

CAMDEN HIGHLINE

Community Involvement Plan

Prepared for:
Camden Highline

May 2022

**JAMES
CORNER
FIELD
OPERATIONS**

PHASE 1 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Works relating to the “Camden Highline” ‘Phase 1’, a high level garden on existing viaduct, including access at Camden Gardens and Royal College Street, Commercial kiosks (within existing arches-Class E), seating area, pedestrian walkway, event spaces, woodland balcony and ancillary waste and storage facilities.



PHASE 1 HIGHLINE SITE PLAN

OVERVIEW

This document provides an overview of the community engagement and outreach throughout the development of the Camden Highline from 2017 to 2022.

During the design phase, the Camden Highline Team, Street Space, Field Operations and vPPR have worked together to devise and deliver a comprehensive programme of engagement to involve local people in the development of the Camden Highline. Together, we’ve harnessed a range of methods to hear the thoughts, ideas and ambitions of different people, perspectives and places.

This chapter outlines what we’ve done and what we’ve heard along the way.

1,600

people have been on a walking tour of the route

300

people have taken part in volunteering activities

5,500

subscribers to the Camden Highline newsletter

1,000+

hours of education workshops

1,000

donations to date



CONTEXT

Beginning as a crowdfunding campaign, the project has relied on it's local supporters to get the project to its current stage. Local volunteers have been essential in carrying out improvements to Camden Gardens and implementing the local education programme.

Camden Highline made sure that community consultation was a key part of selecting the winning design team, and have continued to work alongside Street Space to continue to bring the local community along in the project journey.

ENGAGEMENT TEAM EXPERTISE

Camden Town Unlimited, the BID that supports the Camden Highline charity, has a strong buy-in and accountability to the local business and resident communities, as well as strong links with the local council. Camden Highline has a wealth of experience in running meanwhile use projects (such as Camden Collective), leading streetscape improvements and implementing green initiatives. Camden Highline is the centrepiece of their overarching public realm strategy (Camden Green Loop) and 15-minute city vision for Camden.

Street Space is a new and exciting engagement and collaborative design social enterprise working with people to re-imagine their streets and spaces to make them feel safer, bring joy and social connection.

Street Space are hyper-aware of the importance of taking time to hear the nuanced narratives that live and exist unseen in spaces and places. Through all their work they strive to create opportunities for authentic participation, enabling local people to play an active role in the creation of spaces where they feel they belong.

METHODOLOGY

The Camden Highline launched with a crowdfund, an approach which provided three key benefits to the project. It funded the feasibility stage, proved local support for the project and kick-started the community of local supporters who helped thread the Highline through its earliest and riskiest stages.

The crowdfund was hugely successful, and raised nearly twice the funding needed. The additional funds were used to build a model of the route to help with local engagement, and begin the Camden Highline’s community projects ahead of construction; with an education programme in local schools and volunteer delivered improvements to Camden Gardens.

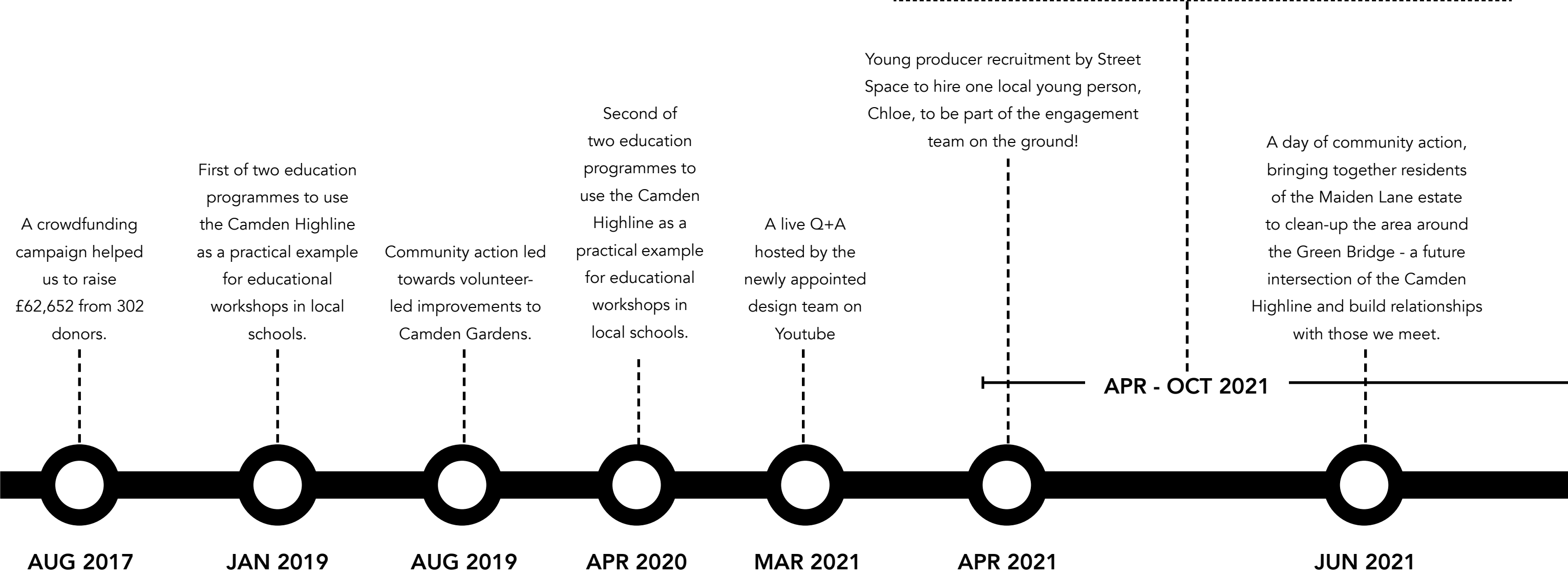
With an already high profile and hugely visible support from local groups, organisations, businesses and residents Street Space’s engagement approach aimed to involve those who hadn’t yet been as included in conversations about the Camden Highline. In particular, residents on the Maiden Lane and Agar Grove estates.

