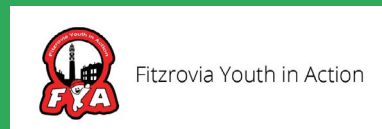


# CAMDEN YOUNG URBAN DESIGNERS PROGRAMME

Regent's Park Area : Safe and  
Healthy Streets



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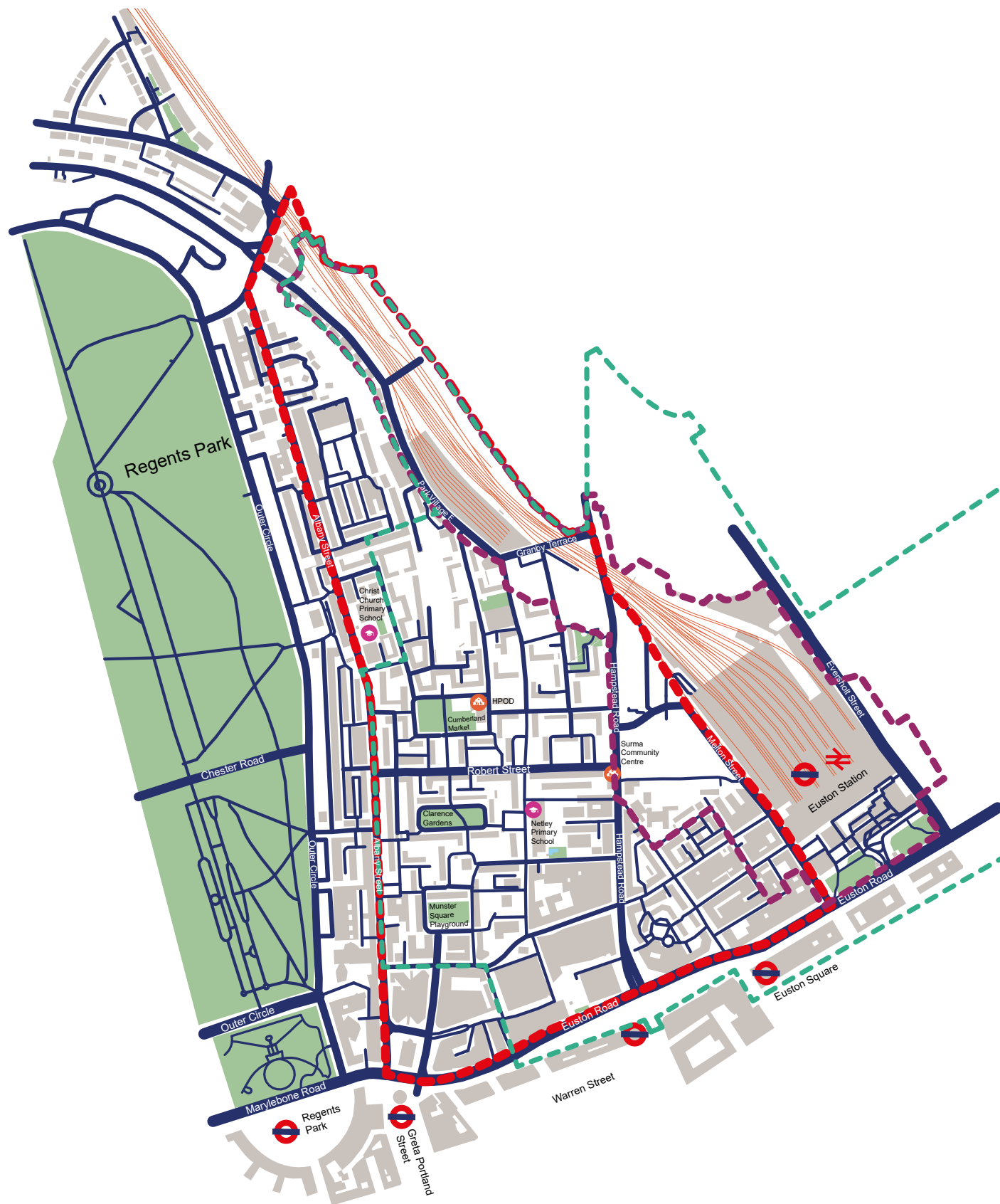
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# 1. Introduction

# Introduction | The wider engagement project



Project Area Map

Through High-Speed Two Ltd's (HS2's) Road Safety Fund, Camden has secured £2.4 million which will be spent on road safety and transport improvements in the Regent's Park Area.

The project is being called **"Regent's Park Area: Safe and Healthy Streets"** and the Council, with support from independent consultants Sustrans, has been carrying out a series of engagement events during Spring and Autumn 2023 to inform what measures to improve transport and road safety, particularly active and sustainable travel, should be funded through the HS2 Road Safety Fund\*.

Through these events the Council wanted to hear the views of people in the Regent's Park Area about the current road safety and transport challenges in the area, as well as their ideas for improving things. The interventions must leave a legacy of road safety improvements once HS2 is complete.

Throughout 2023, Sustrans has engaged with a variety of people in the Regent's Park Area to understand issues around road safety, and to design solutions together. The key to the successful implementation of any changes has been understanding the varying needs and experiences of the communities who have a stake in the area.

\*Please see more information about the project on:  
<https://eustonengagementhub.commonplace.is>



# Introduction | Why youth engagement?

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As part of the engagement carried out across the Regent's Park Area, Sustrans carried out 3 workshops with pupils of Netley Primary School and Christ Church Primary School to gather pupil's feedback on what they felt was not working and the types of transport and public realm improvements that pupils would like to see. During the co-design phase a Play Street was also held on Stanhope Street, where children and their parents could come along to share their views on transport improvements they would like to see in the Regent's Park Area. These activities focused primarily on engaging with children below the age of 11. A separate engagement activity was set up to engage with 11 to 18 year olds. However, there was a very low level of participation in this event.

As a result, it was identified that teenagers (11 to 18 years) have been underrepresented and that there was a need for more focused engagement efforts with this age group.

Engagement with young people is particularly important, as the long-term nature of regeneration at Euston means it is they who will be the next generation of local leaders once the scheme is complete, as well as being most likely to enjoy the benefits of schemes here. As such, the **Young Urban Designers Programme** was set up as a separate project which focuses on co-designing transport and public realm improvements in the Regent's Park Area with young people. This commission is aligned with the Council's wider exploration of how a more child (0 to 18 years) focused approach can be taken in the design and development of healthy streets changes to roads and public realm in Camden.

## 2. The Programme



# The Programme | The Young Urban Designers Programme

## Aims of the programme



**Fitzrovia Youth in Action** (FYA) run youth leadership and youth led social action projects across Camden and Westminster, working with young people to create positive change for themselves, their peers and communities. FYA are particularly interested in how young leaders can scrutinise inequality, conduct peer research and take action, or make recommendations to decision makers in order to move towards systemic change. FYA have been funded by Camden and Islington Public Health for the last three years to run the Community Champions Regent's Park Estate project, including the Young Guardians, resident led initiatives to improve health, well-being and safety in the area.

For the **Young Urban Designers Programme**, Sustrans and FYA have worked in collaboration with Camden Council to develop and deliver a fourteen-week youth leadership engagement programme with local children and young people in the Regent's Park Area. The aim will be to:

- **Enable young people to be actively involved** in developing meaningful design ideas and solutions for the Regent's Park Area: Safe and Healthy Streets project;
- **Help develop Camden Council's approach to engaging children and young people** in the development of and consultation on healthy streets projects. This programme is helping to address this through testing different approaches to engagement with young people, which could possibly be used for other projects across the Borough; and,
- **Provide a programme of activity that participants will directly benefit from** and support their academic or work-based skills, through providing more exposure to the work carried out by transport planners, engineers, urban designers and community engagement specialists. The programme also provided a recognisable qualification, to help contribute to the academic development of the participants.

Furthermore, as part of the partnership, Sustrans and FYA wanted to provide leadership opportunities to local young people to present the findings and recommendations to decision makers on behalf of their community. The approach this programme has taken is more immediate and tangible, and has enabled young residents to have increased roles, inclusion in and ownership over decisions about their local area. The project not only enables the young people to inform designs and rationale, but also to present their own peer research and designs to decision makers directly. The participants of the Young Urban Designers Programme have developed new skills and have had the opportunity to complete recognised AQA accreditations as part of this experience. AQA certificates have been awarded to all who are 11+, while 10 year old participants were awarded participatory certificates. The AQA and skills gained through this project include:

- AQA Project Management
- AQA Leading a Social Action Project
- AQA Public Speaking

This programme has drawn together the skills and experience of both Sustrans and FYA to deliver on the principles of co-design, centring the young people in both the development of the programme and the resulting recommendations. This innovative programme draws on the experience of Sustrans in delivering engagement around the public realm, and FYA's history of engaging young people and community based social action via Community Champions and Young Guardians in Regent's Park Estate. It also draws on Camden Council's desire to ensure the needs of all local residents are considered when making changes to streets and spaces, and to test different approaches for engaging with children and young people.



# The Programme | Young people recruitment

## The participants



Surma Community Centre located on Robert Street

Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA) run youth leadership and youth led social action projects across Camden, and have used their established community networks to attract and recruit local young people into the programme. Advertising was also used locally through leafleting and posters to inform and attract young people to the programme.

As part of Sustrans' approach, the recruitment of less engaged groups was a priority. All sessions were held at the Surma Community Centre which has been a focal point of the Bangladeshi community and of the wider local community in the Regent's Park Area. It is a venue for a wide range of social, cultural and religious events, and

a meeting place for over 16 years. The choice of the Surma Community Centre was therefore part of this approach to prioritise less engaged groups from the local community. It was also a community building located on Robert Street and therefore located at the core of the Regent's Park Area, which was ideal for young people.

