MAKING THE CASE FOR PLACE

Report

REGENERIS

FUTURE OF LONDON
Future of London is an independent not-for-profit urban policy network focused on the challenges facing regeneration, housing, infrastructure and economic development practitioners in the capital. We are a borough-led membership organisation with a number of external partners, which provides top career development, expert-led policy research, and topical networking and speaker-led events.

Regeneris Consulting is an independent economics consultancy operating across the UK and internationally for private and public sector clients. It provides economic and social insight to help clients make better decisions and have a positive impact on people, places and the economy.
INTRODUCTION

Placemaking is a malleable term, open to interpretation. Whether it’s physical design characteristics, land values, job creation, biodiversity, new amenities or simply a sense of well-being, people assign different values to a place. Everyone knows a good place when they’re in one, but there’s no magic ingredient or singular approach.

Future of London’s 2017 programme, Making the Case for Place, did not set out to create an overarching definition or a (static) delivery framework. Our intention was to develop a set of cross-sector guiding principles for measuring the economic, social and environmental impacts of placemaking.

Focusing on value highlighted how some impacts are easier to value than others, and led us to sift through the myriad guidance, frameworks and toolkits for measuring different impacts of place. Although the traditional priority has been economic value, forward-thinking organisations are leading the way to a more holistic appraisal. We are grateful to research partner Regeneris for reviewing and evaluating this guidance – it is a key element of the report, and helped to shape the programme.

Beyond formal impact measurement, most people value placemaking implicitly. Places are defined in large part by people – it is vital that we harness their energy, enthusiasm and knowledge early enough that it can influence design, as this will make better places.

Running throughout 2017, the programme has brought together over 500 people from the public, private and community sectors, and included a debate, senior roundtables, practitioner workshop, full-day conference and six field trips to places undergoing change across London.

We have distilled this wealth of input, knowledge and experience into this report, which includes:

• An explanation of different user perspectives on placemaking
• An assessment of placemaking valuation guidance
• Case studies of emerging approaches to valuing placemaking more holistically across four themes:
  • Acknowledging what’s there
  • Assessing ‘softer’ value
  • Engaging innovatively
  • Measuring long-term success
• Guiding principles for placemaking delivery bodies
• Calls to action for policy-makers, delivery bodies, developers and communities

We are grateful to our partners Countryside Properties, Lendlease, Pollard Thomas Edwards, Mount Anvil and Regeneris for their contributions.
VALUING PLACEMAKING

Place is all around us, in the streets, parks and public squares that are infused with local and personal histories. The qualities that make a ‘place’ are to some extent subjective – what’s meaningful to one person may not be to another – but generally places may be defined by their buildings, design, land uses, and most importantly, the people in them. In turn, places shape people’s economic and social opportunities (e.g. access to education and good jobs, social networks, community spaces), health and well-being (e.g. opportunities for healthy lifestyles, sense of belonging, safety, happiness). With such high stakes, it’s vital to get placemaking right.

Why valuation matters

Any placemaking scheme will have different kinds of benefits, including:

- Economic value e.g. footfall, land values
- Social value e.g. people’s well-being, access to amenities
- Environmental value e.g. energy efficiency, biodiversity
- Fiscal value e.g. impact on the public purse

Some benefits are easier to measure than others. It is relatively straightforward to assign a numeric value to fiscal and economic impacts, whereas qualities that are ‘softer’, such as well-being or social connectivity, can be more difficult.

Although many would question the logic of putting a value on personal and intrinsic perspectives, demonstrating value is key to decision-making.

Local authorities balance their desire to deliver additional benefits for their communities with the statutory requirement to achieve Best Consideration, a complex set of rules and guidelines defined by HM Treasury’s green book (see page 8).

Although the rules state that local authorities must obtain the highest value for their assets, they can add more weight to quality and social impact in the procurement process. This can favour a bidder offering higher social infrastructure, even if their bid reduces the capital receipt.

Valuing placemaking could help developers to win work, but this is not the only reason they should do it. Designing places that are attractive, comfortable, encourage sociability and feel safe will help build good relationships with communities from the outset. If these qualities are carried through to completion, the final scheme will be popular, enhancing reputations and brands.

To make the most of these tools, both public and private sectors need to measure the value of a placemaking scheme holistically, and account for the softer benefits. This will be useful throughout a project’s lifecycle: from initial planning, design and case making, through to learning lessons and evaluating success.

Valuing placemaking: varying perspectives

It is not just local planning authorities and developers who value the impacts of placemaking; all development schemes have an array of stakeholders with a range of priorities.

The table on page 5 shows the breadth of priorities different stakeholders will have for a place, and how these might be ‘valued’.

To value softer elements of placemaking, practitioners need to seek the views of their communities, but there are challenges. Communities have different views and voices of varying strengths; it can be hard to get the full picture. In a place with a mix of uses, practitioners may find it overwhelming to decipher the range of competing interests. And some London-wide contradictions around regeneration loom large, with people wanting new amenities, but not associated growth, rent increases or demographic change.

With any long-term project, there is also the added difficulty of creating places for evolving communities, and balancing tensions between established communities and new or future incomers.

There is a delicate balance to be struck between empathy and pragmatism. It isn’t possible to please everyone, but that doesn’t mean practitioners should simply learn to live with criticism if it could have been avoided.
## Priorities of different stakeholders

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<td><strong>Developer</strong></td>
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<td>Reputation</td>
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<td>Quality and professional standards</td>
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<td>Footfall and community satisfaction</td>
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<td>Associated commercial benefits</td>
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<td><strong>Investors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Residents</strong></td>
<td>Affordability and protection of rights</td>
<td>Value/cost of home</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Connectivity/accessibility</td>
<td>Number and quality of amenities</td>
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<td>Access to amenities, services, space</td>
<td>Happiness, sense of community, sense of safety</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Protection and strengthening of social networks</td>
<td>Connectivity and mobility</td>
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<td><strong>Office businesses</strong></td>
<td>Quality of space</td>
<td>Quality of space</td>
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<td>Reputation/image of area</td>
<td>Recruitment and retention of workforce</td>
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<td>Connectivity and amenities</td>
<td>Reliability of accessibility and connections</td>
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<td>Affordability</td>
<td>Business costs</td>
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<td><strong>Public-facing businesses</strong></td>
<td>Footfall</td>
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<td>Affordability</td>
<td>Levels of spend/profitability</td>
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<td>Demography</td>
<td>Business costs</td>
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<td>Retention</td>
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<td><strong>Community Groups</strong></td>
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<td>Strength of community networks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>Area reputation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Representative engagement</td>
<td>Protected and enhanced services and spaces</td>
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<td><strong>Visitors</strong></td>
<td>Diversity of amenities and attractions</td>
<td>Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vibrancy</td>
<td>Time spent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connectivity and ease of access</td>
<td>Satisfaction/happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Letting agent</strong></td>
<td>Fees/income potential</td>
<td>Values achieved</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demand from potential occupiers</td>
<td>Length of time it takes to sell/let</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>Contribution to local story/pitch</td>
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Valuing the impact of place and placemaking can be formal and process-driven, or informal and organic. The approach depends on who is doing it and at what point.