The methodology included the recruitment of a local young producer, Chloe, to create a locally based team, embedded within the neighbouring estates, who was supported to co-lead the engagement process. Together, the engagement team developed a radically accessible and inclusive programme of engagement to directly enrich and bring the benefit of wider participation into the emerging and collaborative design process of the Camden Highline.



TIMELINE

THE FOLLOWING TIMELINE SHOWS THE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES COMPLETED BETWEEN AUGUST 2017 AND DECEMBER 2021 THROUGH OUR INTEGRATED APPROACH TO INVOLVING LOCAL PEOPLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMDEN HIGHLINE.



On-site pop-ups, door knocking and by-hand postcard distribution saw Street Space push a mobile lemonade stand around the neighbouring estates of the Camden Highline to drink, discuss, door knock and distribute information to local residents about the plans for the Camden Highline, answer questions and gather feedback.





A walking tour of the Camden Highline route to make the plans more tangible and relatable in the minds of local people.

A lighting workshop in collaboration with Spiers and Major Architectural Lighting experts to discuss perceptions of safety in the surrounding area and consider methods of lighting that might help create safer feeling future spaces and places.



A live town hall meeting hosted by the design team on Youtube to provide updates amongst the community.

A collage workshop with children aged 5-14 at Maiden Lane Community Centre to spark imagination and gather ideas for the future of the Camden Highline.

'Design your Highline' craft and engagement activities at Camden Inspire street party.

Fundraising event and Design Preview with Anthony Gormley to provide updates amongst the community.

A painting workshop with community members to create three large-scale imaginative future visions of the Camden Highline.



A volunteer postcard drop to give information to homes along the Highline.

A live town hall meeting hosted by the design team on Youtube to provide updates amongst the community.

JUL 2021

—AUG 2021—

—SEP 2021—

OCT 2021

NOV 2021

DEC 2021

HIGHLIGHTS



FREE LEMONADE IN THE SUMMER SUN!

MAKING THE MOST OF THE SUMMER SUN, STREET SPACE JOURNEYED AROUND CAMDEN WITH A POP-UP LEMONADE STAND TO MEET, GREET, CONVERSE AND DRINK FREE LEMONADE WITH PASSERS-BY.

This ad-hoc and pop-up engagement method aimed to attract those going about their daily lives in Camden to find out more about the Highline and join in conversations about its future. Particularly popular after school, Street Space spoke with kids and adults alike to extend the engagement amongst many people who had never heard of the highline or might not typically get involved in conversations about the future of local spaces and places.



EXPLORING PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY THROUGH CREATIVE LIGHTING!

IN RESPONSE TO SOME OF THE THINGS STREET SPACE HEARD AMONGST LOCAL PEOPLE ABOUT PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY IN THE AREA, WE ORGANISED A CREATIVE LIGHTING WORKSHOP TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER!

The workshop invited residents of the Maiden Lane estate to meet with Street Space and the Highline lighting consultants Spiers and Major to discuss a walkway neighbouring the Highline that had been highlighted as feeling particularly unsafe for local people.



Through a series of exercises we discussed the space to understand perceptions of safety and explore how the highline could respond to local concerns and to make the space feel secure and safe for everyone.

Our conversations touched on a number of different components working together to make people feel uncomfortable, including the feeling of being funnelled and forced along a path, a sense that a space is prohibited, a lack of care for a space, an uneven floor surface, the unreliability of light, the disorientating sound of trains and the lack of social connection in some spaces.



COLLAGE AND COLLABORATION WITH THE YOUNGER GENERATION!

WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE MAIDEN LANE ESTATE, STREET SPACE HOSTED A WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS HOPES, SHARE IDEAS AND DEVELOP DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO INFORM THE EMERGING DESIGNS.

Together we discussed the power of play for learning and making friends, talked about the importance of calm alongside chaos and fun and explored our interests in re-using natural materials along the highline route. Our conversations through this workshop were compiled into a creative playbook to communicate the desires of local young people and inform the emerging designs.



PAINTING OUR VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CAMDEN HIGHLINE!

STREET SPACE WERE JOINED BY RESIDENTS AND ORGANISATIONS FROM ACROSS CAMDEN TO PAINT LARGE SCALE VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE HIGHLINE.

Using the design images created by Field Operations as a starting point, we invited community members to collaborate to create a painting to capture their own ambitions, desires and ideas! Through these workshops we were able to explore the visions of the local community and collect helpful feedback in response to the initial design images of the Camden Highline. The large scale paintings are now on public display in three locations along the highline route - extending conversations far and wide, for more people to see!



HIGHLINE WALKING TOURS

SINCE 2018

Together we discussed the power of play for learning and making friends, talked about the importance of calm alongside chaos and fun and explored our interests in re-using natural materials along the highline route. Our conversations through this workshop were compiled into a creative playbook to communicate the desires of local young people and inform the emerging designs.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY, WE'VE RECOGNISED RECURRING THEMES THROUGH CONVERSATIONS WITH LOCAL PEOPLE THAT DEMONSTRATE THE IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND AMBITIONS OF THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. THE FOLLOWING INSIGHTS AIM TO SUMMARISE WHAT WE'VE HEARD.

LOCAL RESIDENTS AT THE HEART OF THE HIGHLINE

"Where will it be? What will it look like? How will it change the estate? I'd love to find out more and understand how it could benefit me and my neighbours."