About 8 to 12 young people formed the core group of participants. These were aged from 10 to 18 years old, with a group of younger boys aged between 10-13 years old, and a group of older girls aged 14 to 17 years old. Competition for time with other commitments and activities was the main reason why no older boys were successfully recruited on this programme.



Leaflets used to advertise the programme



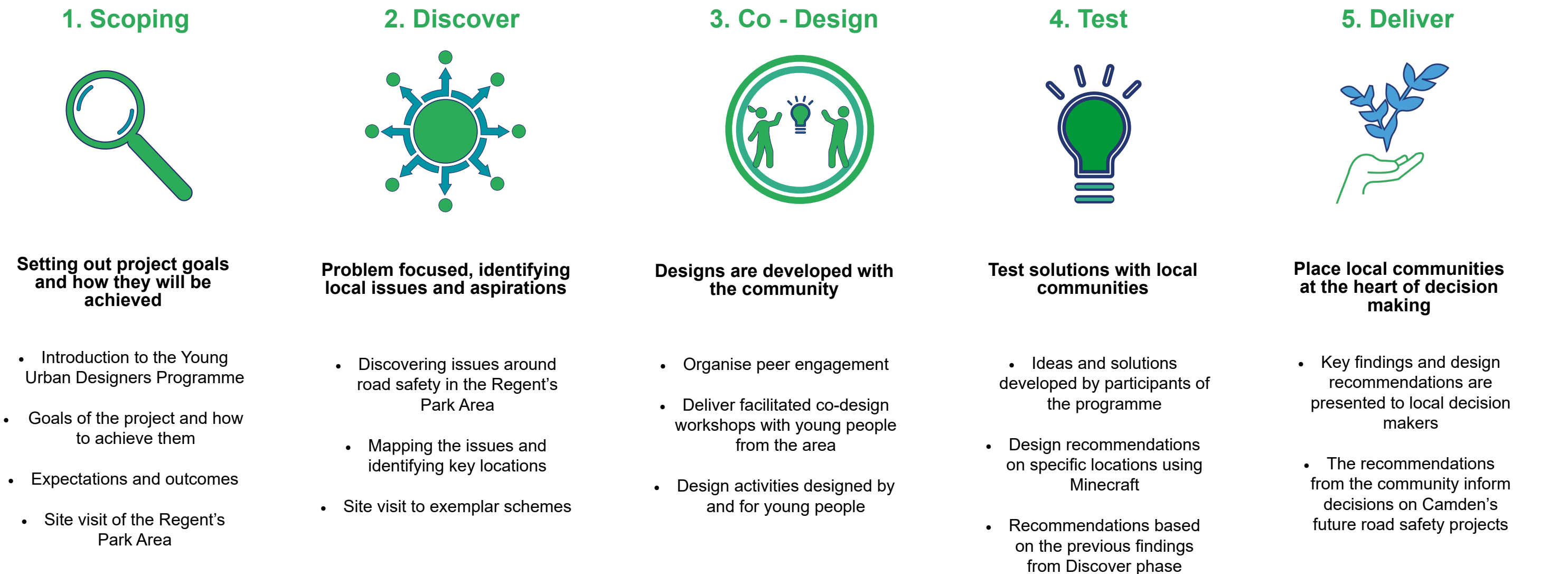


## Sustrans Collaborative Design Process

The deliverables for this project are focused around a 14-week Youth Leadership Programme called 'Young Urban Designers'. This programme is made up of 30+ hours of contact time, which have been delivered weekly - every Monday from January to April 2024 - in partnership with Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA).

The programme outlined below follows the **Sustrans Co-Design process**, which incorporates five stages of delivery. This follows the same process that has been used for the wider engagement in the Regent's Park Area. FYA embedded their expertise in participative engagement, youth led social action and local knowledge into this process. Feedback provided in the discovery and engagement phases of this wider engagement have fed into and have informed this engagement, although the young people had the opportunity to shape and refine the programme through to the delivery stage to suit their needs and that of the programme.

The Sustrans Collaborative Design Process was used as a framework in which the young people carried out the work. While **Scoping** allowed the young people to carry out further background research into the local area and to understand what is at stake in the Programme, the **Discover Phase** was issue focused and gave the young people an opportunity to share views on what is and isn't working. **Co-design** looked for solutions while building consensus and workshops were organised with young people from the area to gather their thoughts about road safety and improving walking and cycling in the area. Using information gathered during the Discover and Co-design phases as a starting point, the participants of the programme moved into the **Test Phase** to look for solutions and develop their own designs built upon the feedback they received from the engagement they carried out. The designs were then presented to decision makers through the **Deliver Phase** to inform future public realm improvement projects in Camden.


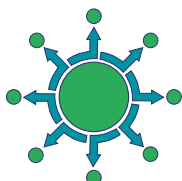







# The Programme | Overview of methods

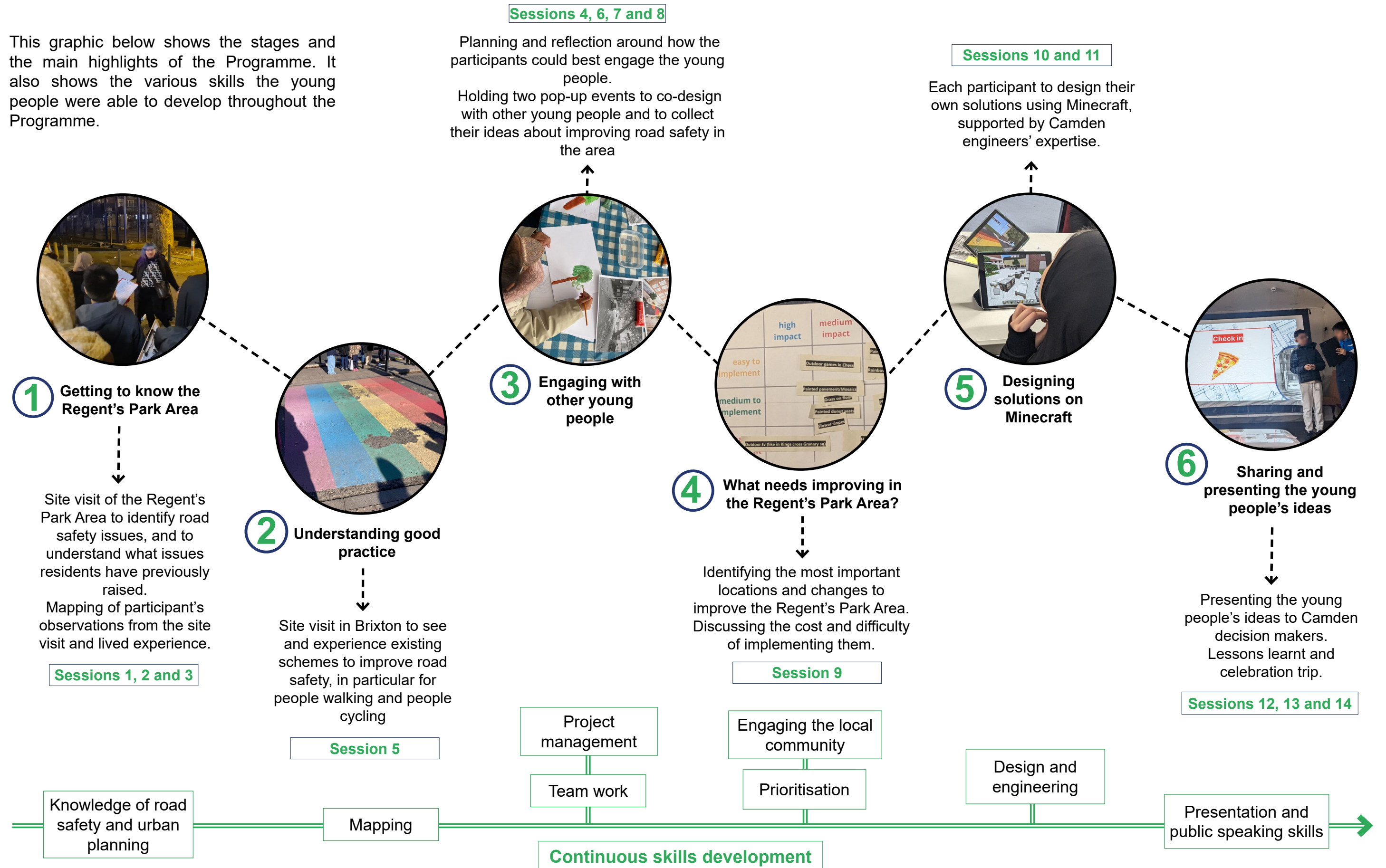
## A 14-week programme

The table below shows how the Sustrans Collaborative Design Process was used as the skeleton of the Programme, and how the content of the weekly sessions were adapted to follow this process.

Sustrans Co-design Process Phases	<b>1. Scoping</b> Setting out project goals and how they will be achieved 	<b>2. Discover</b> Problem focused, identifying local issues and aspirations 	<b>3. Co - Design</b> Designs are developed with the community 	<b>4. Producing Design Recommendations</b> Design recommendations based on previous engagement 	<b>5. Test</b> Showcase solutions to the wider community 
Timeline	Week 1	Week 2 to 5	Week 6 to 9	Week 10 to 12	Week 13 and 14
Objectives of the sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to the Young Urban Designers Programme, and how it sits within the Regent's Park Area Safe and Healthy Streets wider project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site visit of the Regent's Park Area</li> <li>Site visit to exemplar schemes in London</li> <li>Mapping workshop and ideas station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start to come up with initial idea creation</li> <li>Develop a co-design strategy               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills development</li> </ul> </li> <li>Community engagement events to engage with other young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritisation of ideas collected during the Discover and Co-design Phases</li> <li>Develop design ideas into real solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of all ideas collected and designed during the Programme to local stakeholders</li> <li>Reflections, lessons learnt and end of programme celebration</li> </ul>
Items actioned during the sessions	Understanding the 14-week Programme.  What are the goals of the project?  What are the commitments to this project?  What will young people gain from this project?	Visit the Regent's Park area and understand its challenges  Mapping of participant's observations from the site visit and lived experience.  Site visit to exemplar scheme	Understanding of what is possible and development of potential ideas  Facilitation and public speaking skills young people will need  Engage with young people during a face-to-face event	Findings from workshops discussed, developed and prioritised.  Participants develop their own design solutions for the Regent's Park Area on Minecraft.  Participants outline what they want to present to stakeholders.	Participants present findings to key decision makers at Camden Council, share designs ideas and share their recommendations for engaging other young people in this type of work.  Lessons learnt through this project.  Thank you trip for all participants.