While formal valuation can be undertaken by any individual, it is most likely to be undertaken by the organisations who have played a role in the design or delivery of projects, or business or resident groups affected by implementation.

Formal methods of valuation are typically more quantitative in nature, with robust measurements required to demonstrate performance and delivery against objectives. This can cover a broad range of metrics, from place-based economic performance indicators (such as jobs, footfall, turnover and property prices), to commercial and financial indicators (such as realised values and generated incomes).

These valuations make a fundamental contribution to planning, design, monitoring and evaluating a finished scheme, but they tend to miss the more intangible benefits of improving a place, such as happiness and community cohesion.

Most valuation by individuals and communities is informal; those affected by development come to their own implicit judgements without necessarily articulating or recording them. Some communities consider the intangible benefits, like well-being and social connectivity, as most important, but are not always given a platform to express their views when practitioners are making decisions.

Both formal and informal valuations of a place occur at different stages of a development by different people:

**Before delivery**

Placemaking planning and delivery bodies consider the value of placemaking at various times during project design and planning: initially, to inform the design and configuration of the project, and later, to demonstrate potential benefit and make the case for funding, strategic support and planning permission.

This may take the form of a technical business case for funding (typically focusing on economic and financial impacts), or an Environmental Statement where planning is being sought for bigger schemes (focusing on a broader range of environmental and economic measures).

In selecting a developer, local authorities are governed by ‘best consideration’, i.e. getting the best value from the disposal of public land. This can include economic, environmental and social value, though within a set of strict guidelines.

While these exercises are led by developers, designers and local authorities, other groups and individuals have an opportunity to input via consultations or the formal planning process. Getting sufficient early participation is a serious challenge for planners.

**Who values placemaking, and when?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL AUTHORITY</th>
<th>DEVELOPER*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARCHITECT/DESIGNER</td>
<td>LOCAL BUSINESSES/PEOPLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPERATOR/MANAGER</td>
<td>VISITORS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some developers retain ownership and/or management of a place after completion, while others hand over these duties to other bodies at this stage.
During delivery

Managers of big projects with longer timescales may be expected to track core project deliverables (e.g. delivery of new public realm and buildings) and direct results (e.g. creation of new jobs, sustainable supply chains, attraction of new investment). This is particularly the case where S106 commitments are involved or where public funds are being invested.

As with ‘before delivery’, parties tend to emphasise economic benefits.

While these valuation exercises are dominated by local/pan-London authorities, design professionals and developers, as tangible impacts emerge, community groups may start to place their own values on placemaking activities – for better or for worse.

After completion

This is usually the point that users of a place assess a scheme, most often informally. This is not a one-off occurrence; residents, users and local businesses will continue to judge how investment in their area impacts them as they go about their lives.

Partners with an ongoing stake in an area (particularly ongoing management) will continue to value investments and assets, considering costs, depreciation and dilapidation alongside positive measure of success.

For those who have been involved in delivery (e.g. public sector, funders and developers), valuation is often a one-off technical process. As a result of funding cycles and sign-off procedures, this will usually take place within six months of completion. This is a weakness, as many impacts of placemaking can take longer to emerge.

Summary

In summary, placemaking practitioners carry out formal valuations before and during project delivery, and evaluate shortly after completion. Those with a long-term stake in the scheme may do further evaluations, but this is rare.

Meanwhile, businesses, residents and users evaluate the impact of a place on their lives when they experience the results. They play the biggest role in evaluating the end result, but usually far less when a scheme is designed or delivered – i.e. at the point when their views could make a difference.

The graphic below is not definitive and there are exceptions, but it demonstrates typical patterns of engagement.
A range of documents, frameworks and toolkits inform current approaches to the measurement of impact and valuation of placemaking. Largely produced by and used within the public sector, these underpin many of the more formal methodologies currently used to value placemaking. While the private sector develops its own approaches to valuation, these are rarely shared.

For details on accessing the guides in this section, see ‘Evaluation toolkits and resources’ on p. 29.

**‘Colourful’ national guidance**

The UK government has provided overarching guidance on impact assessment, appraisal and evaluation since the Treasury Green Book was first published in the 1960s. The guidance cuts across a number of fields, from property developments to infrastructure investments. It is well established and has provided a consistent methodological and analytical base.

The Green Book sets out fundamentals for ‘robust’ economic appraisal. It is supplemented by supporting guidance documents such as the Magenta Book (which focuses on evaluation) and thematic guidance such as Department for Transport’s WebTag (which focuses on transport appraisal).

Although not strictly government guidance, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Red Book contains mandatory rules, best practice guidance and related commentary to inform valuation of physical assets. The Red Book promotes and supports consistency in valuation. The publication details mandatory practices for RICS members undertaking valuation services, ultimately providing value of assets, but also the ongoing costs of operation.

**Pros:**
- Strong starting point for formal appraisal and evaluation.
- Robust methodologies.
- Emphasises the importance of demonstrating added value (or ‘additionality’).

**Cons:**
- Focused on economic measures; less focus on wider indicators.
- Highly technical, inaccessible.
### Tools to measure impact

#### By theme

A broad range of toolkits and frameworks for measuring non-economic value (e.g. social, environmental or public health value) are used within the placemaking industry. Some of these are industry ‘standards’, others are approaches developed to provide overarching guidance and support for placemaking professionals.

**Examples:**
- Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust (HACT) – Social Value Toolkit
- Transport for London – Pedestrian Environment Review System
- Transport for London/Greater London Authority (GLA – Healthy Streets framework
- Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) – Town Centre Health Check framework
- Building Research Establishment (BRE) – BREEAM

**Pros:**
- Tailored methodologies to measure impacts which are, in many cases, more relevant to placemaking than overarching government guidance.
- Produced by experts in the field; typically well-researched and evidenced.

**Cons:**
- Overall lack of consistency in use/take-up of these frameworks, perhaps reflecting uncertainty about the extent to which the guidance is deemed ‘official’.
- Rarely holistic; a combination of approaches may be required to provide a comprehensive assessment.

#### By investment programme

Aside from the thematic assessment frameworks, in a number of instances, locally-produced guidance supports the monitoring/evaluation of specific public-sector interventions.

**Examples:**
- GLA – Outputs and outcomes framework
- Department for Communities and Local Government – Evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund 2014-2020

**Pros:**
- Consistent basis for measuring impact across multiple schemes.
- Allow results to be aggregated and for trends/patterns to be analysed strategically.

**Cons:**
- Broad scope.
- Best suited to public-sector investment: tend to focus on the most tangible impact measures (typically economic) and on shorter-term impacts (reflecting public-sector investment cycles).

#### By policy area

Aside from formal guidance, there are a range of impact reports which provide helpful intelligence for valuing placemaking projects. These typically focus on demonstrating the overall impact of policy/investment areas (e.g. investment in the public realm). Reports are based either on bespoke research or aggregated findings of previous research/evaluations. Such reports are typically published to inform policy development or for lobbying purposes.