As the news spreads about the Camden Highline, the interest and excitement of local people to be involved expands, along with the importance of bringing people on the journey. How can we continue to involve neighbouring residents in the design of the highline and prioritise the lived experiences of local people?

A HIGHLINE BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES

"We've been living with the same issues for a long time. How will the Highline connect and improve our existing spaces?"

The people we've spoken to are really excited about the potential of a beautiful new park along the railway line and want to extend conversations to neighbouring spaces that surround the site. How can we integrate and improve existing unloved and/or neglected spaces and unloved corners that touch the edges of the Highline?

WELCOMING, SAFE AND SECURE FIRST

"...it feels like there's a divide between the older estates and some of the new developments, our bit is segregated from the back end, because it's not safe, there's lots of drugs and stuff like that round there, we don't let our kids hang around there. Would be good for us to mix with each other more and have places where we can meet and talk - better connect people and make it feel safer."

We've heard of the importance of feeling safe, welcome and secure, especially from residents and people living in close proximity to the Highline. How can we harness creative lighting and other security methods to make people feel safe and secure when using the footpath?

ENSURE LOCAL BENEFIT

"I want to see regeneration for the working class people who are from here and have been here a long time. People have been pushed out in the past and it's important that anything that happens here is sensitive to the lives of the people that it will affect."

The people we've spoken to have considered ways in which the highline could benefit them. Job opportunities, improved access and easier walking routes to work, school or leisure, new spaces to play, things to do and access to nature! How might we prioritise local benefit through crafting locally relevant opportunities and provisions?

GENUINE SHARING OF TALENTS AND IDEAS

"There is so much knowledge in this area, I know ecologists, botanists, carpenters, designers, coffee specialists - it would be great to see local people spearheading what happens on the highline - can local people help design, make or create parts of the highline?"

We've seen the talent, skills and rich experiences of local people during our engagement so far. From botanists to sculptors, guerilla gardeners to carpenters and young dinosaur experts to avid bird watchers. How can we celebrate these local interests and carve opportunities for them to feed into the emerging vision?

INSIGHTS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY IN UNEXPECTED PLACES.

"I like playing in the trees and woods, digging up the mud and playing pretend with my friends - we do it everywhere."

BALANCE ACTIVATED AND ENERGETIC SPACES WITH CALM AND QUIET PLACES.

"if you put a zipline on there then lots of people will come and spoil how nice it is, you don't want it to be too busy like a theme park, but little bits of fun would be fine, something for everyone, different sections for playing and different sections for sitting and being quiet."

HARNESS NATURAL, RECYCLED AND RENEWABLE MATERIALS ALONG THE HIGHLINE.

"It would be good if we helped the animals, could they use it? Could they live on it?" "You don't want it to feel too colourful, stand out too much. I'd like it to look natural - could we find things to build it with there's loads of old things around here that we could use."

LET US HELP MAKE AND SHAPE PARTS OF THE HIGHLINE—FROM SIGNAGE TO SEATING.

"We did the mural on the wall at Maiden Lane. Can we do another one? We could make lots of art to put on there. With some help."



DATA COLLECTION

THROUGHOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME WE HAVE COLLECTED THE THINGS WE'VE HEARD IN A CONVERSATION LOG AND REPORTED BACK TO THE CAMDEN HIGHLINE TEAM ON A REGULAR BASIS TO FEED INTO THE DEVELOPING DESIGNS. THE CONVERSATION LOG CAN BE VIEWED ON PAGES 24-27 OF THE APPENDIX, ALONGSIDE VARIOUS OTHER VISUAL OUTPUTS TO THE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

HOW HAVE THE IDEAS OF LOCAL PEOPLE INFLUENCED THE EMERGING MASTERPLAN?

One of the primary goals of the Highline is to increase biodiversity and habitat while creating spaces for people and families to gather, play, and learn about the plants and animals that are a vital part of London's ecology.

Throughout our engagement process we've consistently heard people's desire for green space that isn't only for people to enjoy but for birds, insects, and animals. The materials and plants we are using are carefully chosen to enhance the ecological impact of the Highline while also creating an enriching experience for people to enjoy and where children can play.

We are actively incorporating what we've heard into our design work. From horticulture to safety, the design is integrating the community's thoughts and concerns into the future of the Highline.

From the beginning of the Highline project, even before designers were engaged, understanding what the community wanted out of a new park in their neighborhoods was the top priority. Because of the robust engagement groundwork laid from 2017 onward, when the design process began in 2021 the team was well equipped to weave in community input to the Phase 1 designs.

Early in the design process, safety was a top concern of neighbors. Some of the existing conditions along the Highline feel unsafe due

to lack of lighting, low visibility, and narrow spaces. With lighting consultant Spiers Major, the design team met these concerns early in the summer with a lighting scheme that prioritized safety while also incorporating lively placemaking elements like colored lights in the archways.

Some neighbors were concerned about privacy for those who directly abut the viaduct. The design team undertook a rigorous privacy study for the Phase 1 portion of the project—the diagrams of which are included in a supporting privacy statement—to understand and illustrate these concerns and map out how they would be addressed.

When it came to the design itself—determining the activities, furniture, and landscaping on the Highline—the designers began with comments from the community, paying particular attention to the needs and desires of the neighborhoods' children and young adults. The younger generation were excited by the opportunity to engage with this piece of infrastructure that has loomed so large in their lives and neighborhoods. The design team added playful elements throughout the site plan, like portholes through the separation screen and "artefact" displays of old railroad gadgets so that children (and adults!) could interact directly with the viaduct's shared use and history. Specific areas of play, like the log yard and outdoor classrooms in the Woodland Catwalk segment, were also built around this input, centering learn-through-play and learn-through-nature theories of early childhood development.

