting the Assembly members' development of their learning and creating their recommendations, with over 70% of respondents agreeing that all inputs were valuable. The testing station had the largest number of disagreements for developing recommendations with 15% of respondents disagreeing on this point.



Inclusion

18 Assembly members provided comments on things that were particularly important for helping them take part and feel welcome. Being friendly, welcoming, and helpful were frequently mentioned, as was the venue and refreshments. Other factors included encouragement to contribute, reassurance, points of contact and timing.

“Allowing us to take frequent breaks and providing food inclusive for all people. For example, also providing halal and vegetarian food”.

“I think you worked hard and succeeded in establishing a welcoming, friendly and supportive forum”.

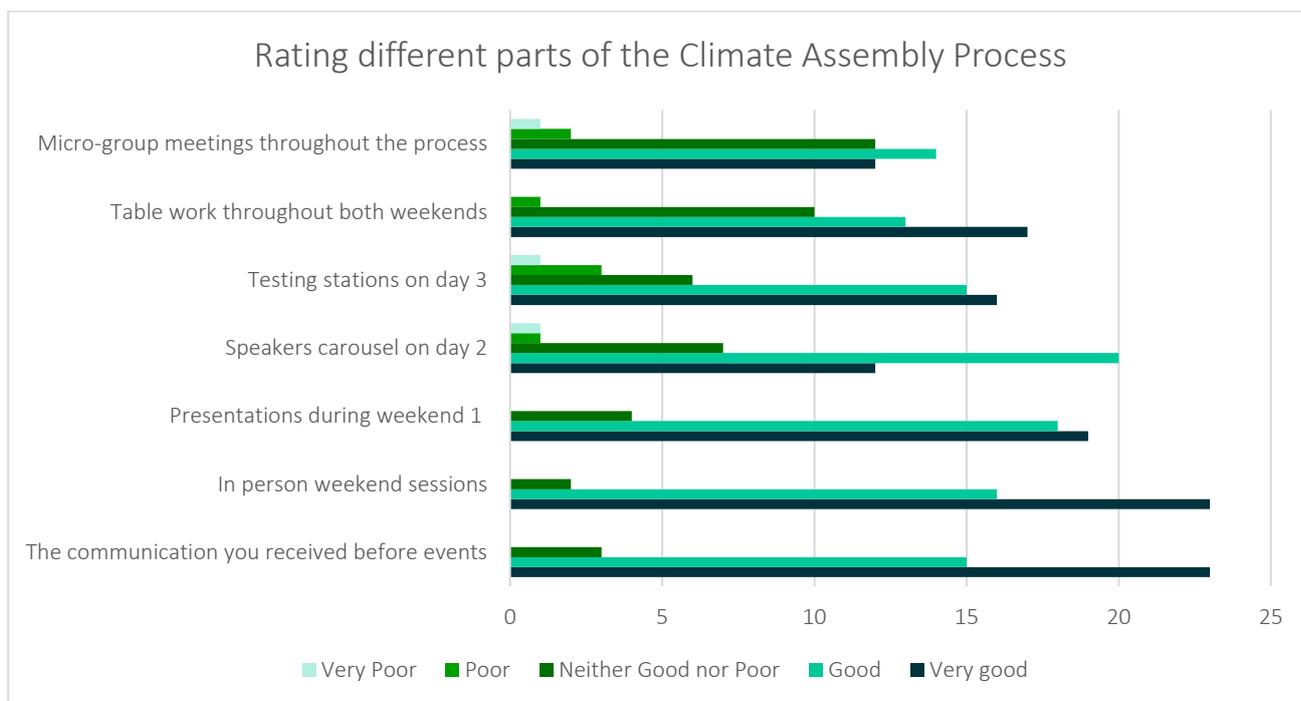
Two Assembly members shared that there had been issues that prevented them from fully taking part which were due to the heat on the first weekend, the background noise occasionally; and the timing of the micro-group Zoom meetings due to their work schedule.

After issues were raised with the heat from weekend one, the venue was changed.