**Examples:**
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) – The Value Handbook
- CABE – The Value of Public Space
- London Forestry Commission – Valuing London’s Urban Forest
- Living Streets – The Pedestrian Pound

**Pros:**
- Useful benchmarks on value of investment.
- Bespoke and focused research on a specific policy area.

**Cons:**
- Quality of the research can vary in robustness (for example depending on small sample sizes and dated research).
- Often a lack of consistency in how the research findings are used/publicised.
By project
Developers appraise projects on a scheme-by-scheme basis. Through the use of key performance indicators and scoring systems, companies can judge the place value of a scheme in comparison to other projects, as well as local and international best practice. They can also integrate salient parts of different frameworks and assessments into one system that suits their needs.

Pros:
- Project-specific.
- Detailed analysis.
- Integration of existing frameworks and guidance.

Cons:
- Private sector companies have little incentive to share their own model with a wider audience.

Weaknesses and gaps in placemaking valuation
While it would be impossible to design one approach to valuing placemaking to suit all themes, places and actors, the above review shows a complex and inconsistent picture. The table below summarises specific weaknesses and gaps that affect the quality of the monitoring and evaluation process, and ultimately of places.

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<th>Weaknesses and gaps in current approaches for placemaking</th>
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<td>Inconsistent approaches in private and civil society sectors</td>
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<td>Large number of frameworks and toolkits</td>
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<td>Technical nature of guidance</td>
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<td>Guidance is generally ‘broad brush’</td>
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<td>Focus on quantitative analysis</td>
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<td>Focus on appraisal and evaluation, less on monitoring</td>
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<td>Project design: ignoring local context</td>
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<td>Monitoring and evaluation timescales</td>
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Emerging Approaches to Valuing Placemaking

Successful placemaking considers the needs of different communities, and finds balance between a wide range of outcomes. There is no singular approach, but there are some core activities: deeply understanding a place and its assets, proactive measuring a range of outcomes, engaging broadly and evaluating success over time. The following examples from London and further afield demonstrate the possibilities.

Acknowledging what’s there

Development in London rarely starts with a blank slate. Seemingly empty brownfield sites may have lingering uses or rich histories, while established but changing neighbourhoods are underpinned by intricate social and economic networks. The economic, social, cultural, environmental and historical value of places may not be evident at first, but development that ignores these strengths risks alienating locals and creating inauthentic places.

While housing development has been strong in recent years, alarm bells are sounding over the loss of other uses. Each year, local authorities release an average of 106 ha of industrial land – well over twice as much as the GLA’s target of 41 ha – disrupting important supply chains and jobs. Cultural hubs – often doubling as community and social spaces – are disappearing; the number of pubs has decreased by 25% since 2001; LGBTQ+ venues by 58% since 2006; and grassroots music venues by 35% since 2007.

Physical spaces aren’t the only valuable yet vulnerable asset involved. Community groups and enterprises provide access to knowledge, skills and networks, primarily connecting local people with neighbours and neighbourhoods through employment and social opportunities. They’re also a gateway for local authorities and developers to discover local people’s experiences, key to understanding the narrative of a place. Narrative – the unique web of stories within a place – builds empathy by allowing people to put themselves into another person’s situation. Sharing stories is a universal way to connect to one another and local places as well as to reveal nuances of those relationships.

The need for housing has created an imbalance with other policy areas, skewing policy focus – and by extension, development – towards housing at the cost of employment, heritage and cultural space. Reviewing housing provision is also more straightforward than other land uses. Broad Industry Group (SIC2007) categories don’t account for all activities or business types. As a result, there’s a lack of up-to-date data on the numbers, activities and contributions of London’s cultural hubs, community enterprises and businesses beyond the high street.

As a starting point to value what’s there, mapping assets can be a powerful tool, compiling quantitative and qualitative data to reveal local economic and social networks. Local authorities can then use ‘Special Policy Areas’ to safeguard these places. They and other organisations can also give funding and underused assets to local social enterprises, which in turn support existing communities.
In 2014, the GLA and LB Southwark produced the Old Kent Road Employment Study, compiling details of economic activity around Old Kent Road (OKR). This thorough study informed Southwark’s 2016 draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan, which aspires to add 5,000 jobs and 20,000 homes. Building on the GLA and Southwark’s work, staff and students from Cass Cities undertook a more detailed audit, Vital Old Kent Road, which included fine-tuning business categorisation, canvassing more businesses, and exploring a wider geographical area.

Findings indicate that OKR supports 10,000 jobs across 1,000 mostly independent businesses, including retail, mechanics, printers, couriers and creative industries. Around half of local jobs are in industrial sectors. Detailed categorisation of ‘industrial sectors’ is challenging; existing Broad Industry Group (SIC2007) categories don’t account for certain types of businesses, such as prop and set designers, obscuring their economic contributions.

Most OKR businesses anticipate stability or growth in coming years; art and artisan industries (e.g. printmakers) are particularly fast-growing. This on-the-ground feedback highlights a deficit between experiences of industrial businesses and trend-based economic forecasting, which tends to be inaccurate when predicting change in industrial sectors.

Old Kent Road’s businesses are integral to the area and to London generally. Many of the 10,000 jobs cater for local entry-level and lower-skilled workers and OKR is central to local economic networks: 18% of suppliers and 49% of customers are within the local area; a further 29% of suppliers and 36% of customers are in London. OKR is thus highly valued as a place to do business; unsurprisingly, the Cass Cities audit found most owners want to stay in the area. However, with ambitions to deliver 20,000 homes, Southwark’s Area Action Plan proposes replacing some employment areas – particularly industrial estates – with housing and intensifying others, restricting options for floorspace-intensive industrial operations and likely to push out some businesses.

This story is familiar throughout London. Under pressure for housing, industrial areas have disappeared rapidly in recent years. The GLA and local authorities increasingly recognise the situation is untenable, but solutions such as mixed-use residential/industrial are largely untested in the UK and draw viability concerns from developers. Audits such as Vital Old Kent Road and the GLA’s Park Royal Atlas are crucial for understanding the value of places of employment: they give visibility to local businesses and the people within them, their business networks, and their economic and social contributions. This is especially the case for industrial sectors, which may be otherwise perceived as incompatible with or irrelevant to current neighbourhood design principles.

The Cass Cities audit of Old Kent Road employment revealed diverse, thriving businesses which are tightly knit into the local fabric, providing thousands of jobs and relying on local networks of buyers and suppliers. [Photo Mark Brearley]
Community enterprises in Kensington & Chelsea and Southwark
Supporting local organisations to deliver social benefits

Throughout London, community enterprises provide social and employment opportunities as a supplement or alternative to increasingly defunded local authority services. Community enterprises offer places for people to socialise and build networks, gain new skills and training, and learn about changes in the area. Locally ingrained with well-established networks and irreplaceable reach into resident populations, they are valuable partners for placemaking.

Catalyst Housing Group recognises the value of community enterprises as part of their commitment to HACT (see case study on p.20). Its community investment team aims to improve social capital and help people into work, using successes to secure additional investment for an area. In west London, the housing association is supporting community enterprises alongside its 15-year Portobello Square regeneration scheme. For example, it currently sponsors the Goldfinger Factory, which provides space for artisans to reuse construction waste to design furniture and interiors as well as training for the public, students, and young people – delivering both environmental and socio-economic benefits.

