



## Commonplace case study

# Waltham Forest Mini-Holland

### Customer

London Borough of Waltham Forest

### Engagement

Public realm and transport

### Background

The London Borough of Waltham Forest secured £30m of investment in Mini-Holland, a programme to radically improve cycle routes and public spaces across the borough.

### Challenges

Highly controversial programme meeting **high opposition** by drivers and lobbyist groups.

Delivering a borough wide programme in a **timely manner**, on budget, with a small engagement team.

## Reaching beyond the vocal opposition.

Over **5% (15,000 residents)** of the borough were engaged over an 18 month period, including large proportion of **people aged under 40yrs.**

The Waltham Forest Mini-Holland is the **most advanced** of the three awarded schemes in London.

Engagement upheld by courts following demonstrations and petitions.

**Award winning.** It has been awarded the Sustainable City Awards 2016 and London Cycling Award 2015.

“**For the extensive consultation required, Commonplace proved to be a hugely constructive tool in engaging residents and businesses, and easily understanding their need.**”

Iain Killingbeck, London Borough of Waltham Forest

# 15,000 residents engaged in 10 different locations over 18 months

## Paving the way for big changes to the public realm

Traffic calming; blocking rat runs; improving conditions for walking and cycling - all require large-scale consensus-building. For each area Commonplace collected a clear evidence base to support change, and provided comparative data to inform strategy.



### The top four things businesses think will improve access to Lea Bridge Road for their customers



### Vs The top four things visitors think will improve access to Lea Bridge Road



Lea Bridge Road is one of the 10 focus areas of the programme. The initial perception survey gathered 1,010 comments highlighting key concerns and ideas on what people would like to see improved.

57% of businesses thought that better car parking will improve access to their shop, this was not raised as a concern by the people visiting i.e. their customers.

An area where the new scheme has already been implemented has shown a reduction of 56% in traffic levels and increase in walking and cycling, benefitting businesses.

## Respond in an informed manner to the public's voices

By using Commonplace, Waltham Forest adopted a genuinely open approach - which encouraged broad engagement and let all residents see the diversity of views about the Mini-Holland schemes. This was beneficial because it prevented any campaigning group from gaining traction.

Commonplace enabled the Council's leaders to understand the extent of support and objection, beyond headline-grabbing actions and petitions. This made it possible to fine-tune plans to meet specific local objections and observations, rather than getting swept into a war of attrition with vocal protest groups.

# Evidence-based decisions

## A strategic tool for senior decision makers

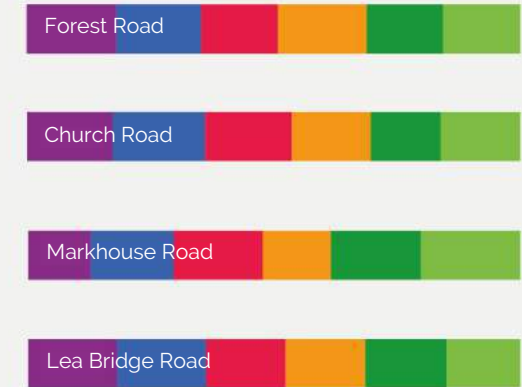
Not only did the project team use Commonplace, but senior decision-makers in the Council, including the deputy leader, also used the analytics to make strategic decisions.

Using Commonplace informs the design team about what the public needs in an area, and allows us to make informed decisions.