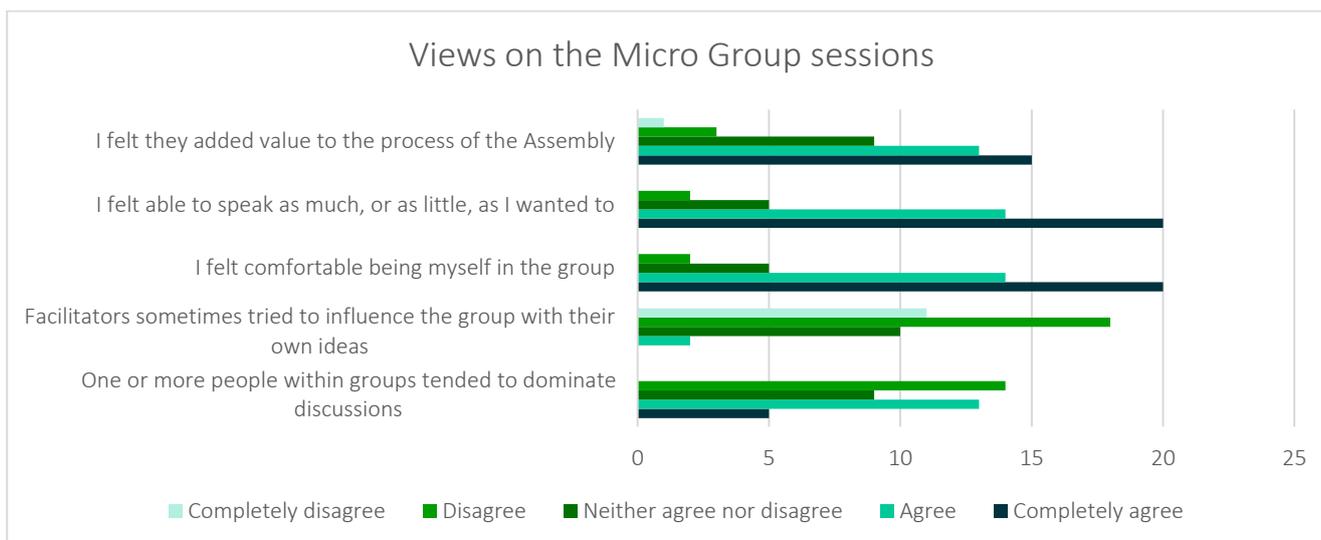
Rating different parts of the Climate Assembly Process

Overall, 39 respondents rated the Assembly weekend sessions either 'good' or 'very good' with 38 respondents rating the communication they received before the events 'good' or 'very good' also. The presentations during weekend 1 were also very highly rated.



Micro groups

We asked Assembly members about their experiences of the micro-groups.



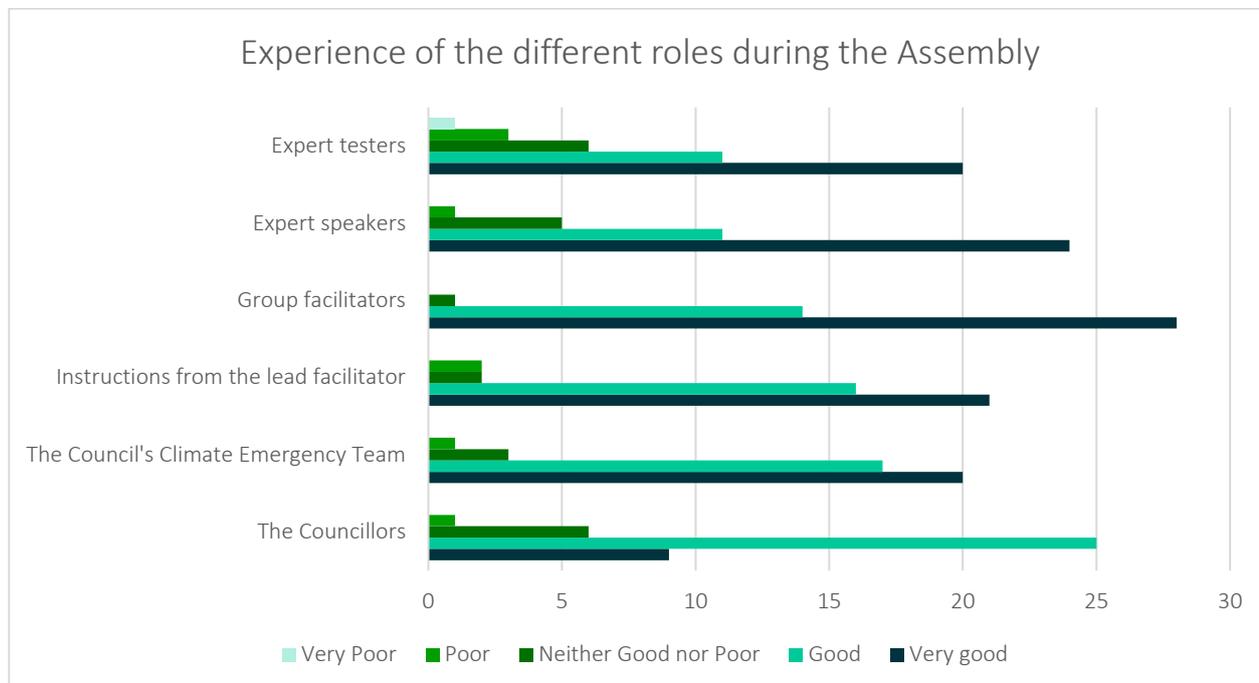
20 respondents completely agreed with the following statements: "I felt able to speak as much, or as little as I wanted to" and "I felt comfortable being myself in the group".