Funding from Catalyst also ensures ongoing operation of the 31-year-old North Kensington Women’s Textile Project (NKWTP). Nominally a sewing club, NKWTP is also a social hub and support network helping women establish local connections. Many members are new to the UK, speak limited English, or have no other social networks. In addition to opportunities to socialise and learn English, NKWTP organises excursions to buy sewing materials, giving women confidence navigating London’s transport and markets. The organisation also has systems in place to connect women to mental health and domestic abuse services when needed. Some members affected by regeneration use the club as a way of sharing experiences and news about local change.

Support can also come in the form of free or discounted space. In fast-changing Peckham, LB Southwark gave local enterprise Pempeople a free temporary lease in a previously vacant building on Peckham High Street. This allows Pempeople to focus on delivering its core services – including community gallery space for aspiring creatives, an employment academy and signposting people towards business support.

Pempeople is at the heart of local change, surrounded by major upcoming schemes affecting Peckham Library, the Aylesham Shopping Centre and Peckham Rye station. Having a high street presence not only gives visibility to its services and local projects, but provides a forum for people to engage with one another over planning matters, including the Southwark Plan and local regeneration. Founder Nicholas Okwulu considers it important for people to learn about local change from peers rather than the council, with whom they may have a weak relationship – hence the name ‘Pempeople,’ or ‘people empowering people’. Pempeople’s skills- and knowledge-building are critical to preparing residents for the changes coming to Peckham.

The Goldfinger Factory provides free studio and shop space for artisans to reuse construction waste and become self-supporting; in exchange, they contribute to workshops for apprentices, students and the general public.

[Photos courtesy Marie Cudennec and Oliver Waddington-Ball, the Goldfinger Factory]
Green and blue spaces – such as parks, woodland, rivers and canals – have multiple benefits. Ecologically, they support biodiversity, absorb runoff and rainwater, and reduce the urban heat island effect. Socially, they provide spaces to gather and play. From a health perspective, they host sports and activities in addition to positively impacting mental health.

Thamesmead is best known for its ambitious post-war housing estate, even though some 40% of the area is open space. This is split evenly between green and blue assets, all integral to water management in a town built on a floodplain outside the Thames Barrier. However, Thamesmead’s housing usually faces away from these spaces, which lack the lighting, surveillance and activity that make such areas feel safe and welcoming. Poor connectivity – often from similarly unattractive routes – limits footfall, and spaces offer few activities once people do arrive.

Within these spaces are several ‘hidden assets’ – important but hard-to-access amenities – such as Lesnes Abbey ruins, Crossness pumping station and Thamesmead Sporting Club. These important heritage and community assets are cut off by railway lines, major roads and unwelcoming or unknown local routes.

Housing association Peabody manages around 65% of space in Thamesmead (including the green and blue assets) and recognises the value of these spaces. As Peabody embarks on new cultural and housing strategies, it aims to bring these environmental assets back into use. For example, food-growing programmes will support community stewardship, schools will be encouraged to use green and blue spaces as part of lessons and new boat storage will support local watersports.

Across the city in Hammersmith & Fulham, developer Mount Anvil’s Queen’s Wharf scheme has similarly understood the benefit of opening access to the river Thames. Queen’s Wharf is a riverfront redevelopment involving iconic arts organisation Riverside Studios and new housing. Consultation indicated widespread support for constructing a broad riverside walkway. In response, the scheme will open a previously inaccessible part of the Thames Path. This will provide an uninterrupted walking link from Barnes Bridge to Craven Cottage (Fulham FC’s stadium), offering a new community amenity and linking to surrounding areas.
Pan-London and local cultural asset-mapping
Visualising and detailing cultural asset information

The breadth of venues and cultural facilities across London play an important role in its reputation as a global capital for culture. But spaces such as artists’ studios, music venues, night clubs, pubs and LGBT+ venues are particularly vulnerable. The Mayor has recognised that these cultural facilities should be protected and enhanced as areas change.

The GLA is undertaking a detailed study that will bring together information and data from venues and cultural facilities as part of the first ever Cultural Infrastructure Plan. Launching in 2018, it will include:

- A London-wide audit and mapping of cultural facilities, with over 20 data sources
- Analysis of the findings, including identifying opportunities for growth
- Annual publication of data and evidence to support better decision making for developers and policy-makers
- Guidance to help support growth, including a new charter for LGBT+ venues and design guides aimed at developers of cultural facilities

The award-winning Accents Team at Poplar HARCA has also adopted an asset-based approach to placemaking in East London. The team maps and reappraises the spatial, economic, community and cultural assets to develop a deep understanding of the area. Poplar’s industrial heritage, physical architecture, creative business community and geographical context overlap to form the area’s cultural landscape. Combined with the area’s principal asset – its people – these diverse assets provide an authentic and accessible base on which to build.
Policy power in Westminster and Wandsworth
Protecting places with Special Policy Areas and Supplementary Planning Documents

Traditional policy tools such as conservation areas and listed assets have long safeguarded special built environments. But this protection tends to concern physical characteristics such as building facades, materials, heights and views, not social or economic impact for the wider neighbourhood and London. Recently, some local authorities have added to their regulatory arsenals by creatively using existing policy tools to protect spaces of socio-economic importance.

In 2016, City of Westminster added several Special Policy Areas (SPAs) to its local plan, covering specific streets (e.g. Savile Row, Harley Street) and street clusters (e.g. Mayfair). Generally used for licensing food and drink establishments, Westminster’s SPAs instead prescribe which land uses and occupiers are appropriate for areas considered to have unique cultural value. For example, in Savile Row, existing tailoring uses are protected from change of use and new tailors are encouraged, with non-tailoring uses strictly limited to small units occupied by retailers selling bespoke or unique products in keeping with the characteristic activity of the street.

Westminster justifies each SPA by acknowledging cultural and socio-economic impact. For example, in Mayfair, “the galleries in and around Cork Street are culturally significant, having provided many artists with breakthrough exhibition space ... The galleries tend to be small businesses, but employ significant numbers of specialist and highly skilled workers in the art trade. Many have an international importance and catchment, attracting collectors from all over the world, as part of an international art trade valued at over £41bn in sales (2015), of which Britain counts for 21% (approximately £8.8bn).”

In 2015, LB Wandsworth adopted its Town Centre Uses supplementary planning document (SPD), which recognises the importance of pubs in terms of the built environment (e.g. architectural value, role as local landmarks) as well as economically (e.g. job creation, associated spending at nearby businesses) and socially (e.g. as places for leisure, socialising).

On this basis, the SPD commits the borough to protecting pubs; to do this, LB Wandsworth has revoked permitted development rights for 120 pubs and developed criteria to assess the architectural or community value of other pubs in the borough. The council can designate pubs meeting the criteria as ‘assets of community value’, automatically revoking permitted development rights and introducing the option for community right to bid.

**LB Wandsworth public houses and bars community value criteria**

1. Has a licence for entertainment/events/performance/ sports (e.g. darts)
2. Has rooms/areas for hire (e.g. meetings, parties)
3. Holds non-licensed events (e.g. quiz nights, karaoke, poetry recitals)
4. Has its own sports club/teams (e.g. cricket, football, darts)

There is no minimum number of criteria to meet when assessing community value; each pub is assessed according to individual merit.
Assessing wider value

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing focus on balancing a broader range of perspectives and impacts in placemaking valuation. Previous approaches have been too skewed towards economic impact.