# The Programme | Activities undertaken

This graphic below shows the stages and the main highlights of the Programme. It also shows the various skills the young people were able to develop throughout the Programme.



# 3. Key findings



Youth community engagement in the Regent's Park Area



Key numbers from the community engagement:

- 2 pop-up events organised to engage young people
- 30 young people participated in the treasure hunt
- 34 young people engaged during the pop-up in Cumberland Market
- 10 different themes for improvement came out of the engagement

Key findings from the community engagement:

- 

**More play on the way**  
was one of the preferred options
- 

**More colours in the street**  
such as colourful surfacing
- 

**More seating & greening**  
including colourful planting and safe places to meet
- 

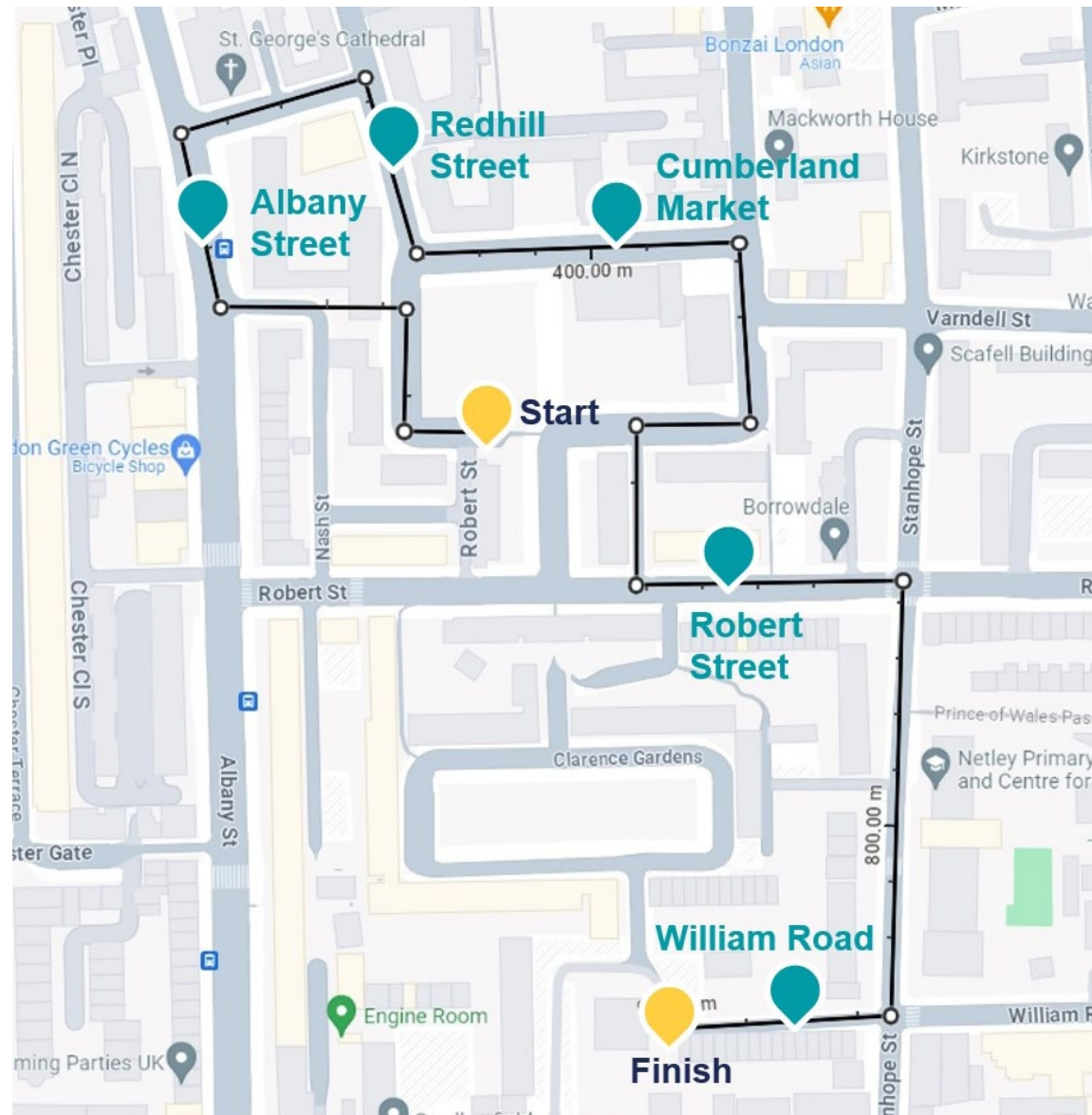
**Better crossings**  
to make it safer to walk through the Regent's Park Area



# Key findings | Engaging with young people from the area

## Engaging with young people

Two pop-up events were organised to bring young people from the area together and gather their feedback about road safety issues in the area, and what kind of solutions they would like to see. The idea development for the events was led by the young people from the Young Urban Designers Programme, based on what they thought would work best. The pop-up events took the shape of a treasure hunt, and of a Saturday out in the park. Both events were designed to engage fully with young people through fun and active activities that were created by the participants of the Young Urban Designers Programme.



Treasure hunt route through the Regent's Park Area

### Treasure Hunt

The main goal of this pop-up event was to visit various key locations in the Regent's Park Area and to collect feedback from the young people on how to improve road safety.

The treasure hunt involved a walkabout with more than 30 children and teenagers in the streets of the Regent's Park Area. It was designed to help the young people express how they were feeling about road safety in different parts of the Estate. It included questions about road safety in the area as well as games and fun interactions to trigger young people's interest and imagination.

Opposite is the route we followed and the locations where we stopped to get feedback. This was held on Monday 26th February 2024.

Five key locations were visited as per the map opposite:

- Albany Street
- Redhill Street
- Cumberland Market
- Robert Street
- William Road



Treasure hunt event



Treasure hunt event



# Key findings | What did the young people say?

## Key findings from the Treasure Hunt

At each location, the treasure hunt participants were asked several questions about road safety and what kind of solutions they would like to see to improve it. These are the different questions and solutions that were raised at each location:



### Albany Street

**How could we make it safer to cross the street?**

More traffic lights and more zebra crossings

**Give one way to reduce noise in Albany Street**

Pedestrianise the road, or reduce the amount of cars

**Ideas to improve greening on the street?**

Plant trees, flowers or grow plants



### Redhill Street

**Give ideas to make the street nicer so you can spend time there with your friends after school**

More traffic lights and more zebra crossings

More colours in the street – planting, flowers, blossom trees

Painting on the road /rainbow pavement/ mosaics on the ground

More benches, places to sit



### Cumberland Market

**Why Cumberland Market and its surroundings do not feel safe at night, or why you wouldn't go there after dark?**

Dangerous, anti-social behaviour, gangs, drug users

It's too quiet, it doesn't feel safe, there's nothing to do

**Ideas to make the area feel safer for you?**

More lights, or brighter lights  
More police enforcement



### Robert Street

**If you could choose shapes and colours for crossings?**

- Colourful crossing
- Patterned LED flooring
- Lights on the floor



### William Road

**Why is it hard to walk here?**

Too much littering  
No safe pavement, no safe crossing  
Flooding, bad drainage

**Ideas to improve the space for you?**

Improve cleaning, no littering, more bins  
More lights, or colourful lighting  
Add benches and places to spend time together



# Key findings | What did the young people say?



Preferred option for seating and greening



Preferred option for a pocket park



Preferred option for colourful surfacing in the street

## Overall

To sum up their feedback, young people are keen to feel safer in the streets of the Regent's Park Area, by reducing traffic and making it easier to cross the roads. They also mention a lack of bins which lead to dumping, and report that the lighting in the area is poor, which does not make them feel safe at night. The young people are keen to see more colours and play in the street, along with more seating and colourful planting.



**Better crossings**



**More lights and more bins**



**More colours in the street**



**More seating and planting**



# Key findings | What did the young people say?

## Outdoor party event in Cumberland Market

The goal of this pop-up event was to offer various fun activities to engage with young people and collect their ideas about improving road safety in the area. The young people deliberately chose to hold the event on a Saturday to make sure many others could join, and they were successful - about 34 young people engaged in this event.

The pop-up involved a number of fun engagement activities and stalls specifically designed by and for young people from the Regent's Park Area, to engage with their peers.

They included:

- **Penalty shots** to vote on the location that needs most improving. Participants could choose from William Road, Albany Street or Augustus Street.
- **Model kit** to design your ideal Robert Street.
- **Painting** your own colourful crossings and murals.
- **Clay designs** to create your own street furniture.
- **Voting game** for what would you like to see on your streets. Participants voting could choose from these different options:
  - Trees, plants and home for little creatures
  - More space to walk
  - More lighting
  - Places to sit and rest
  - Artwork
  - A place to park bikes and scooters
  - Play on the way to school

This event was held on Saturday 2nd March 2024.



Voting board



Model kit activity

## Design ideas collected

### What do you want on your streets?

Thanks to the voting tubes panel (see picture opposite), children were able to vote for what they would like to see on their streets. The results clearly indicated children and young people wanted:

1. More play on the way to school
2. Place to park bikes and scooters
3. More trees and planting

### Penalty shots

As per the results of the penalty shots activity, the preferred location that needs most improving was William Road.