One respondent felt that they did not add value to the process of the Assembly.



Experience of different roles during the Climate Assembly

Assembly members overwhelmingly had a 'good' or 'very good' experience of everyone who contributed to the delivery of the Climate Assembly. The group facilitators received the highest positive ranking, with 28 respondents rating them as 'very good'.



Staying Involved

Assembly members were asked if they would like to stay involved with Westminster City Council beyond the Citizens' Climate Assembly. 71% of respondents indicated 'yes' or 'maybe' to a range of opportunities offered.

Aside from attending the celebration event for all those involved in the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly, most respondents were keen to receive a monthly environmental e-newsletter from the council.

All respondents have now been linked to these opportunities and 36 Assembly members provided consent for their contact details to be shared with the council to allow for ongoing conversations.

Around 10 Assembly members have stayed actively involved with the reporting of their recommendations at the council's Climate Leadership Group and Full Council.





Comparison Data: what changed between the start and the end of the Citizens' Climate Assembly

Aside from the valuable insight, feedback and data displayed above, some of the questions in both the pre- and post-Assembly 'Have your Say' surveys were identical, to support the comparison of responses. Consequently, we were able to track the impact of participation in the Assembly, on the attitudes, views, and perspectives of Assembly members.

Not all members completed all questions and results are shown as percentages of those who completed each question. All numbers have been rounded up or down and therefore may not add up to 100%

Levels of agreement increased for all responses to questions relating to the following themes:

Climate change and the council



There was a 40% increase in respondents feeling well informed about the climate emergency and its impacts across Westminster. There was also a 50% increase in respondents' knowledge about the council's declaration of a climate emergency, and commitment to its net zero targets.



Feelings towards affecting change



**64% agreed that the
Climate Assembly would
lead to positive change**



78%



**93% were happy to
take part in the
Assembly**



93%



**52% trusted Westminster
City Council to act on the
recommendations from
the Assembly**



73%



**50% felt confident
that their
contributions would
be listened to**



60%

93% of respondents were happy to take part in the Assembly both before and after the Assembly sessions, which is extremely positive.

There was a 21% increase in attitudes and views towards trusting Westminster City Council to act on the recommendations from the Assembly, and a 10% increase in respondents feeling that their contributions will be listened to.



Perspectives on being listened to



**27% felt that
Westminster City Council
listens to residents**



63%



**39% felt they could
influence decisions that
Westminster City
Council makes**



64%

There was a 25% increase in respondents feeling they can influence decisions that Westminster City Council makes, and an even bigger increase of 36% of respondents feeling that the council truly listens to its residents.