As well as work on social value, environmental measures of impact are now relatively well used: organisations such as the Building Research Establishment established common standards for setting targets and monitoring performance (e.g. BREEAM). Social impact is more challenging; in the past, measurement has been held back by its typically intangible/softer nature. However, new approaches are exploring ways to measure impact both in quantitative and qualitative terms. New tools and collections of benchmarks have been developed, providing partners with a more consistent basis upon which to place a value on social wellbeing outcomes, such as finding a job, participating in regular volunteering, gaining confidence and living within stronger communities.

Whilst the principles of Social Return on Investment (SROI) are well established, there is evidence of a renewed interest in ‘ethnographic’ styles of research, which focus more on understanding the perspectives and stories of individuals and groups affected by placemaking interventions. While this may be a more time-intensive and costly process, it offers a bottom-up perspective and a greater depth of insight and understanding.

More generally, the focus of the regeneration industry is being continually shaped by broader discussions about localising approaches to supporting inclusive growth and mitigating the negative impacts of gentrification upon established communities.

GLA Regeneration
Measuring the social value of regeneration

Over the last decade, the GLA has managed successive programmes of investment supporting regeneration and investment across London’s town centres and places. Delivered in partnership with boroughs, the Outer London Fund, the Mayor’s Regeneration Fund, the London Regeneration Fund and the High Street Fund have invested over £150m in a range of projects, from public realm improvements to investment in workspaces, and business and skills support schemes.

Across each programme, the GLA has worked closely with London boroughs to track impact during delivery and evaluate performance after. Reporting has demonstrated considerable success against a range of measures of economic vitality and performance, but there is less evidence of the social and environmental impact of programmes and projects.12

Consequently, the GLA Regeneration Team is undertaking a programme of research to understand the value of regeneration more holistically. This reflects the increasing strategic focus on ‘good’ and inclusive growth, and the need to move beyond core measures of economic performance.

Recent research for the GLA by We Made That and LSE Cities has explored the social value within London’s high streets, “one of the most commonplace and everyday experiences of the city”. Through primary research and case studies, the study highlights that high streets’ wide range of social and economic function should be enhanced by policy and investment.13

The GLA is also working with LB Haringey to explore the social impact of regeneration activity in Tottenham, one of the areas which has benefited most from GLA investment in recent years.

Building on this research, the GLA is producing a new handbook setting out best practice in monitoring and evaluation in tandem with the launch of the Good Growth Fund. The handbook encourages the use of a range of economic, social, environmental and strategic indicators of impact in evaluation. It is designed to be accessible to a broad range of project delivery partners: from London boroughs to small community organisations.
LB Harrow’s Social Value Policy and Toolkit
Extracting social value through procurement

Public sector organisations have significant ability to influence local economic, social and environmental outcomes via their spending and procurement activities. Since the Social Value Act came into force in 2013, they have increasingly focused on securing stronger outcomes via public sector procurement. The act requires commissioners to consider the economic, environmental and social benefits of their approaches to procurement before the process starts. It has helped to raise the profile of social value and increase understanding of it, though it could be used more.

LB Harrow’s Social Value Policy and Toolkit puts social value at the heart of procurement. The toolkit comprises a set of principles to improve the sustainability of the council, its supply chains and the community, questions to ask of potential contractors, evaluation criteria and specific requirements that can be tested in evaluations.

The toolkit has potential to create training and employment opportunities for residents, while using local suppliers helps safeguard existing jobs and promote growth of local businesses. The London Living Wage is an important part of the council’s conception of social value, helping to boost incomes and increase local spend and prosperity.

Companies tendering for any work with a value over £100k are required to demonstrate how they will meet the policy. Bidders are provided with background information that details how the contract will achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability objectives. Tenders are evaluated against a social value weighting, which is set at a minimum of 10%. The process enables suppliers to provide targets against specified commitments, such as apprentices employed, work placements and other social value indicators. Higher social value targets lead to higher scores.

The framework is delivering tangible results: in 2016/17, LB Harrow created 121 apprenticeships through its supply chain. This compares with 16 apprenticeships in 2014/15 and 35 in 2015/16. In addition, it helped more than 800 Harrow residents into employment, provided 150 work placements and generated almost £28m in local supply-chain spend.

The council’s Economic Development team is fundamental to the framework’s results. It plays an active role in helping contractors meet their obligations and monitoring their performance; encouraging businesses to recruit apprentices and Harrow residents; preparing young people for apprenticeships; preparing workless and low-paid residents for work and career progression; and supporting major contractors to use local SME suppliers.
Elephant Park
Prioritising environmental value in Elephant & Castle

Amid growing concern about London’s air quality and a mayoral push to deliver ‘healthy streets’ – decreasing driving in favour of walking and cycling – placemaking needs to take environmental impact seriously. While several small placemaking schemes can have an impressive cumulative impact, major schemes have potential to holistically transform the sustainability of an area across several buildings, streets and green spaces.

Developer Lendlease is rising to the challenge, intending to build one of the world’s most sustainable regeneration projects at Elephant Park, the redevelopment of the Heygate estate at Elephant & Castle. Landscaping initiatives include tree planting, green roofs, green walls, communal gardens and food growing spaces; sustainable drainage will operate throughout the site; and 15 ‘Futurehomes’ will achieve Passivhaus standard. Parks, squares, communal gardens and food growing areas provide residents with spaces to foster community.

An on-site energy hub – including a combined heat and power plant using natural gas, offset by grid-injected biomethane – will deliver net zero-carbon heat and hot water to residents and businesses across Elephant Park, with the capacity to connect into a further 1,000 homes across Elephant & Castle. Buildings will be up to 30% more energy efficient than current regulations require and use up to 30% less water than the average London household. This forms part of Lendlease’s commitment to the C40 Climate Positive Development Programme, of which Elephant Park is among 19 projects around the world.

To measure impact, Lendlease sets targets and key performance indicators based on local and international best practice as well as requirements of LB Southwark and the GLA. They have also developed an internal sustainability scoring system, which sets minimum standards, encourages continual improvement and awards innovation. The system awards each phase a grade from A+ to E against each of the 12 Lendlease sustainability framework areas.

Lendlease shares lessons from Elephant Park’s environmental strategy through academic research studies, publications, site tours and industry events.

Green spaces at Elephant Park contribute to environmental outcomes as well as offering places to build community cohesion. [Photo courtesy Lendlease]
Interest in social impact measurement has been growing across the sector as providers become increasingly conscious of the importance of understanding the difference that their activities make. In 2014, HACT published the Social Value Bank to address this.15

The Social Value Bank compiles a wealth of research and statistical analysis on the impact of community investment activities on personal wellbeing, allowing organisations to measure the success of a social intervention by how much it increases people’s wellbeing.

The Social Value Bank is broad in scope: it places a value on over 70 different socioeconomic indicators, covering factors such as economic stability, enjoyment of environment, sports and activity, and housing security. The tool also enables differentiation in terms of demography (impacts vary by age group) and location (taking into account regional variations in values).