### Clay designs

Young people suggested many ideas as per the below:

#### Benches

- Sunshine bench or Wiggly Bench (shapes to provide fun and communal seating)
- Function benches e.g. cup-holders
- Seating close to colourful plants
- Benches that also have ways to do exercise - bench pedals!
- Infinity shape with hearts bench and plants in the middle

#### Shelter

- Mushroom shelter - places for kids to sit or play but sheltered
- A safe place where young people can sit, without people complaining about them being there

#### Street furniture / sculpture

- Public headphones for people to listen to music, or an arch that looks like headphones and plays music as you pass through
- Rock climbing walls



# Key findings | What did the young people say?

## Design ideas collected

### Crossings or murals designs

#### More colour on our streets

- Show our personalities as an area
- Colourful crossings and adding in murals on Robert Street

#### Painted-on-floor games

Hopscotch or other games painted permanently on the street

#### More greenery

- Light up trees.
- Colourful plants, flower slope, biodiverse planting to attract pollinators.

### Model kit

#### Greener, more colourful and people-friendly spaces

- More seating, e.g. next to greening, away from the roads.
- Better ways to cross (e.g. pedestrian bridge or new pedestrian crossings)
- More greening.

#### Improving Stanhope Street crossings

- Improving road crossings on Stanhope Street, including adding a raised crossing point.
- Flooding is a big issue here so better drainage needed (e.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems).

#### Creating a skatepark

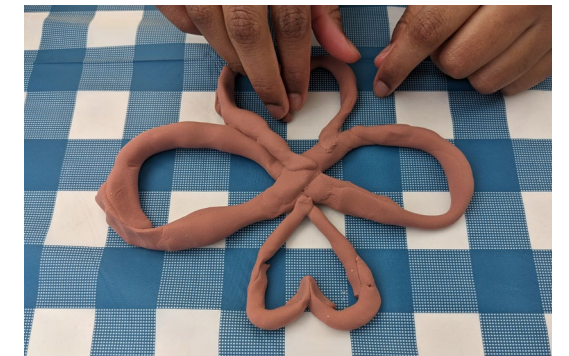
More things to do during the weekends, currently everything is closed.



Seating and greening ideas from Model kit



Colourful crossing idea from Model kit



Infinity shape bench



Hopscotch, trees and colourful crossings



Model kit



Model kit activity



Improve crossings



Clay street furniture activity



Greenery



Penalty shots voting



Wiggly bench



# Key findings | What did the young people say?



Design idea for a colourful crossing



Suggestion for more play and more greening



Pocket park suggestion including seating and lighting

## Overall

Young people are keen to see more colours in the streets, which could be achieved by introducing colourful planting and colourful surfacing or crossings. Young people would like to see play in the street and on the way to school, along with more seating opportunities and places where they can spend time together.



**Better colourful crossings**



**More and nicer places to seat and be together**



**More play on the way to school**

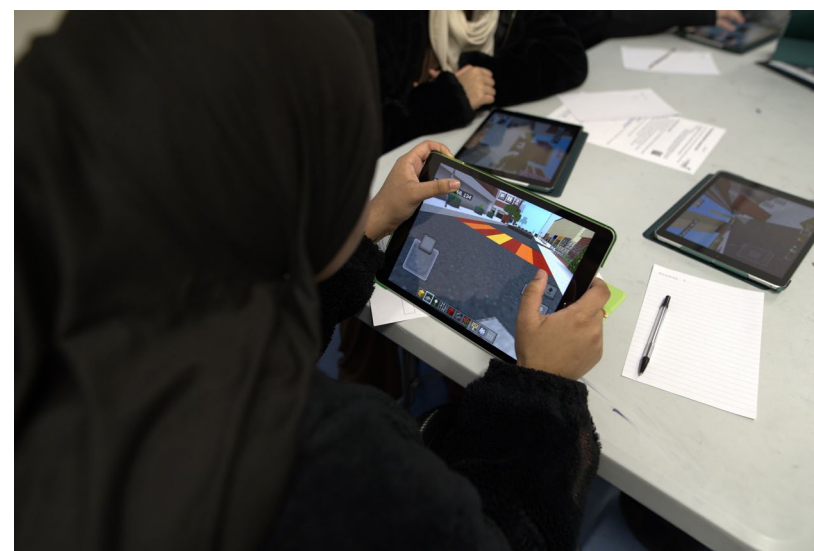
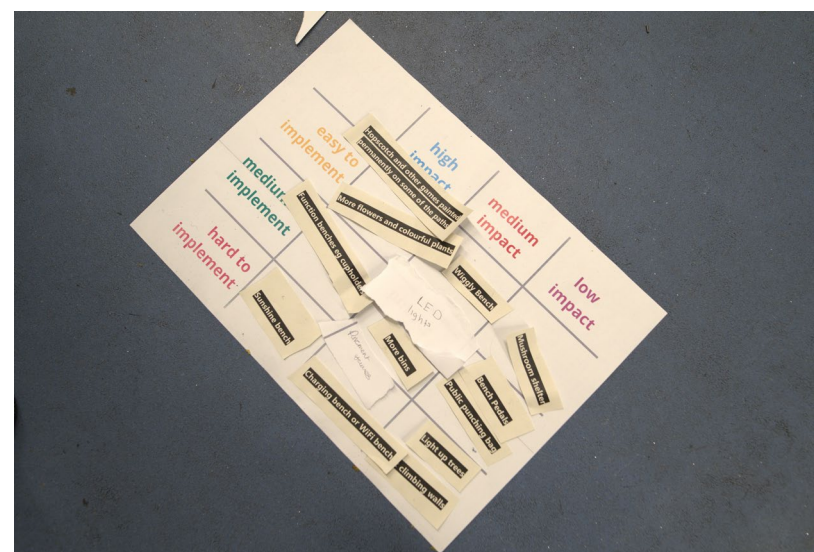
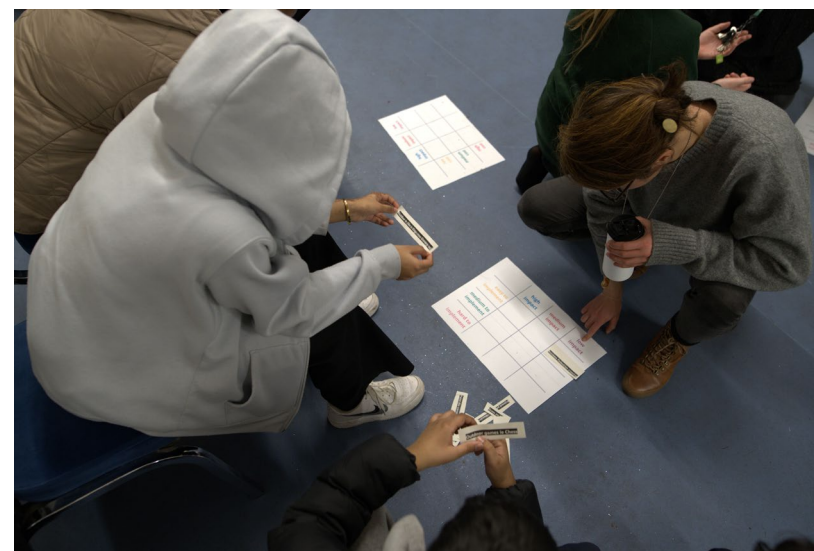


**Greener, more colourful spaces**



## The Programme | B | Converting suggestions into real designs

## Developing the young people's ideas



After the co-design pop-ups, the young people took the feedback of their peers and reviewed during a **prioritisation workshop** the suggestions collected. They discussed the impact these suggestions could have, and whether they were easy or hard to implement. This helped them decide which ideas to take forward into their Minecraft designs, in addition to their own ideas developed over the course of the programme (shown on next page).

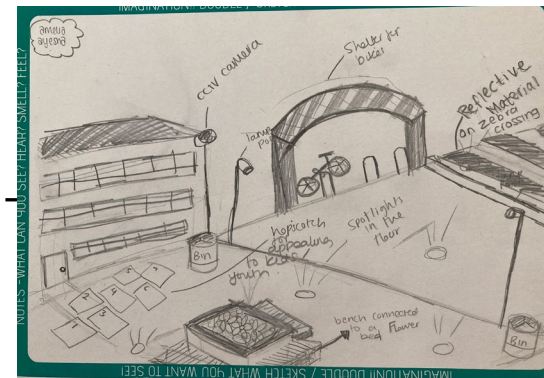
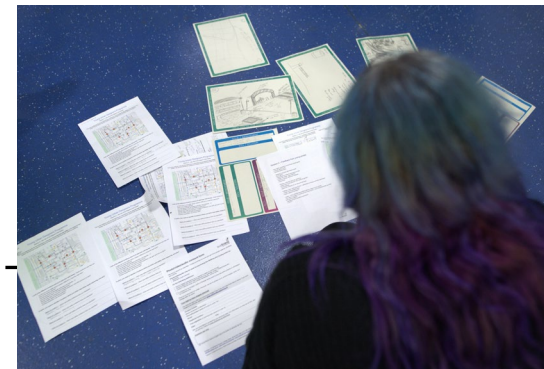
The young people consistently went back to these ideas during the Minecraft sessions.



## Minecraft as a design tool



Converting an idea from drawing to reality



When the participants moved into the **Test Phase**, they were given the opportunity to design their own ideas and those of their peers gathered during the pop-up events to improve road safety for the Regent's Park Area by using **Minecraft**.

Minecraft is a video game made up of blocks that you can use to build things from your imagination. Blocks can be broken, crafted, placed to reshape the landscape, or used to build infinite creations. Sustrans has seen potential in the creative aspect of the game and is using Minecraft as a tool to engage with young people and help them design their own ideas.