Over the summer and into the autumn, community members were invited to design and imagine alongside the team. From painting activities with schoolchildren, to picture book illustrations, to walking tours, to imagining the future for the Highline through postcards and drawing, community members played an active role in how the design team formulated ideas about the elements of the park's natural and built features.

Over the course of three town hall meetings, the design team solicited feedback from Camden residents and neighbors. Across the three meetings, key themes emerged. Older members of the community were keen to ensure there was ample seating throughout the Highline, framing it as a place for quick respite from the bustling town below. There was similar interest in using lighting as a way to draw people up from the street, as an element of placemaking. The audience was also excited by the idea of kitchen gardens and composting on the Highline, as a way to include people who already use garden plots in neighboring areas. A "link in" with the surrounding communities, an active invitation to all Camden residents, is key to the design proposals and emblematic of how the design has evolved.

Most resonant was the desire to have this park feel like and for Camden. "Playful, edgy, dynamic and multicultural," were the words of one town hall commenter. And therefore for the community. Though this will be a citywide draw, this is a park for Camden. Camden residents will continue to inform the design as it develops over the coming months.

WHAT DO PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE DESIGNS SO FAR?

"It looks lovely. More trees means more oxygen which is good for the children. It is always good to introduce insects and biodiversity."

"I like the grating material of the floors, they remind me of the ones on the estate."

"I can now see there would be more space and more places to sit for me and my family, above the city."

"It seems a lot safer as it will be away from traffic and will have lots of people using it"





NEXT STEPS

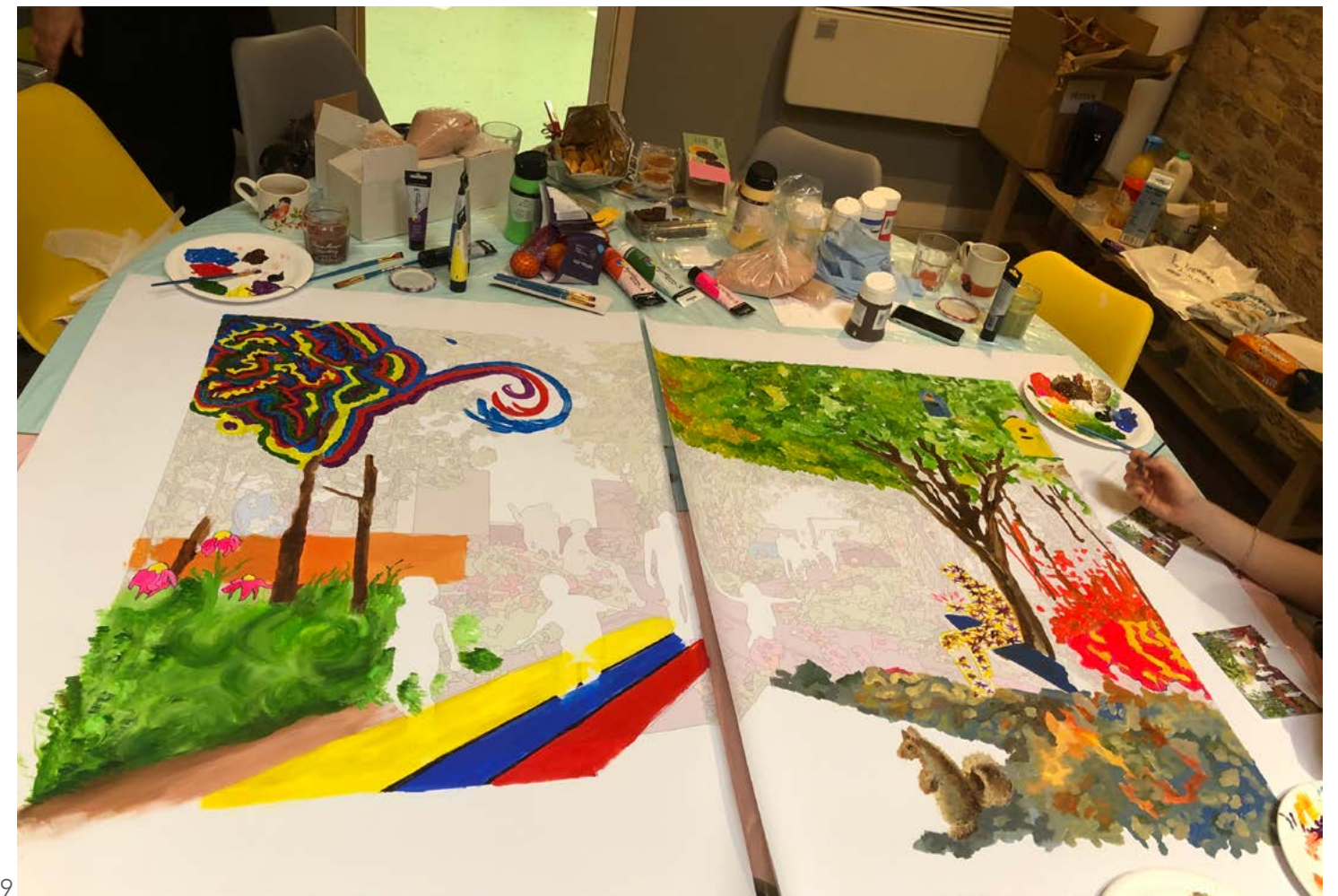
The Camden Highline will submit a masterplan for it’s design, and a detailed design for section one in January 2022. These are the culmination of the engagement it has undertaken over the last four years. Engagement and outreach will continue through public events, volunteer days, walking tours and feedback collected. Once planning is secured the focus will turn to things on, around and associated with the Highline; what kind of interventions would the community like to see on the Camden Highline, how best can we deploy the Camden Highline’s volunteer community, and ways we can coordinate with others to embed the Highline entrances into their local landscapes.