While developed for the housing sector, the breadth of indicators make the Social Value Bank relevant across the development industry. Since launch, it has been used across the public, private and civil society sectors to track the impact of a broad range of interventions. Recent examples include:

- LB Lambeth used it to understand the social value of the council’s housing contractors in 2016/2017. The research considered performance against a range of social outcomes, including helping people into employment, delivery of apprenticeships and work experience opportunities. The research found that the total social value generated was around £800,000 on contracted budgets of £116m.16

- The Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) explored the impact of its work across communities in South East London and Kent. The research explored how CACT’s work improved community and social wellbeing in three specific areas: improving levels of education and employment, reducing crime and improving health. The research found that every £1 spent by CACT produces £6.89 of social value.17

As an organisation, HACT offers training and certification to support effective and consistent use of the Social Value Bank; they are also continually updating the research to take account of new research and feedback from providers. To make it accessible, the Social Value Bank tracks indicators using a spreadsheet and is available for non-commercial uses under a Creative Commons licence. Commercial uses are allowed on a standard licence.

### Sample Indicators

- Moving into employment
- Starting an apprenticeship
- Becoming a regular volunteer
- Not worried about crime
- More frequent exercise
- Feel part of neighbourhood

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Engaging innovatively

As the concept of placemaking becomes part of mainstream development, it’s important to work with communities early and continually rather than sideling them in favour of taken engagement events or statutory consultation. Early engagement can reveal valued amenities within a place and local ambitions, providing a solid basis for a shared vision. Regular opportunities for the public to shape and critique a project will likely result in a place that aligns with this vision.

Often this is easier said than done. Demographics such as young people and ethnic minorities can be difficult to engage, and even once brought into the fold, people within a community will have conflicting views which can be challenging to reconcile. Engagement may seem costly and time-consuming compared to the statutory minimum – but it’s nothing compared to the potential financial and reputational costs of failing to achieve buy-in from stakeholders.

Alongside traditional engagement methods such as meetings and information events, more innovative engagement can encourage conversation and attract a wider cross-section of people. Hands-on community design schemes can deliver a more immersive and educational experience for people while extracting community-driven ideas for place. And, as digital connectivity spreads, online engagement is an increasingly useful tactic for an increasingly wide demographic.

Commonplace and Neighborland

Engaging digitally

Several online social platforms for placemaking have emerged in recent years. These platforms enable a more collaborative and flexible approach to placemaking, complementing traditional engagement methods. Being online allows 24/7 access to placemaking projects, attracting people who are unable or not inclined to attend meetings. Interaction on digital platforms also skew towards the hard-to-reach younger demographic, but this isn’t to say older or ‘off-line’ people, such as people who are homeless or on very low incomes, are left out, as feedback from digital platforms can be shared at traditional consultation events and vice versa.

Commonplace is an online platform for collecting and analysing public views and ambitions for neighbourhoods.1 Using an interactive map, members of the public can submit or view comments on specific streets and spaces. Consultees assign a sentiment to each submission, ranging from very negative to positive, producing a heat map of how respondents feel about an area. Others can view and ‘agree’ with comments. Typical submissions relate to traffic volumes and speeds, feelings of safety, cleanliness, pedestrian amenities, and community facilities.

Upon registration, Commonplace invites users to submit optional demographic information (e.g. age group, ethnicity, relationship to area, modes of travel, children). Assessing this data is useful for understanding who is engaging and the extent to which respondents represent an area’s wider demographic profile.

Numerous organisations have used Commonplace to inform policy and planning. For example, ahead of a masterplan for West Norwood and Tulse Hill, LB Lambeth used Commonplace alongside traditional consultation meetings. Its

The comment heatmap for West Norwood and Tulse Hill highlights hotspots of local concern, such as clusters of critical (red) comments around major roads, or pride, such as clusters of positive (green) comments around St Luke’s Church and West Norwood Cemetery. [Source: Commonplace/westnorwoodandtulsehill.commonplace.is]
2,700 mapped comments (and 1,600 ‘agreements’ with those comments) gave detailed insight into the assets and opportunities respondents value most.

In the United States, Neighborland has a similar role and functionality. Municipalities and other organisations have used the platform to gather public views on areas ranging in size from specific streets to entire cities. In many Neighborland projects, public feedback includes broad interventions in addition to street-level improvements. For example, several projects generate support for establishing markets, building community amenities (e.g. youth centres, sport facilities, fire stations, public plazas), extending public transport and cycling networks, and running support services (e.g. for local businesses, youth, vulnerable people). As with Commonplace, this feedback helps project managers understand what is valued in an area and by whom.

Although generally used prior to developing placemaking projects or policies, digital platforms can easily form part of ongoing monitoring strategies. If used at conception, completion and several years post-completion, digital platforms would visualise qualitative responses to change in an area over time, complementing other monitoring data.

Neighborland’s interface shows community ideas and grassroots support. It also allows project managers to flag progress towards implementing ideas. This Neighborland project in New Orleans has progressed several community requests. [Source: Neighborland neighborland.com/cities/nola/ideas]
Young people’s design competition
Educating and empowering people to design places

Digital platforms have proven useful for gathering views from younger demographics, but it’s not the only way they engage. Using a more traditional technique, in 2015 LB Islington engaged several young people in the redesign of Finsbury Leisure Centre. Completed in 1973, the leisure centre provides a range of athletic facilities, but the ageing building is no longer cost-effective to operate and interacts poorly with the surrounding streetscape. In 2014, LB Islington’s planning team developed a planning brief to guide redevelopment of the site, requiring new housing, a nursery, a GP surgery, and improved public realm in addition to a new leisure centre.

Alongside a professional design competition for the site’s masterplan, the planning team ran a ‘shadow’ competition for young people aged 14–18, arising from their desire to extract greater social value from the design process. LB Islington’s project partner Open City organised a series of one-day workshops throughout London to introduce participants to the project brief and placemaking concepts. Around 40 young people from across London attended the workshops, forming six project teams and completing their designs during summer 2015.

LB Islington’s planning team credit the shadow competition with helping to change the dynamic of the design process, giving a traditionally hard-to-reach group the opportunity to take an active role and develop an interest in placemaking, gain insight into creating a masterplan that satisfies diverse needs, and have a stake in the future of the community.

Older Women’s Co-Housing
Educating and empowering people to design places

Older people make up the fastest-growing demographic in London – the over-65 population is projected to increase by 36% by 2030 – and will impact how places are planned, designed and managed.20 In 1996, concerned about loneliness, the limited options available for older people’s housing and the potential to support each other, a group of six women formed Older Women’s Co-Housing (OWCH) for women over 50 with a goal of establishing a co-housing project.

OWCH worked with architects Pollard Thomas Edwards (PTE), co-ordinator of the Housing our Ageing Population – Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) report, to learn the skills needed to lead their own housing development.21 For example, PTE explained aspects of design and planning such as site assessments, map reading and design briefs, giving them specialist knowledge to shape their co-housing project.

A bigger barrier was finding a partner willing to provide a site: all local authorities and several housing associations rejected OWCH’s proposals. A turning point was the Barnet Director of Adult Social Care’s argument that a community in which people share values and support one another is likely to reduce – not increase – the social care bill.