Amy Priestley, London Borough of Waltham Forest

### Top 6 Improvements

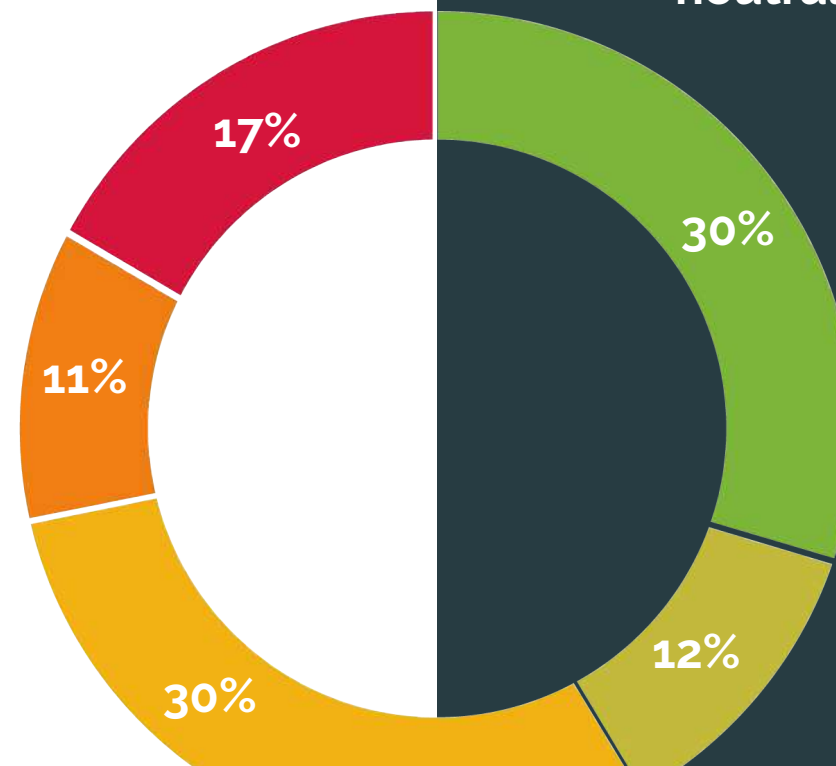
Respondents would like to see on roads.



- Protected cycle lanes
- More plants and trees
- More attractive streets
- Safer crossing points
- Less traffic
- Better pavements

# 72%

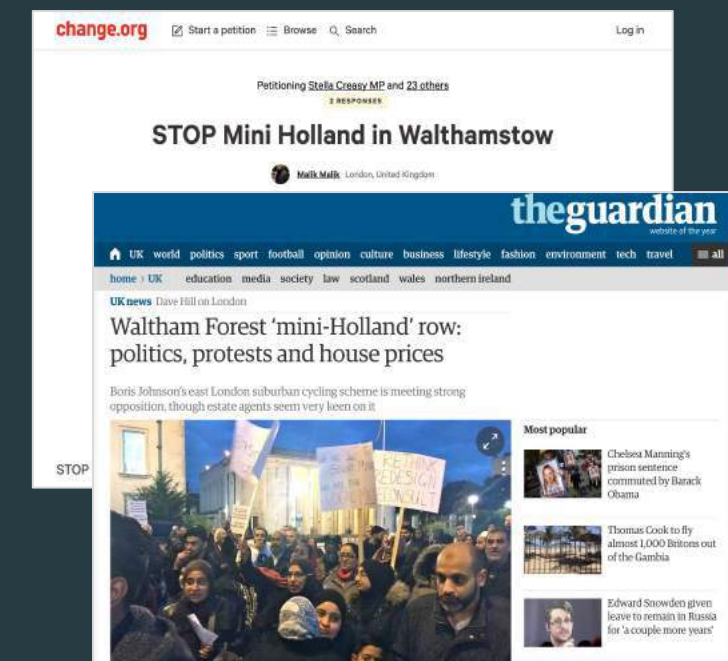
Of respondents were either neutral or supported the proposals



### How respondents felt about the Mini-Holland proposals on Commonplace

- Positive
- Somewhat-positive
- Neutral
- Somewhat-negative
- Negative

## The lobbyist's perspective



# More communication, better relations

## Explain clearly and communicate often

Commonplace made it easy for the Waltham Forest Council to communicate effectively with residents, so that everyone could see what was planned and help to shape it.

The Commonplaces created a strong feedback loop between residents and the Council, informed by attractive infographics to communicate key points.



Example Mini-Holland newsletter from January 2015

The amount of technical feedback from residents has been quite surprising! Details like the curb line and height of the curb. People really like to see positive change and that's what we are providing.

Amy Priestley, London Borough of Waltham Forest



Learn more about the scheme  
on Commonplace

Mini-Holland Commonplaces

<https://miniholland.commonplace.is>

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