WHO WE SPOKE WITH

THROUGHOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME WE HAVE ENGAGED WITH THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS:

Kentish Town Road Action Group	Living Streets
Camden Giving	Google
Inner London Ramblers	LabTech
North London Railway Historical Society	King's Cross Central Limited Partnership
Maiden Lane Community Centre	Arch Company
Camden Climate Change Alliance	Tile Yard Studios
Camden Tour Guides Association	The GA Group
Coram's Fields	Moo
North Camden Zone	The Holiday Inn
Camden Friends of the Earth	Lendlease
Camden Cyclists	HS1
Camden Giving	Rainbowwave
Camden Railway Heritage Trust	All businesses in Camden Town though Camden Town Unlimited
Sustrans	ThinkandDo Camden
National Park City Foundation	Camden Town Garden Centre/Cafe
C40 Cities	Rochester Square
Association of Leading Visitor Attractions	The Camden Town Shed/The Men's Shed
Agar Grove Tenant Management Co-operative	Camden Town Community Forum
Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum	Camden Square Neighbourhood Association
Inkerman Area Residents Association	Camley Street Steering Group
Camden Broadway Conservation Area Advisory Committee	Elm Village
Camden Town Brewery	Camden Collective
TfL	Maiden Lane Community Centre
Network Rail	Maiden Lane TRA
GLA	Urban Partners
Camden Council	Urban Community Projects
London Zoo	Global Generation
Kentish Town Community Centre	Secure by Design

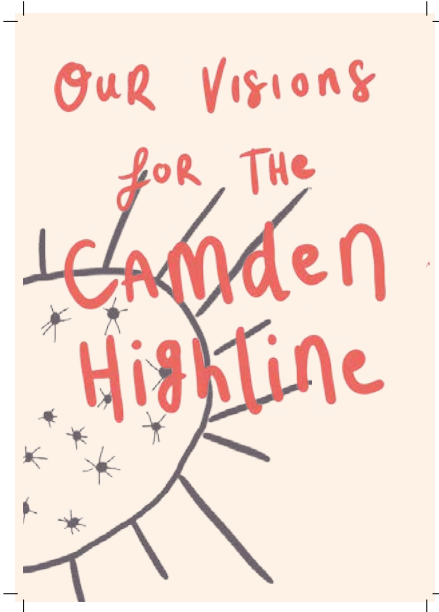


COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

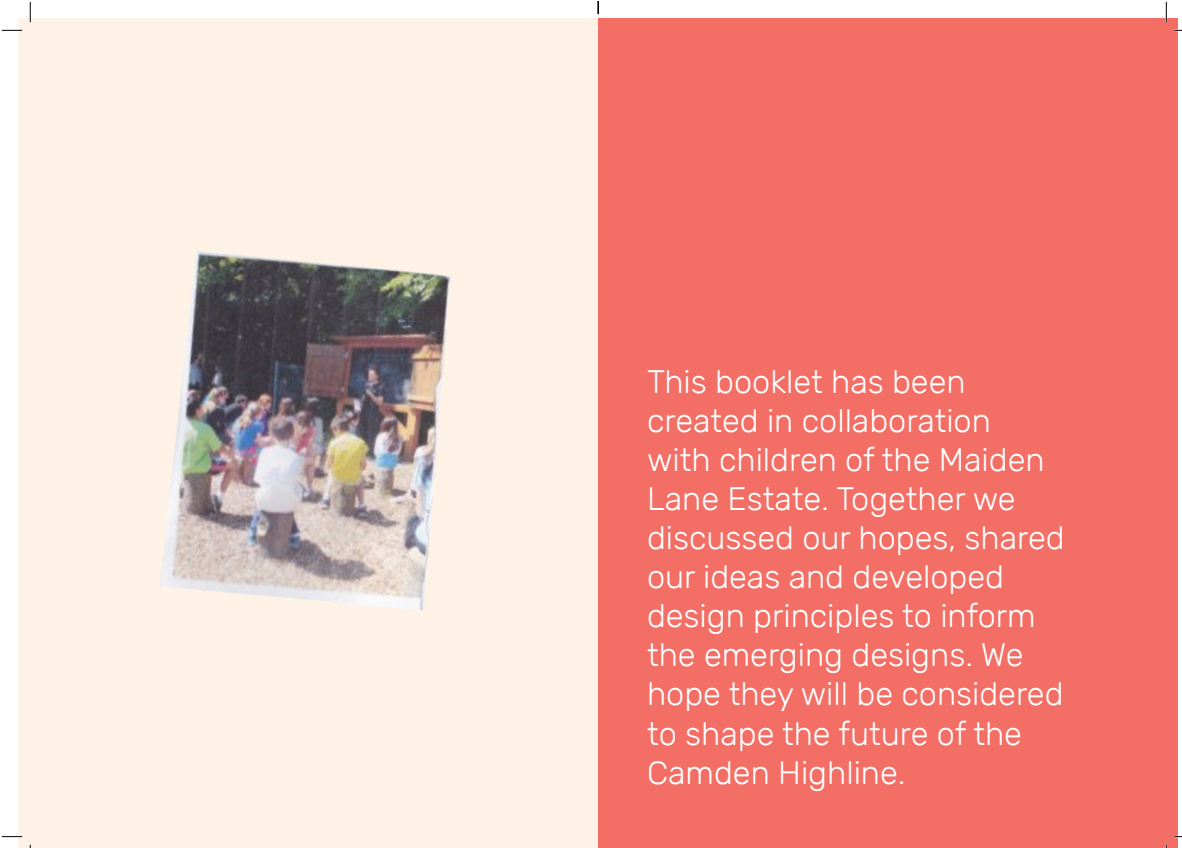
APPENDIX

OUR VISION PLAYBOOK

COVER



PAGE 1-2



PAGE 3-4



PAGE 5-6

That it should be all about Nature and it should be a safe place to play sports like football and basketball.