Following the pop-up events, there was a session where the key themes from the engagement were discussed and the young people used this session to think about the type of design interventions they would want to include in their Minecraft designs, to reflect what participants in the engagement had said. During two consecutive workshops, the young people were then given an Ipad each, and they developed their own ideas to **improve Robert Street with Minecraft**. Robert Street was selected because it is one of the priority location that came out of the engagement activities of the main Regent's Park Area Safe and Healthy Streets project.

The current version of Robert Street was re-created within Minecraft, which allowed the young people to change it the way they wanted it to be. This enabled the young people to easily design practical and location-specific solutions to the issues around road safety raised before, without any technical knowledge about street design.

The tool was very successful among young people and some ideas that were drafted from session 2 were then designed in Minecraft, and incorporated into the context of Robert Street. As per the figures opposite, the idea of an arch was sketched early on in the Programme, was then tested through a clay experiment, and finally saw its final shape and location in Minecraft.



# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs

## Young people's proposals to improve walking, cycling and road safety in Robert Street:

The following pages show the various design ideas and recommendations elaborated by the participants of the Programme, and what issues they chose to address in Robert Street.



Create colourful crossings on Robert Street, along with a colourful cycle lane, and an arch into the park



Convert Compton Close into a place for young people to rest and read



*"I wanted to create a seating area with blossom trees to meet with friends, and also hopscotch to promote play"*



An arch with seating and planting to restrict traffic and to invite people to walk into Cumberland Market



# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs



A dedicated space in Compton Close with trees and seating where young people can spend time together and feel safe



A bridge to restrict traffic, to make it easier to cross Robert Street, and to put pedestrians first



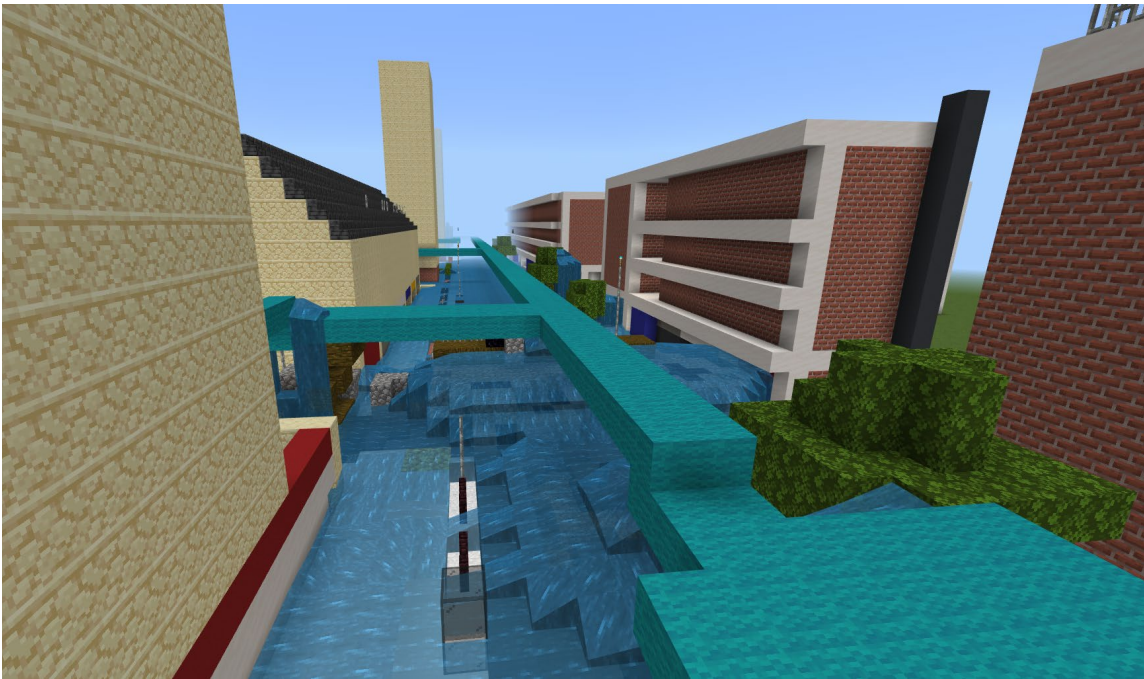
An area to promote community seating with trees and colourful benches that would also act as a modal filter on Robert Street



*"I wanted to create a cooking area so residents can benefit from a community kitchen to cook and spend time together with the comfort of a hot meal"*



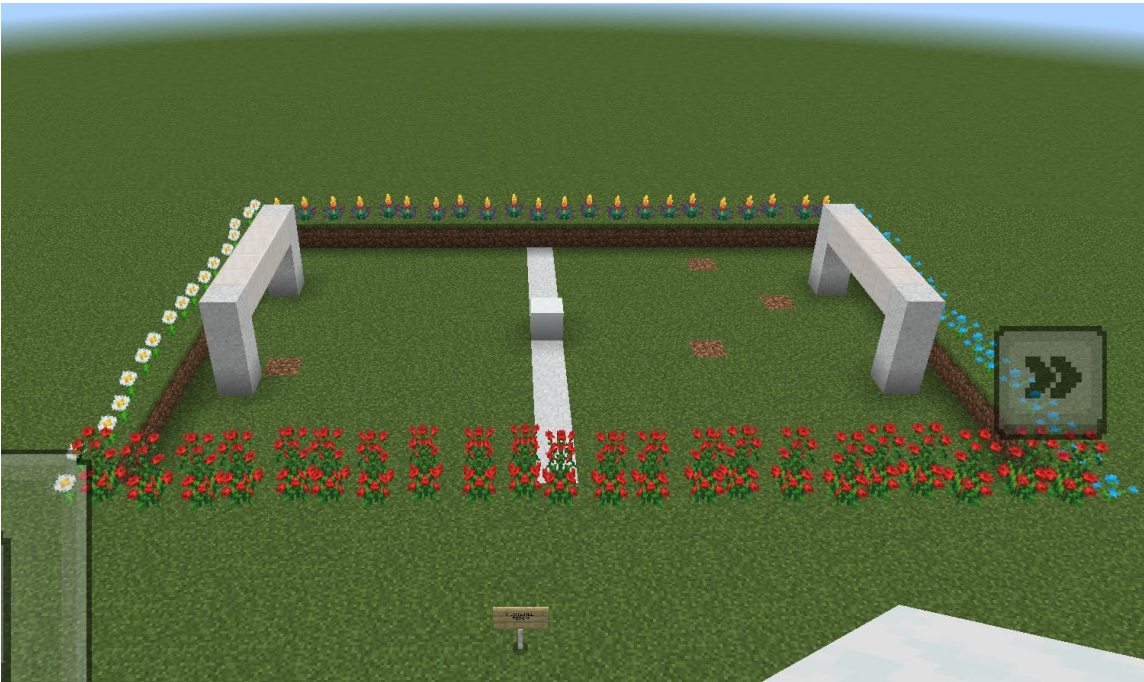
# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs



Denmark-inspired transformation of Robert Street into a canal with raised footways



Rain gardens and planting that are watered through wastewater and filtered sewage



A football pitch with a flower fence



*"I wanted to create murals along the street so you don't have to be bored"*



# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs

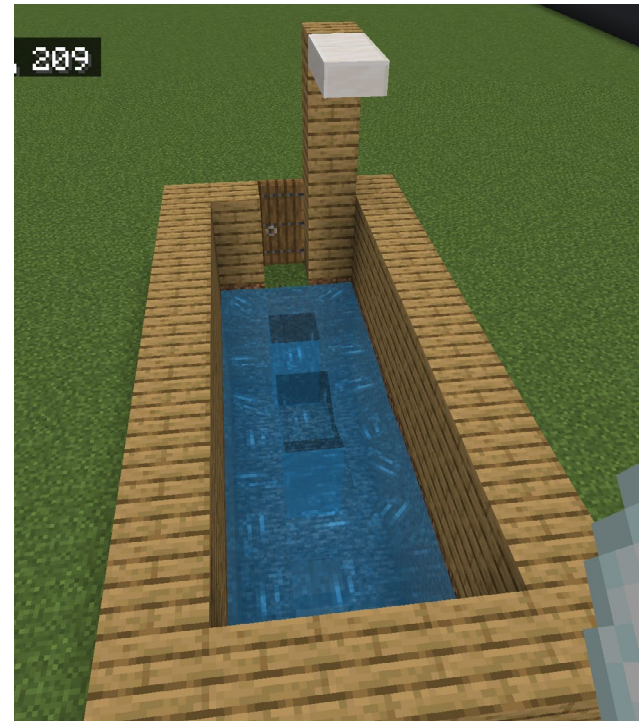
## Young people's recommendations to improve walking, cycling and road safety in Robert Street

About 8 to 10 young people attended each Minecraft session and many ideas were designed during both sessions. Even if all ideas cannot be fully implemented, they are an expression of the young people's desire to improve public realm. The young people worked with Camden engineers to discuss the realism of their designs and how they might work in practice.

It is interesting to do a comparison between the suggestions of the young people and those raised in the main engagement Regent's Park Area Safe and Healthy Streets project.

While a strong emphasis was put on improving road safety by reducing traffic speeds, improving pedestrian crossings, and improving traffic congestion in the main engagement project, the designs from the young people show they were interested in different options to improve the public realm, such as:

- creating spaces to spend time together outside home,
- creating more child centred streets, less dominated by traffic
- increasing planting and greenery
- creating more colourful and playful streets.