Contrary to assumptions about community-led development, OWCH and PTE found the collaborative process did not add time or costs to housing delivery. Co-design helped OWCH develop not only homes fit for their needs as they age but a wider community, giving residents a sense of belonging through on-site social networks and opportunities to work together.

Residents at New Ground, all of whom are women aged 55+, have forged a strong sense of community through creating the estate, working together to manage the site, and opportunities for socialising.
**Measuring long-term success**

In most cases, particularly larger-scale regeneration programmes and intervention this, the real impacts emerge long after completion. But effects of placemaking are rarely tracked formally on a long-term basis. These circumstances reflect the development cycle: practitioners measure impacts to pass key delivery milestones; once delivery is complete and signed off, focus switches to the next location.

To an extent, tracking long-term impact hinges on the continuing involvement of delivery partners. For example, at King’s Cross, Argent LLP is both the developer and long-term asset manager; given its stake in the area, the company has been able to develop a bespoke approach to tracking impact and change over a longer than usual period of time.

There is a range of approaches to long-term impact tracking. At the most basic level, monitoring available social and economic datasets gives an overview of demographic and economic change, benchmarked against wider areas. Repeated observations of the same people can yield valuable insight, providing a more bottom-up and socially-focused perspective of success.

Over the last decade, there has also been increasing emphasis on the opportunities presented by big data. Public sector bodies and agencies collect a large amount of intelligence within day-to-day processes and service delivery. A more joined up approach to collecting and sharing this information could improve intelligence on local socio-economic conditions and characteristics.

Similarly, intelligence collected by the private sector, such as telecoms and social media data, could provide a greater understanding of how people use places, the relationship between places and the inclusivity of different areas. Crucially, big data offers potential for patterns and processes to be analysed on a larger (and hence more robust) scale than ever before, and over longer time periods.

**Mobile data analysis**

**Using big data to track activity**

Mobile data is perhaps the most prominent manifestation of ‘big data’. The UK’s 46m mobile phones generate rich data about how we use places and interact with our surroundings. Retailers, advertisers, planners and transport operators are using mobile data to better understand specific markets and locations. Used well, mobile data can provide stakeholders with better information on how public spaces are performing.

Telecoms operators can provide non-identifying customer data such as postcode area, age and gender. Mobile signals and wifi use provide information on users’ activities, such as travel routes, idle time, apps used and webpages visited. Considered together, demographic and activity data provide new insights into who is using a space, when and how they are using it, and to some extent why.

This evidence is useful for assessing the ongoing impacts of placemaking for both public-sector and commercial partners. By understanding who is using a space and how, it is possible to make better-informed judgements about whether a place is attracting target groups and ultimately achieving its objectives. Constantly updating data also allows managers to better understand the impact of specific events or investments over time.

There are challenges associated with mobile data. Individuals may be uncomfortable with how it is collected which can, in turn, impact how the data is perceived. Although a shrinking group, those who don’t have a mobile phone are not included in the data. Additionally, the cost of buying, storing, assembling and analysing the data is a barrier to entry for some, further complicated by each mobile provider holding their own data. If harnessed and used correctly, however, mobile data offers a new opportunity to better understand how places are used.

**Examples of insights**

- Movement patterns: mode of travel, origin/destination, route chosen, onward journeys
- Use of space: local vs non-local visitors, repeat visitors, purpose of visit, length of visit, activities undertaken
- Broad demographic profiling: visitors’ interests, spending habits, age, gender
- Temporal changes: differences in demographics and activities depending on time of day
- Impacts of external factors such as travel disruption and bad weather
South Acton Estate/Acton Gardens regeneration
Surveying long-term social impacts of regeneration

Acton Gardens is one of London’s largest estate regeneration projects, replacing 1,800 homes from the South Acton estate with 2,517 new homes and accompanying amenities by 2026. The long-term, multi-phase project is being delivered by a joint venture between Countryside Properties and L&Q. Seeking to test and improve their methods for estate regeneration, the developers are undertaking a series of surveys with local people. The first survey, carried out in October 2015, will be complemented by repeat surveys every two or three years as new phases are complete.

Developed by Social Life in partnership with the University of Reading and funded by the JV partners, surveys consider how respondents feel about physical amenities and infrastructure as well as social aspects such as inclusion, networks, cultural life and influence. Most questions have been adapted from nationally recognised surveys to allow for benchmarking and comparison, including Understanding Society, Citizenship Survey/Communities Study, Crime Survey and the Taking Part survey. Surveys are conducted with residents of the South Acton Estate, Acton Gardens, and neighbourhoods next to the regeneration area. Including the latter group not only provides localised benchmarking but assesses the wider impacts of regeneration and Acton Gardens’ integration with nearby areas – a key goal for the JV partners and LB Ealing.

Alongside resident feedback, architects review the built environment using CABE’s Building for Life Assessment tool, which considers aspects like distinctive character of place, whether design promotes engagement and interaction, ease of wayfinding and management of spaces.

Sample survey questions
- Do you feel like you belong to this neighbourhood?
- If you needed advice, is there someone you could go to in your neighbourhood?
- How safe do you feel walking alone in the day? After dark?
- Can you influence decisions affecting your local area?
- How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?
- From what you know about the regeneration plans, what do you think about them?

The 2015 survey revealed overall positivity among respondents. Some requested more communication and engagement to complement existing measures, which included a community board with residents from across the estate, quarterly newsletters, a resident liaison, and a project website. Residents due to relocate in the later years of regeneration were especially keen to know more about the process and timescales. The JV partners developed several new initiatives in response: morning and evening surgeries in marketing suites and other local venues; pre-move events for residents to learn about the relocation process and meet the builders, developers, and their new neighbours; post-move social events such as barbecues; and more bespoke information to resident groups, which residents are encouraged to start or join.

Respondents from 2015 will be re-surveyed in autumn 2017 and in future rounds to completion in 2026, allowing the JV partners to regularly review and adjust their approach. In the longer term, accumulated data will give unprecedented insight into the social impacts of regeneration, both within and beyond the project area.
This report is designed to share insight and guide reflection on what tools or processes may be effective in a given project or location. While we don’t recommend any single approach to valuing or tracking the impact of placemaking, this set of principles may prove useful:

**Understand**

- Understand the different baseline position of partners and stakeholders. Engage communities through existing networks and work with civil society groups to target different groups and get representation/inclusion.
- Listen to stories and histories, and build up an authentic understanding of a place’s character and narrative.
- Treat people like adults. Manage expectations; be honest about what can and can’t be achieved.
- Understand that community groups may want to take on different roles, e.g. lobbying, caretaking, managing or informing.
- Explore new ways to undertake engagement (such as digital engagement platforms) to diversify views and get a more accurate and inclusive baseline position.
- Carry out a thorough audit of assets – businesses, culture, heritage and community assets. How are they interconnected? What do they contribute to the local economy and community?
- Learn about the likely demographics of new communities as well as existing and devise strategies to encourage new and established communities to mix.
- Take time to understand wider investments/change. How can greater critical mass be achieved by working in partnership – including across boundaries?