Little Bit of trees

CHANGE MORE EDIBLE PLANTS



PAGE 7-8


Infrastructure

More Places to Play and Maby put a Place for books and also some Shops that Sales Some ~~music~~ things.



Cafe

Wall design by the local children with the kids. Binoculars in prime Paint to See the View Setting- Lots of bins, A Sensory bits along the Walk, Pram, Wheelchair space access, toilets, Lot of Sign and directions. Communal garden.



Signs made by Children

one line of pavement slabs/lane and on either side; grass and flowers With Seating spaces for people to relax. With an art Shop or Cafe / Wall of art Spray Paint a name for the area




Solo panels to power lights



PAGE 9-10

Our design principles:

- Create opportunities for play in unexpected places.
- Balance activated and energetic spaces with calm and quiet places.
- Harness natural, recycled and renewable materials along the Highline.
- Let us help make and shape parts of the Highline - from signage to seating.



CONVERSATION LOG

Person A
“There are loads of groups of young people who already meet outside during the week - ready to go! There’s also a community radio station, podcasts which might be good to get the highline involved in. Lots of connections - helping book families in for the highline - connections to the TRA and Agar Grove estate. Excited about future enaggement plans, happy to assist and help where she can!”

Newsagent near Camden Gardens
“Why not - it’s something that is not already being used in London - we are very crowded here so it will be nice!”

Person B
“Pubs! Car mechanics (Thomas). Neighbourhood plans that ensure that Camley Street development takes the existing businesses into account. Lord Stanley is good for food and a bit bourgi? Alara have annual street party. Kentish Town Greengrocer is key. The old eagle is a locals pub like the Constitution before it closed pre lockdown. Pubs are really important for this area.”

Person C
“Maybe the seating could be a bit like at Paddington by the water? Lots of tiered seating and beautiful flowers.”

Person D
“It would be to show people exactly what it’s gonna look like, for exampled if it might block someones view” “When you say ‘park in the sky’, what does that really mean?”

Academic
“Thumbs up from me” “I really don’t want it to become like the canal, where you get cyclists taking up all the space”

Grandparent and resident of Maiden Lane Estate
“I think it would be great, that railway line isn’t being used anyway!” “I would like there to be more options for young kids, structures which are safe” - Had an interesting insight into the divide in the estate between the kings cross new development and the agar grove side: “our bit is segregated from the back end, cos its not safe, there’s lots of drugs and stuff like that round there, we don’t let our kids hang around there. Would be good for us to mix with eachother more and have coffee stands where we can meet and talk.”

Parent and resident of Maiden Lane Estate
“fun things for kids, like built in trampolines” “sensory activities like if you had one of those mirrors that makes you fat and skinny”

Members of the Men’s Shed
“Some fears around privacy / disruption and litter. Worried about overuse. Keen for members of the mens’s shed to get involved. Potentially making a scuplture (Mike) or benches or planters - definitely keen!”

Estate Gardening & Maintenance team
“We need longevity and consistency whatever happens...things start and then stop around here. We had a permaculture society, but it all stops when the funding stops. With some new flats there’s some new interest - we used to do bird watching! Network Rail will need to maintain access along here for the tracks. It would be nice if there were nature walks and benches maybe?”

Person E
“Worried about increase in drug dealing by non locals - area already a hot spot and this might be more people from other areas here. The lighting is very poor and strange sound effects around here. It would be good to keep the design clear and simple. Worried about access to gangs from other estates... we’ve had problems in the past. It’s easy for burglars to escape through these passageways... it’s important it’s shut off at night. A girl was raped near the green bridge a few years ago. We have a strong community and TRA here - fireworks night etc. Be good to speak to Gary the community liaison officer, he knows all of the gang activity...”

Local resident
“Kids are always hopping over the fence anyway to go get their balls from the tracks. I watch them do it, it’s really dangerous. Its because the football court has an open top so they cant help it - and footballs are expensive so they dont want to lose them!”

Local residents
“Not really a drug problem here - maybe used to be. I live right there so I should know!”

Local resident
“It’d be the perfect walkway for me!”

Local resident
Be great to have peep holes to the trains - my kids love trains. Maybe some play and adventure play for kids?

Elderly local resident
“I was a bit thrown by the question as to what I think should be included on the Camden High Line, because it passes through an area of considerable current and past diversity.”
“It’s a great idea and I look forward to being able to walk along it some day”
Ideas:

- for older people (like me) in particular, access to somewhere to sit for a little rest, and public loos nearby (and signposted), are important.
- The variety of different kinds of imaginative seating on the NY Highline is very attractive (also around the Granary Square area)
- likewise disabled access
- provision of explanatory panels, QR codes about history, wild life etc (also available in braile, as a sound recording?)
- flexible space for any kind of cultural group-dance/music for example, from local groups/visitor; art displays (could be changed regularly for use by local groups); sculpture
- play/adventure areas - might incorporate displays/ explanations about the history of the area - fascinating science/technology hisotry plus domestic/social history
- ‘wild’ planting and perhaps bug-hotels and bee hives (been very sucessful in The City)

Person F
Grafitti is ruining the place up there (beyond the green bridge) people go up there to take drugs, it’s a big problem. It would be great to paint over the grafitti and clean it up, if you try to remove then you need three coats of heavy solvents.