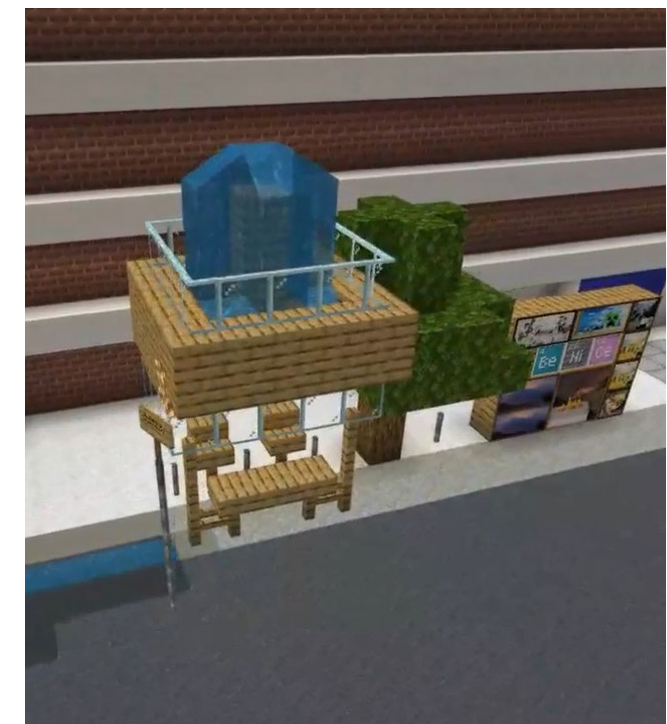
An outdoor swimming pool



An outdoor cinema



Planting and play on the way



Elevated water fountain



# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs

## List of suggestions created with Minecraft:

- An outdoor cinema
- A red, orange and yellow colourful crossing
- A rain garden including colourful planting
- Greening Robert Street's pavements
- An outdoor swimming pool
- A fenced garden on Compton Close, along with seating, and cycle stands
- A community kitchen on Robert street
- An arch into Osnaburgh Street with seating and planting to restrict traffic
- A space in Compton Close with trees and seating where young people can spend time together
- A seating area with blossom trees to meet with friends, and also hopscotch in Compton Close
- Convert Compton Close into a place for young people to rest and read
- For ease, below is a list of all the suggestions that were designed through Minecraft, which,
- Colourful pavements on Robert Street
- A colourful cycle lane on Robert Street, along with an arch into Cumberland Market
- Community seating with trees and colourful benches that would also restrict traffic on Robert Street
- A bridge to restrict traffic and to make it easier to cross Robert Street
- An elevated water fountain also acting as a view point
- Colourful planting including flowers
- Street art on the walls
- Play on the way (hopscotch and other floor games)
- Seating and greening in Osnaburgh Street
- A water fountain surrounded with colourful planting



A fenced garden on Compton Close, along with seating, and cycle stands



A water fountain



Colourful pavements



Rain garden with colourful planting



# Key findings | Converting ideas into real designs

This page is exploring how these recommendations could be transformed into **real projects on Robert Street**, by linking the young people's ideas with existing public realm projects in the UK or the rest of the world.



Learning Gardens in Chicago

The street kitchen idea could be converted into Learning Gardens alongside a community kitchen, which would create a true investment in the local community.



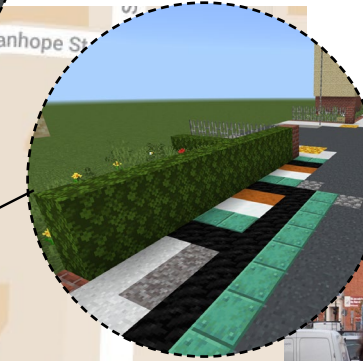
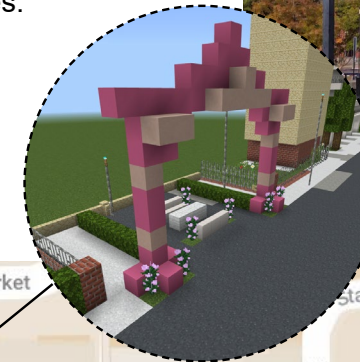
St Antoni Super Block in Barcelona

Barcelona's Super Blocks are a good example of how to restrict road traffic and replace it with people walking and seating, creating mingling and play opportunities.



Montgomery, Alabama

Street arches are often used in the United States to magnify entrances and give residents and users an increased feeling of belonging to places.



Tolworth Greenway, UK

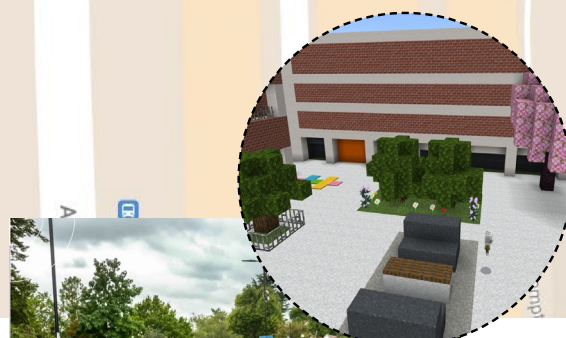


The Tolworth Greenway project is a great example of how colourful surfacing can be used to organise streets differently, slowing down traffic and giving more space to pedestrians.



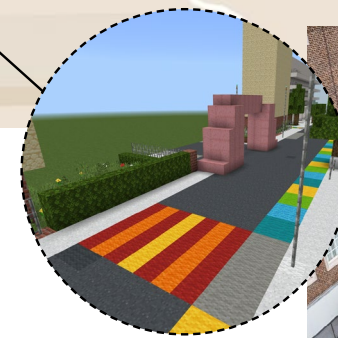
Kilburn Grange Playground, London

Kilburn Grange is a park in Camden and offers an array of play and active experiences; in particular, an adventure play area made from reclaimed materials.



Dulwich Village seating and planters, London

Pocket parks are an efficient way to quickly activate streets and unused places into attractive areas where people can spend time outside and meet friends.



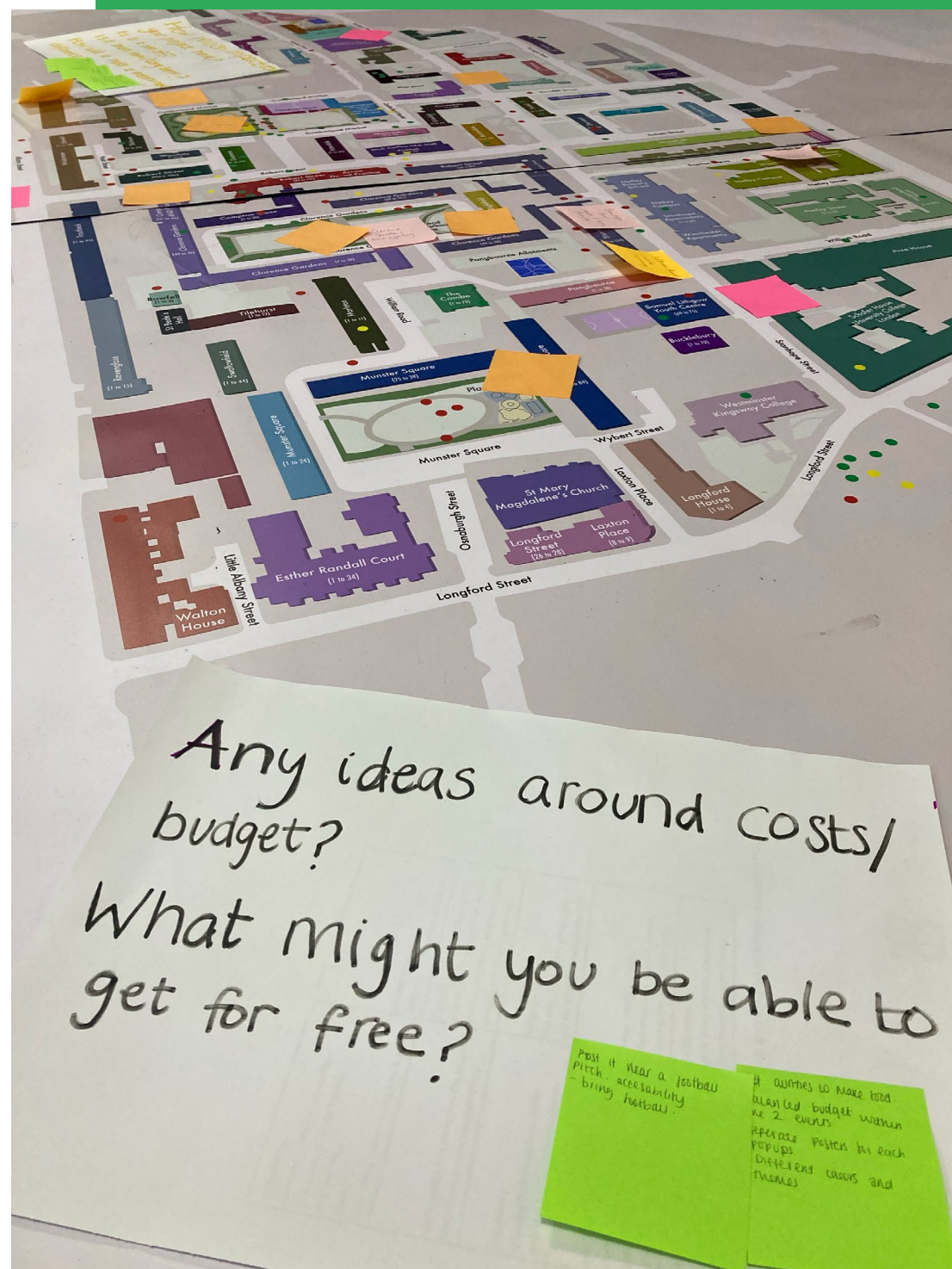
Lambeth, London

The design of this school street in Lambeth (London) shows how colourful surfacing can be used to slow down traffic, raise drivers' awareness and help pedestrians cross the road (children in particular).