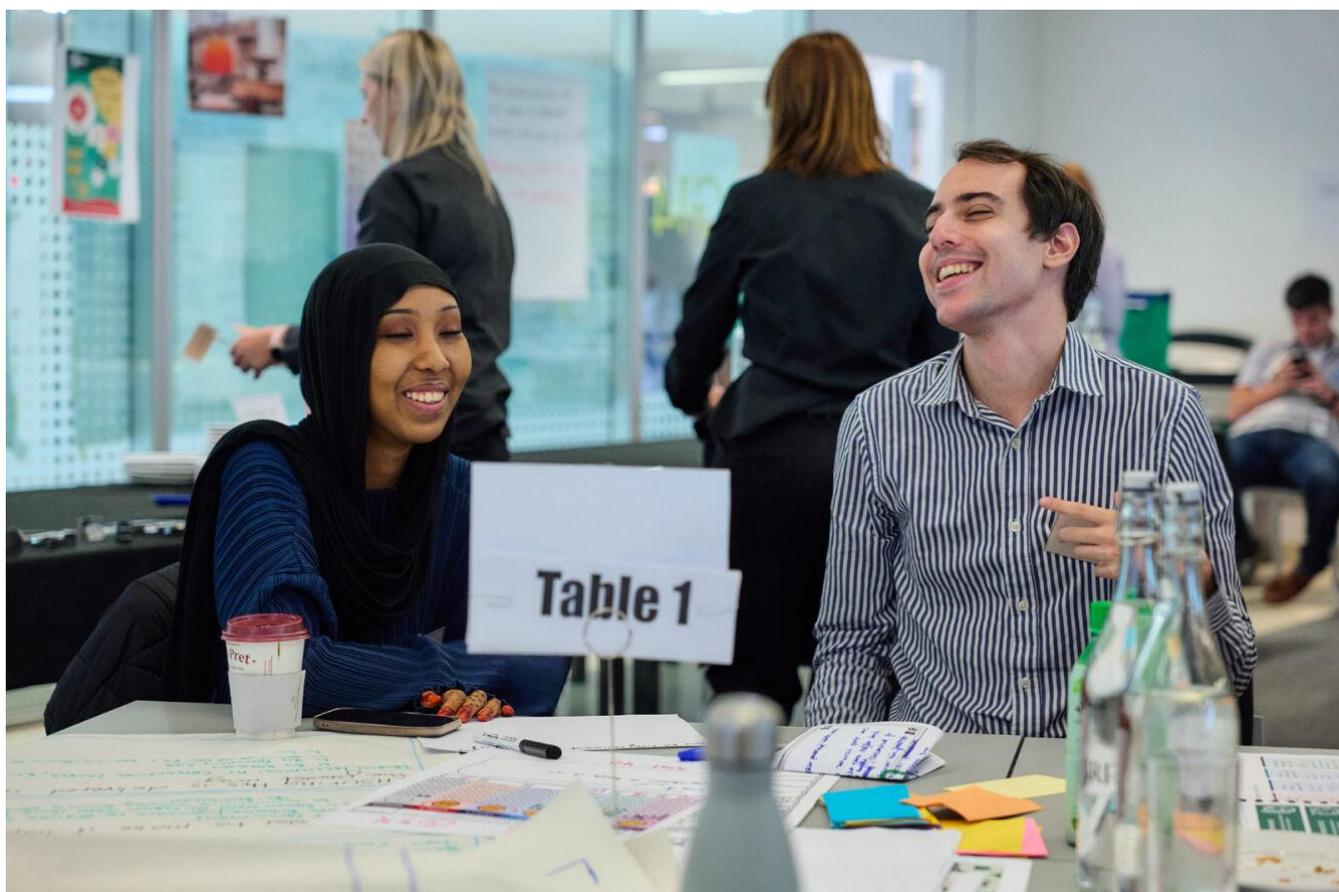


NEXT STEPS

The council is in the process of reviewing the Assembly's recommendations and exploring how they can be used to influence decisions concerning climate change across the City of Westminster. Although an evolving process, the initial step involves an evaluation of the council's ongoing activities to ascertain their synergy with the Assembly's recommendations.

Certain recommendations might necessitate the establishment of new initiatives, and this process will be guided by cooperative efforts with external stakeholders.

Once consensus is reached, a response to each recommendation will be disseminated to Assembly members and the wider public before they are integrated into the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as a result of the commitment of everyone involved, the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly was an incredible success. It has significantly enhanced the representation of residents' perspectives in Westminster's journey to net zero by 2040, helping to ensure the City's decarbonisation is fair and equitable for all.

As the first Citizens' Assembly commissioned by Westminster City Council, it serves as a model for the effectiveness of deliberative democracy, and of collaboration and partnership working, in addressing the challenges we collectively face.

This Assembly exemplified the value of supporting a diverse group of residents to effectively work together to learn, deliberate, and make decisions on one of the most significant challenges of our time. Every Assembly member contributed their distinct viewpoints, perspectives and lived experiences, ensuring the final recommendations genuinely reflected locally specific challenges and experiences in Westminster. We now have a concrete set of recommendations for ambitious action on climate change, to underpin our collective efforts to achieve a net zero carbon city by 2040.