Person G
A cafe is essential - at the Camley St/Maiden Lane access point. We’re big supporters, it would be good to have plenty of places to sit, stalls for entrepreneurs to sell things and coffee - providing eyes on the street. We hope it’ll be a place of calm - no loud music or wheels. We’d like to walk along to the Everyman cinema at Granary Square so a pedestrian/cycle bridge connecting to Canal Reach would be wonderful.

Local guerrilla gardener
Turning existing neglected spaces into wild life corridors of native planting with NO MONEY and completely sustainably. “ We should ask Camden residents to bring a cutting of something that grows well in their garden/terrace to plant the Highline. This way it will be completely sustainable, locally resonant and native - no plastic, break down the system! Find the super-doers and they will connect to local networks. Engage closely with the different communities locally to understand what they grow - what they’d like to see e.g. colour / wild / neat / ownership. As well as diverse ideas for engagement activities/events.”

Person H
I’m all for regeneration but I don’t want to see 750k flats for sale here. I want to see regeneration for the working class people who are from here, have been here a long time. Affordable places to live and work. People have been pushed out.

Person I
Bit of unfair reputation - are issues with Agar Grove gangs, serious level of criminal activity. Design Out team have been working with the TRA - will hook us into discussions around CCTV/lighting. We should invite him/colleagues to any action days.

Person J
“Walks through the green bridge with her kids every day on the school run - convenient way to get back home.
Sense of fear around the drug use, would like to get involved in making the walkway feel safer for people. Has done some litter picking herself to try and clean up the area.
loves the idea of the park on the disused railway “”its not being used so why not! It’s also going to make this area feel a lot safer””
Told her to email with any ideas and so we can get in touch for action days in the future - very keen to get involved “

Wildflower expert
Concerned about the destruction of the wildflowers around the estate and along the green bridge - someone with weed killer had spread it around and killed some of the beautiful species - excited about the highline and what it could bring to the natural environment - “bees love wildflowers!”

Person K
lots of interest in the highline - works with Joanna on the TRA - interest in doing a lighting workshop - helping us look for another young producer. Weary of crime/asb but realises that making the space more ‘active’ will move the negative activiities along and make the space more successful.

Member of the Men’s Shed
Moved from Chicago to Kentish town a few years ago - engineer - familiar with the New York Highline - keen in interest in involvement in engagement projects

Person L
Very excited about the highline - lots of questions on when it is going to be built - would like there to be focus on access routes and coffee places - many queries about time frame - very keen for it to be built soon!

Person M
Used to run cheerleading on the estate and beyond. Long history of being left out of decisions in Camden and things that affect residents - don’t want this to happen with this. Make sure residents are at the heart of engagement or decision making going forward.

Member of the Men’s Shed
“There’s no such thing as community, only real estate”. Member was concerned that with the Highline comes higher rents and private business who might push them out. “It used to be really dodgy around here. The estate is still struggling with the trauma of it’s past. Champion the men’s shed as an important charity/ space culturally within the estate to the client and design team. Collaborate with them to create a structure for the highline.”

Person N
“Past issues with the council, changing things without consultation. She used to run a cheerleading club on the estate. Ideas for the large unused space in camley street to become a youth centre/gymnastics hall/skate park. Could be a varied space.”

Local sci-fi artist
“Have you thought about using crypto-art? Good way to encourage investment and create buzz around project”
“London is one of the most multicultural cities in the world. The Highline should include and encourage this array of backgrounds and cultures””

“Creating wall art with the community along the highline using upcycled, collected materials and ‘junk’ would be a great way to involve local people and local kids to allow them to leave their mark on the space, while highlighting the current climate crisis and the importance of re-use and sustainability”

Person O
“Camden has a very interesting and rich history, both artistically and architecturally. It would be really good if the highline reflected and merged with the existing buildings and landscape”

Person P
The making of moden housing’ - Is a really interesting book and is important for anyone working on this project to read””
“The website Meetup is a great tool to get people together and host events”

Young resident
“I like playing in the trees and woods, digging up the mud and playing pretend with my friends - we do it everywhere.”

Young resident
“if you put a zipline on there then lots of people will come and spoil how nice it is, you dont want it to be too busy like a theme park, but little bits of fun would be fine, something for everyone, different sections for playing and different sections for sitting and being quiet.”

Young resident
“It would be good if we helped the animals, could they use it? Could they live on it?” “You don’t want it to feel too colourful, stand out too much. I’d like it to look natural - could we find things to build it with there’s loads of old things around here that we could use.”

Young resident
“We did the mural on the wall at Maiden Lane. Can we do another one? We could make lots of art to put on there. With some help.”

Residents of Maiden Lane Estate

We heard that there are a number of different components working together to make people feel uncomfortable and unsafe in their journeys between Camley Street and Maiden Lane estate, along the green bridge and passage. Although these insights are specific to this site - we think that through listening to them we can better inform the design of the whole highline. Some of the things we discussed were:

- the length of the journey - once committed to taking that route, the journey is quite a distance, with twists and turns and no alternate routes. The length of this journey makes people feel unsafe as they know once they have committed to this route, ‘there’s no turning back’.
- the feeling of being funneled - in addition to the above we heard about a feeling of being funnelled and forced down along the route contributing towards a sense of entrapment.
- a sense that the route is prohibited - nothing about the route is inviting, nothing about it’s design informs people walking that this space is for them, that people are allowed and welcomed to use it. Infact, we heard that people feel they are not actually supposed to use the route at all - is it out of bounds? is it prohibited?
- a lack of care - in addition to the above, the litter, the broken glass, the uneven floor all contribute towards the space feeling as though it’s not cared for at all, which might reflect a lack of care for the people using it.
- the uneven floor surface - the floor surface is very uneven especially near the green bridge. Alongside this safety risk, people have to really concentrate on where they are walking, which limits their ability to concentrate on what else is happening around them.
- unreliability of light - sometimes lights come on, sometimes they don’t - people can’t rely on them and don’t trust them!
- sound of the trains - when trains go past they are very loud, limiting the sense of hearing to assess safety of surroundings.

lack of social connection - the existing lighting shadows people’s faces, this paired with the forced funneling of movement through the space makes people avoid contact with others.