# The Programme | C | Engaging with young people

## Successfully engaging with young people

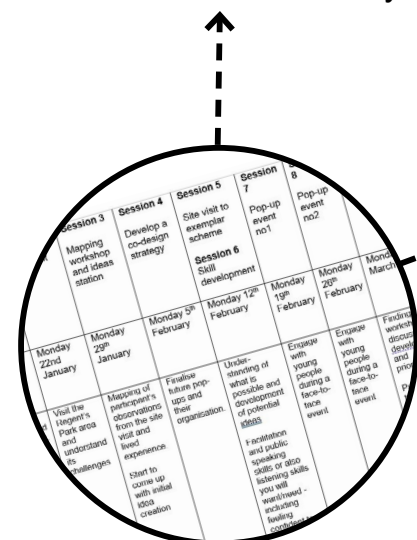




# Key findings | Why did young people join the programme?

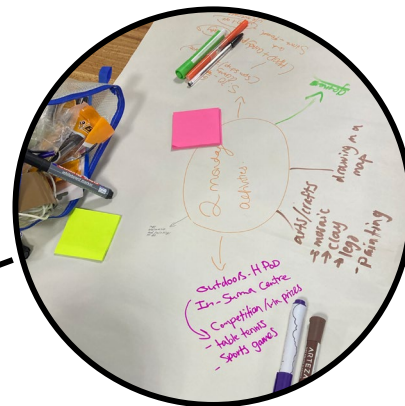
## Approach

Time was a valuable asset as a 14 week programme was developed to deeply engage with a core group of young people. This created the opportunity to fully explore the various phases of co-design step by step, and also allowed the young people to deeply dive into the programme and fully understand what they were doing. The Programme also provided people with a consistent extra curricular activity.



### 1 Time

### 2 Skills development and certificate accreditation



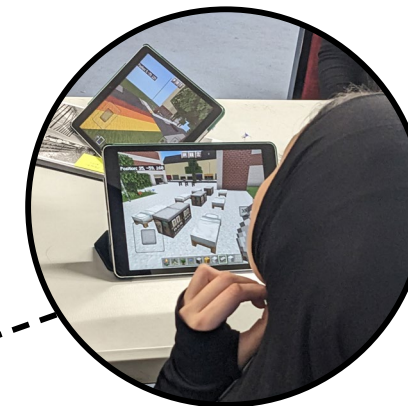
Through this programme the young people were able to gain knowledge about road safety and develop skills such as public speaking or team working. They also gained AQA certificates which means that they can assert the skills gained for future education. This was an important asset to ensure regular group attendance.

Identifying the most important reasons why young people would join an engagement event was key to the success of engaging with them. The participants of the programme - young people themselves - clearly highlighted that they would join events if there were fun and friendly. Free food (e.g. chocolate hunt) was also a good incentive. £10 vouchers were also successfully used to attract young people to one event.



### 3 Food and Fun

### 4 Value young people's voices



Giving the opportunity to a group of young people to fully design their own ideas on Minecraft was key to the success of this programme, as it gave them the possibility to create designs that really work for them. It also gave them the possibility to express ideas of their own without the pressure of group consensus. Using games such as Minecraft puts young people in a position of expertise as this is something they are familiar with, making the engagement process with expert engineers and planners more equal.

The young people were given the opportunity to present their own design ideas and recommendations to Camden decision makers, which made them feel valued and listened to. It gave credit to their work and their ideas, and they felt proud to know their ideas will be a starting point for future road safety improvement projects.



### 5 Sharing ideas with decision makers



# Key findings | Engaging with young people

## Engagement methods that worked well

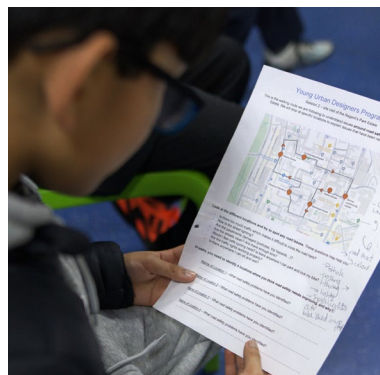
During the 14 week program, various methods were used to engage with young people to help group bonding, facilitate listening and group work, and to get their valuable feedback on improving walking, cycling and road safety in the Regent's Park Area. Below are the engagement methods that worked best over the programme.

### Play



Play and fun are key to the FYA participatory process. Play during sessions was essential to create a welcoming atmosphere and many short games were used as ice-breakers at the beginning of sessions. It also helped the young people to relax and focus better during sessions, as using games put them in a position of expertise as this is something they are familiar with. The group bonding activities meant the group gained confidence over time. Play, fun and leisure were also the main features of both pop-ups, that attracted many participants.

### Tools for imagination



During site visits, cameras were given to the young people to help them capture the important features. Worksheets with questions were also used to help them focus their attention on the issues, and to trigger their imagination.

When working in groups, the young people used tools such as tables to measure impact versus means, that helped them to synthesize their findings and turn them into ideas.

Minecraft was also an important tool used to trigger the young people's imagination and help them turn their ideas into real designs.

### Group engagement



Recruitment was opened to any young person living on the Estate, aged 12-18 years old, which allowed young people to join together as friends. Some younger people were allowed to join to increase the number of participants, which helped achieve the programme aims. This also helped increase confidence and fun within the group. Group bonding was key to the success of the programme as the young people developed solutions as a team, learning to listen and make concessions while expressing their own vision for the Regent's Park Area.

### Outings and trips



Two site visits were organised during the Programme - one site visit to the Regent's Park Area, and one to Brixton (South London), to see exemplar schemes. Young people said they really enjoyed the Brixton site visit, as it gave them the opportunity to experience something beyond their every day neighbourhood and see things in a different perspective. A rewarding trip was also organised at the end of the Programme to help ensure participation in the full programme.

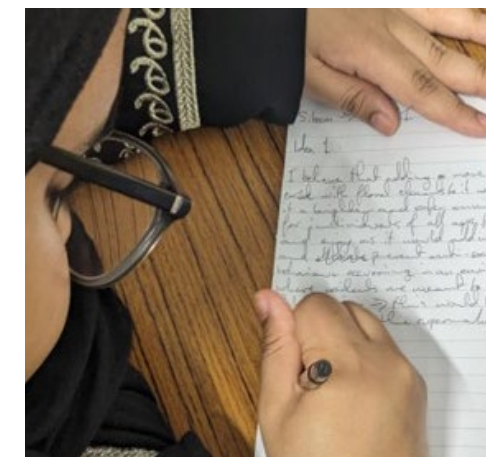
### Mapping



Mapping was used to capture the participant's observations from the site visit and their lived experience. The map containing their observations henceforth created was compared with what other residents said during the previous consultation on the Regent's Park Area led in 2023. As a group, mapping was also used to move towards an initial idea creation (by placing infrastructure cards on a large map).

### Empowerment

Empowering young people was one of the main goals of this project and all ideas and solutions were developed by participants of the programme, in partnership with their networks and peers. Giving increased ownership to the young people throughout the sessions during the 14 week programme empowered them to take their own decisions and to feel listened to and valued. For example, the young people were given the opportunity to choose and detail how they would engage with their peers and networks during the pop-ups.

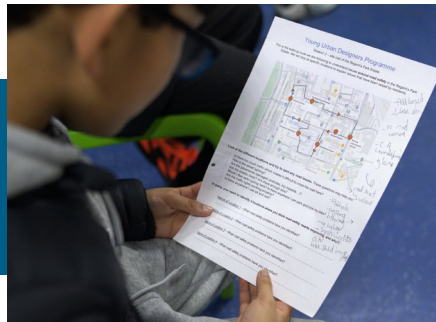




# Key findings | Engaging with young people

## Tools used to engage with young people during the Programme

Sustrans and FYA used a variety of tools to support the young people to fully engage in the programme. These tools were specifically chosen for each session, designed to help the young people observe their surroundings, help them work in groups, develop their creativity and achieve the goals of each session. Some tools also enabled non verbal or individual input into team decision making.



### Worksheets

Encourage young people to focus on specific themes and exercises, and to respond to questions on their own



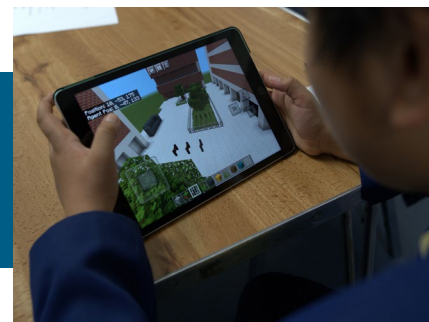
### Cameras

Help the young people focus their attention on specific features during site visits and help them remember what they saw



### Tables

Facilitate the organisation of ideas and measure feasibility versus impact



### Minecraft

An individual tool that allows young ones to design their own ideas in the context of an existing street



### Prompt questions

Help the young people discuss and solve issues as a group



### Clay

A hands-on activity that allows to think and shape ideas in 3-D



### Drawing

First means of expression for the young people to express and shape their own ideas



### Mind mapping

Helps the young people discuss on their own about pop-up organisation and design solutions together



## 3. Key learnings



## Guidance to engage with young people in the future



### 1 Partner with youth organisations to dive into existing networks

The partnership with FYA was essential to the success of the young people engagement. FYA have established successful models for youth engagement and youth led social action across Camden and hyper locally in Regent's Park Estate and Euston. They tried and tested, fun and informal participative strategies to empower young people to co-design programmes and activities. This was particularly successful regarding the pop-up events, utilising both the young people's own networks and FYA's existing local relationships to promote and engage young people and families. FYA also hold a wealth of knowledge and expertise to organise large quality and successful engagement events with and for young people safely, including adding capacity of staffing and event resources.