**Plan**

- Map out a clear plan that identifies beneficiaries and expected impacts.
- Seek out community leaders and groups – what sorts of skills and networks do they offer to support placemaking?
- Plan how success will be measured and valued at different stages in the process. Ensure that this includes regular partner feedback.
- Build partnerships with different groups and (in the case of planning authorities) departments to gain buy-in, increase the range of evidence and potentially increase budgets from those with mutual interests, e.g. business, housing or highways.
- Involve and challenge existing communities, businesses and stakeholders to be ambitious, and to consider new ideas for their places.
- Ensure project appraisal provides appropriate balance between social, economic and environmental benefit.
- Be flexible with design principles and be prepared to respond to changes in the local evidence base.
- Use evidence to define and build on the unique character of an existing place to ensure authenticity.

Placemaking is an ongoing process. As an area adapts and changes, practitioners should revisit early principles to supplement and verify findings from the evaluation stage. This will indicate whether new placemaking schemes – and which types – would further benefit an area.
**Procure**

- Set out clear evidence requirements and objectives.
- Use planning levers to get the best outcome – a favourable planning agreement can support innovation and mix of land uses.
- Use the Social Value Act alongside local evidence to enable more specific local action and commitments.
- Build in appropriate performance indicators linked to environmental and social improvement. Strive to give these parity with commercial and economic considerations.
- Employ good legal support experienced in embedding social and environmental value into regeneration and placemaking schemes.
- Build long-term management models into procurement process. What’s most appropriate for a scheme? Public, private, community and hybrid models are all possibilities.

**Deliver**

- Put in place measures to minimise disruption for established communities e.g. deliveries, road closures.
- Continue to engage. In phased development over long timescales, keep people in later phases involved and make sure early occupiers aren’t ignored during later phases of development.
- Monitor delivery and impact on an ongoing basis; be open, proactive and bold in identifying areas where delivery could be enhanced to better meet objectives.

**Evaluate**

- Don’t just do a snapshot evaluation. Talk to people, and develop a strategy to engage people repeatedly over time.
- Develop case studies which reflect the experiences of different groups impacted. Reflect on the journey and share lessons learned.
- Be credible: robust and realistic information will help add value and learn lessons.
- Explore use of big data to provide a greater range of evidence.
- Build in resource to provide a longitudinal analysis, particularly on larger placemaking projects.
CALLS TO ACTION

Local and pan-London authorities and their development partners have many tools to value and appraise the impacts of placemaking more holistically. How do we nudge these innovative practices into the status quo? The following changes would help:

All partners should:

• Engage and empathise with others, recognising that placemaking is ‘owned’ and experienced by a broad range of groups.

• Commit to robust monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of a commitment to understanding the impact of placemaking.

• Recognise that a balanced approach is needed to understand the impacts of placemaking: a rounded assessment will consider a range of economic, social, environmental and commercial factors.

• Understand softer and harder-to-measure social impacts. Research tools such as the government’s Community Life Survey25 and place-based engagement platforms such as Commonplace provide a strong starting point.

• Think about the language used. Appraisal, Monitoring and Evaluation are technical and formal terms which do not inspire creativity. More action-orientated terms such as Vision, Verify, Validate and Value could help nudge practitioners and partners toward more innovative behaviour. Using a common language is especially important with communities – too much jargon makes people suspicious!

The GLA, development corporations and/or sub-regional partnerships of boroughs should:

• Acquire and assemble central data functions to support placemaking.

• Obtain mobile data and the resources required to use it.

• Continue to explore how big data and data sharing across public and private partners can improve our understanding of places and change through the emerging GLA London Office of Data Analytics.

• Provide a trained team of specialists who can be commissioned to support engaging communities in placemaking.

Local authorities should:

• Set out aspirations regarding social value and priorities for placemaking. These should balance the needs of local communities with wider economic priorities.

• Collect consistent socio-economic data/intelligence which informs conversations about place and allows performance to be tracked.

• Use the levers in the Social Value Act to compel partners to deliver stronger social outcomes.

Developers should:

• Develop appraisal systems that measure and prioritise wider placemaking impacts.

• Involve community engagement experts to reach out to business, residential and other user networks, in order to gain trust.

• Be as open and transparent as possible about investment decisions.

• Commit to tracking impact over a longer time period.

Communities should:

• Take opportunities to engage early in the planning process. Group responses will be easier for practitioners to use, so consider neighbourhood/business forums, residential associations and community groups to reach a shared view.

• Be vocal about interest in and commitment to projects from an early stage, and inquire about opportunities for engagement, consultation and co-design.

• Take part in an open discussion and seek to understand viewpoints, even if they differ from personal views.

The Treasury should:

• Reconsider the use of land value uplift as the principal measure of value within the revised Green Book (2017), or provide improved guidance on the contribution that good placemaking can make to land values. This will help to rehumanise the guidance and recognise the role that people and communities play in increasing the holistic value of a place.
CONCLUSIONS

This programme set out to understand who values placemaking, and the extent to which formal valuation tools measure impact beyond the economic. The results are promising: policy is already nudging practitioners towards more holistic valuation, and practitioners from all sectors are developing their own models and metrics.

Places are made up of intertwining physical, historical and personal assets. The case studies in this report show developers, land owners and planning authorities building in-depth understanding of places, often at the very beginning of the development process.

The report’s guiding principles show that good placemaking is cyclical. The process does not end at development completion. Practitioners need to engage users frequently and over a number of years to truly understand impacts. Cross-sector knowledge-sharing is also vital.

We hope this report inspires all parties – policy-makers, the GLA, local authorities, developers and communities – to see the value of good placemaking, and create a healthier and more inclusive London.

EVALUATION TOOLKITS AND RESOURCES

- Transport Research Laboratory (2017), Pedestrian Environment Review Software (PERS) [bit.ly/2kBjmKi]
- Association of Town Centre Management, Town Centre Health Check, [bit.ly/2zkqy8T]
- GLA (2015), Key Performance Indicators Handbook [bit.ly/2j7nPJU]
- CABE (2004), The Value of Public Space [bit.ly/1OEPsPA]
REFERENCES

1 | DCLG (2015) bit.ly/2zm7fIR
5 | Of lost LGBT venues, 38% were due to redevelopment and 7% rent increases or lease expiry. Figures for pubs and grassroots music venues lost due to redevelopment, rent increases, or lease expiry aren’t given, but the GLA Rescue Plan identifies these factors as relevant in the case of music venues. Furthermore, there is likely to be some overlap between these figures, e.g. LGBT pubs, pubs also functioning as music venues. GLA (2017), bit.ly/2iM0gFM, bit.ly/2yfB8yn; GLA (2015), bit.ly/2gNXCeF; GLA (2017), bit.ly/2gObPs0
6 | Refer to work done by Rosanna Vitiello at Local Legends: local-legends.org
7 | GLA (2016), bit.ly/2gPgFVM
8 | LB Southwark (2016), bit.ly/2yZULaB
9 | Cass Cities (2017), bit.ly/2gYm1BU
10 | City of Westminster (2016), bit.ly/2zUkj8n
11 | LB Wandsworth (2015), bit.ly/2z3ihjC
13 | GLA, LSE Cities, and We Made That (2017), bit.ly/2zRywlt
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