Some of the ideas shared in response to the above were:

- a HUGE lit up arrow inviting people into the space, telling people that it is there to be used and that we want them to use it
- Lines along the floor to easily direct people and let them know they are going in the right direction
- Highlighting recognisable things using lighting, trees, foliage, walls, positive

things that help people to understand the environment they are entering

- Use lighting to light up people’s faces to encourage people to recognise and connect to others”

Local resident

“It’s great to see animals and wildlife in the pictures, the highline should promote biodiversity!”

Person Q

“The images make me feel uplifted and relaxed”

“Tthey look playful, engaging and calming”

“They make sense and its good to see the amount of planting/flowers and trees”

Parents of children in the Maiden Lane community centre group

- “so amazing. A comfortable area with greenery””
- “they remind me of a forest”
- “I can feel that it is an inclusive and open public space”
- “It would be good to have a space for children with learning difficulties. My son has autism and constantly needs activities to occupy him. It would be good if the Highline had room for this. It would also be great if an aspect of the highline could raise awareness about different needs, e.g. through activities, so that people around here can understand him better, as I often feel people are judging him and me when we are out and about because of lack of understanding”
- “I just want it to benefit the children who live around here, a safe space where they can play freely”

10-year-old resident

“I only have a small balcony that I can fit house plants on. It would be nice to have a bigger area with lots of plants”

Local resident

“Won’t people be able to see right into my back garden? How are the structures going to protect us and give us privacy?”

“We get so much dust from the trains coming into our gardens.””

Local resident

“It reminds me of the walkway from Stratford to Victoria park”

Local resident

“It reminds me of the highline from Alley Pally to Finsbury Park”

Local resident

“It reminds me of Coal drops yard and that walkway up to granary square”

Local resident

“There are a few places in London that look like it”

Local resident

“Nothing, I’ve never seen anything like it”

Local resident

“It look like the nature reserve round the corner.”

Local resident

“It’s a great idea, I especially like the Willow arch structure”

Local resident

“I think there needs to be a change. It will be nice to give us something nice as it currently looks like a SHXTHOLE.”

Local resident

“It will be nice to have access. I can’t wait for it to be open.”

Local resident

“I think the whole concept is brilliant!”

Local resident

“I like the grating material of the floors, they remind me of the ones on the estate.”

Local resident

“The arches or tunnels look really nice”

Local resident

“It’s really pretty, I love that there are loads of trees and flowers.”

Local resident
"It will be a nice place to go on walks with the family. I have young kids so will definitely take them up there lots."

Local resident
"The trees look a bit overcrowded. I don't think there needs to be so many."

Local resident
"I don't recognise the surrounding buildings from these particular images. This is not where it will be in relation to our estate. It would be good if you could see the estate from the pictures."

Local resident
"It seems a lot safer as it will be away from traffic and will have lots of people using it"

Local resident
"When you have narrow spaces such as the green bridge near the estate, it becomes a rat-run for criminal activity. My concern is the same thing will happen to this highline."

Local resident
"Maintenance is important. Who's going to look after it and keep it safe?"

Local resident
"Safety is a concern. It is important to make sure it is not used for antisocial behaviour."

Local resident
"Very nice – beautiful! Only if they can take care of it. Maintenance is really important."

Local resident
"Maintenance is really important. Safety for women and the lighting needs to be working properly."

Local resident
"For 38 years I've tried to get Network Rail to clean up that area and they've ignored all of our plights. They have really bad communication and don't care about cleanliness or safety."

Local resident
"What about having shared allotments that people on the estate could use. I think it would really give them a sense of place and ownership over the Highline."

Local resident
"It looks lovely. More trees means more oxygen which is good for the children. It is always good to introduce insects and biodiversity."

Local resident
"I can now see there would be more space and more places to sit for me and my family above the city."

INSIGHTS ILLUSTRATIONS

UNDERSTANDING AND ILLUSTRATING WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM ENGAGEMENT SO FAR.



1. LOCAL RESIDENTS AT THE HEART OF THE HIGHLINE

Residents from Maiden Lane and Agar Grove estates are new to conversations about the highline! How can we continue to involve neighbouring residents in the design of the highline and prioritise the lived experiences of local people?



2. A HIGHLINE BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES

The people we've spoken to are really excited about the potential of a beautiful new park along the railway line and want to extend conversations to neighbouring spaces that surround the site. How can we integrate and improve existing unloved and/or neglected spaces and unloved corners that touch the edges of the Highline?



3. ENSURE LOCAL BENEFIT

The people we’ve spoken to have considered ways in which the highline could benefit them. Job opportunities, improved access and easier walking routes to work, school or leisure, new spaces to play, things to do and access to nature! How might we prioritise local benefit through crafting locally relevant opportunities and provisions?



4. WELCOMING, SAFE & SECURE FIRST

We’ve heard of the importance of feeling safe, welcome and secure, especially from residents and people living in close proximity to the Highline. How can we harness creative lighting and other security methods to make people feel safe and secure when using the footpath?



5. GENUINE SHARING OF TALENTS & IDEAS

We’ve seen the talent, skills and rich experiences of local people during our engagement so far. From botanists to sculptors, guerilla gardeners to carpenters and young dinosaur experts to avid bird watchers. How can we celebrate these local interests and carve opportunities for them to feed into the emerging vision?

PAINTINGS FROM WORKSHOP