### 2 Engagement events have to be fun

The main success of both pop-ups (treasure hunt and Saturday afternoon in the park) is that they were involving a lot of fun, creativity and play adapted to the age of the participants. Both engagement events were adapted to what the young people like - for example games around football, creative activities around painting and clay, and games that included competition and team spirit. An engagement event centred around fun is helping the young people to boost their imagination and is helping them to overcome the technical challenge of designing ideas for street improvements.

### 3 Community feeling - make the community come together

What young people like is to spend time together. Organising events that promote community links and help young people spend time together is attractive for them. The fact that they can join an event with their friends, parents, siblings or cousins, engage and give feedback while still being able to spend quality time with their peers is a key to a successful engagement event, as it will increase attendance.

### 4 Free food at events

It is a simple thing that can make the whole difference. Teenagers are naturally attracted by food and offering free food is a way to help them join an engagement event.

It is also interesting if the food is gamified through the engagement event, for example as a chocolate hunt.

### 5 Reward young people for their time

It is worth considering rewards or even payments when asking young people to join a public engagement event. Some young people may join and participate actively in an event because they know they will get a reward if they do. For example, all participants from the treasure hunt received a £10 voucher which really boosted attendance. The opportunity to gain AQA qualifications through the Programme was also a strong incentive for the young people. It is important acknowledging that young people are not only to be consulted or taken from, but that their additional labour as experts of experience for developers should be remunerated.

### 6 Let the young people lead on and own the project

A key success of this programme was that the young people put forward their own ideas about engaging with their peers, and they led the engagement activities, resulting in a very good turnout of young people at the events. Young people leading on developing and running engagement activities helped them feel valued and listened to, and this approach was also successful because the young people scrutinised what they and their peers might want to actually participate in.

### 7 Confidence building

Building the confidence of the participants and bonding in between them was essential to the success of the programme. Thanks to various engagement methods, FYA and Sustrans supported the group in evolving throughout the Programme - from all being very quiet to being quite lively. The engagement methods that were used with the young people included icebreaker games, social activities, group work and individual worksheet exercises, or Minecraft. Therefore, the participants all gained the confidence to speak up and express their own ideas, and building this progression is essential when engaging with young people on future projects. While group work is important, it is also good to have a break from negotiation and let everyone explore their own ideas in a creative tool, and Minecraft was the perfect opportunity for that.



## Reflections on the Programme

The experiences of working with the young people for 14 weeks helped to build some reflections on what went well and what could be improved for future projects. One of the first aspects Sustrans, Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA) and Camden reflected on was to **consider people's drivers for joining** in order to shape the overall project and the activities around this. For example, young people from the Young Urban Designers Programme highlighted that the initial driver for them joining the Programme was to make a difference in their local area rather than learning about transport design.

It is also worth considering **scheduling** before launching a long Programme: September to December are often the best times of year, but that means there is also more competition for time from other projects. January to April is generally a good moment to engage with young people, while April onwards creates conflict with exams. It is also worth considering engaging during Summer holidays as, while some families will be away, some others will stay in London and will look for something to do during the school break. It is also important to consider local holidays, religious and cultural events, as this might mean people have other commitments - such as Ramadan for example.

**Communicating** with younger people can be challenging and it is worth considering that communication with younger participants will have to go through parents. It is also worth considering the language barriers which can slow or even cut out all communications.

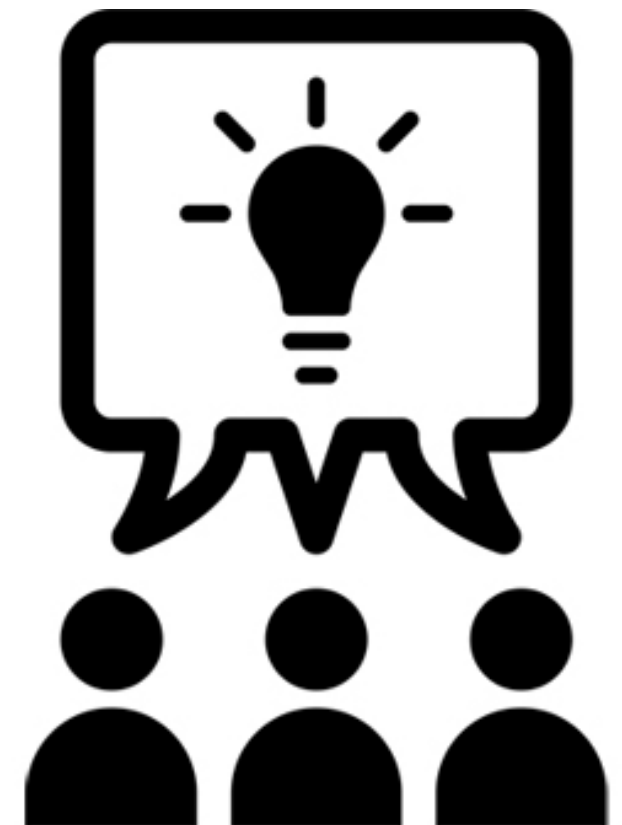
Sustrans, FYA and Camden also reflected on **accessibility and inclusion**. It is important to adapt the sessions and the tools used to the participants and the specificities of the group. It could have been a positive approach in the Young Urban Designers Programme to include creative activities that did not necessarily require speaking early on, as part of the tools that were used to build people's confidence. Minecraft was a good example of a tool that was really empowering, as the young people were able

to draw or design their own response without having to speak in front of the group.

In terms of **inclusion**, it is worth noting that no disabled participant took part in the Young Urban Designers Programme, although one participant with additional needs did. It is therefore key to consider how more young disabled people or people with additional needs can be encouraged to take part in the future. In the instance of this project, one participant with additional needs was supported to take part by allowing them to attend half, rather than the entirety of sessions. This approach may work for some disabled young people, although ultimately, the best method to ensure inclusion will be bespoke to each individual, depending on their needs. It is worth reaching out directly to disabled young people (including local groups) rather than expecting them to take part in existing projects that may require a lot of verbal and cognitive engagement. Once the cohort of participants is identified, tailored sessions can be created, ideally collaboratively with the young people. The sessions may need to factor in more play and staff time, with short bursts of engagement work. In general, there is a preference for people to be included as part of groups wherever this is possible.

FYA's **flexible approach** to meeting young people's needs in terms of session attendance and requirements at sessions meant that people were under less pressure from the project and found it easier to balance it with other commitments (such as exams and Ramadan). This formed part of the success of the programme.

It is also worth noting that the investment needed from the Project Managers of the Programme is key to a successful **project delivery**. While it is clear that allowing young people to set the direction with their ideas is the best way forward, realistically due to time constraints there is a need to invest in adult staff resources to deliver their ideas on the ground (e.g. buying and organising and preparing resources for pop-up events, printing, room bookings, etc).





# Key findings | Young people's feedback

## Case Study

"KJ" is a young person who was extremely shy and nervous in the group. They stated they had social anxiety and found it hard being in big groups and would often only stick to people they knew and felt comfortable with. As weeks went by, small improvements could be seen in "KJ" with them answering questions in the group, discussing their Minecraft work with the group/members of staff and finally presenting at the final showcase to decision makers. "KJ" has made such great improvement and has returned to join another FYA cohort.



## Feedback/Quotes from young people in group



***"I really enjoyed this group - I did think it was going to be boring at first, but it wasn't. I really enjoyed playing games and doing the group with my friends."***

***"Joining a group of new people was scary at first, but by the end I was more comfortable and really enjoyed it"***

***"I do feel like my confidence improved. I have really bad social anxiety and don't feel comfortable talking to people I don't know or putting my hands up to speak even in school, but this group has helped me feel a little more confident"***

***"I'm proud of my Minecraft images I got to create and doing the presentation at the end to staff"***

## Reflections from trip

Young people shared that if they had to tell someone else about their work and what they were proud of, it was their Minecraft designs and presenting to Camden staff and local Councillors.



# Next Steps

The London Borough of Camden has commissioned the **Young Urban Designers Programme** to achieve two key goals:

1. **To co-design solutions** to transport and public realm issues in the Regent's Park Area with local young people.
2. **To increase Camden's capacity and understanding of how to better engage with young people** on built environment issues in the future.

The way learnings related to these goals will now be taken forward by Camden is described below.

## Taking forward design recommendations

Following the publication of this report, Camden will review the young people's transport and public realm design recommendations, presented here, alongside those provided by the wider community in the main Regent's Park Area Safe and Healthy Streets Project. This includes general recommendations for the Regent's Park Area as well as the design ideas produced in Minecraft for Robert Street.

As part of Camden's review, the feasibility of the different design solutions will be evaluated. This includes how designs might impact traffic, road safety, air pollution, placemaking, as well as the cost of constructing projects. The Council will prioritise projects according to which areas demonstrate the greatest need, and their alignment with Camden's Transport Strategy. Once these factors have been considered, the Council will decide on which projects it will take forward.

The Council will fund the implementation of these proposals through the £2.4m Camden secured from HS2's Road Safety Fund. It is expected that the Council would be able to start delivering schemes proposed during the Young Urban Designers Programme within 18 months of the publication of this report (Spring 2024). Delivery of each individual project will be subject to further feasibility work and public consultation. As part of this, the Council will look for opportunities to engage young people around any changes proposed in the area. Projects will be delivered in stages rather than all at once and residents will be informed of any proposed changes and associated construction in advance.

## Taking forward learnings about engaging with young people

As the Council develops more detailed design proposals for the Regent's Park Area Safe and Healthy Streets Project, it will aim to re-engage local young people, so that they can give feedback on whether the designs meet their expectations. This may involve going back to the Young Urban Designers cohort, as well other groups, including young disabled people.

The Council also wishes apply learnings from the programme in its wider strategy for increasing youth participation in built environment projects and designing in a youth-friendly way. This may include setting up youth design panels through similar intensive engagement projects elsewhere in the Borough. These could help establish participant cohorts which can then be contacted to provide feedback on a range of projects.







Camden



Fitzrovia Youth in Action

