# Citizens' Assembly on Travel and Transport

**Prepared for**

Oxfordshire County Council

**Special thanks go to**

- The assembly members who dedicated their time and hard work to the process
- Expert contributors for their energising perspectives
- The Advisory Board for their guidance and expertise

What steps do we need to take so Oxfordshire's transport system enables our county's health, economy, and environment to thrive in 2050?
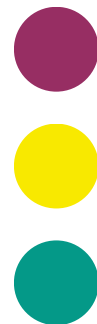
Spring 2025

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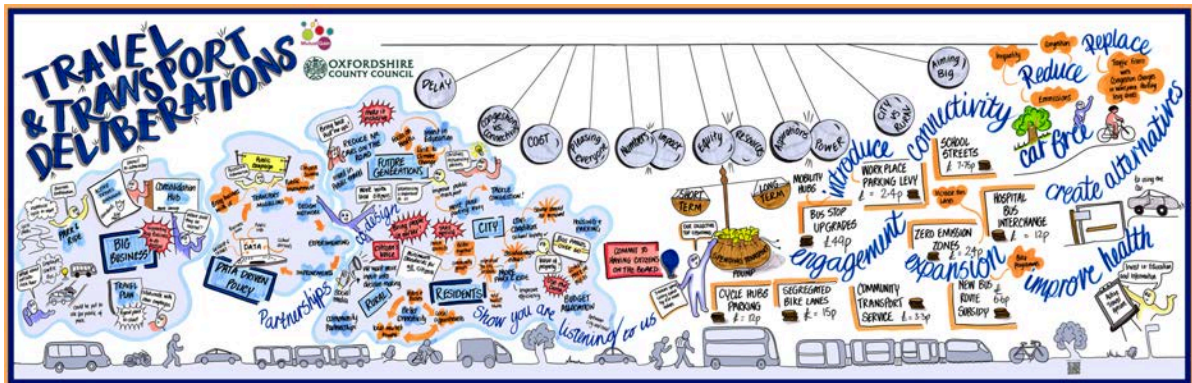


In early 2025, a Citizens' Assembly to explore how Oxfordshire's transport system could support people's health, the local economy, and the environment by 2050 was conducted.

Thirty-four residents were selected by civic lottery to reflect the demographic and geographic diversity of Oxfordshire, including urban, rural, and market town communities.

The Assembly was independently designed and facilitated by MutualGain, following national best practice in deliberative democracy. Oversight was provided by an independent Advisory Board.

All individuals and organisations who expressed an interest in contributing were given the opportunity to do so.  48 speakers contributed in a variety of ways (see section two)

Across five sessions and over 45 hours, Assembly members engaged with policy evidence, lived experience, expert speakers, and peer dialogue to develop informed, future-focused proposals. Participants considered this within the context of the ambitions set out in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan.

They worked individually and in groups to explore trade-offs and test ideas using co-designed criteria, including fairness, affordability, deliverability, and community benefit.

The Assembly placed particular focus on the needs of both city and rural areas, ensuring that congestion, access, and connectivity were considered at a whole county level, with specific focus on Central Oxfordshire. They undertook structured exercises to consider financial decisions and co-developed practical tools and frameworks for future planning.

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# Executive Summary

Key process explorations included:
- Consideration of core schemes within the existing policy framework
- A Fair Road Use framework prioritising essential journeys and people with fewer alternatives (e.g. disabled people, care workers, tradespeople, rural residents).
- A set of Active Travel investment criteria, to guide future decision-making on walking and cycling improvements.
- A series of public transport considerations that resulted in access, pricing, integration, and community connectivity for operators to respond to.

Participants developed 20 recommendations, 16 of which received over 80% support. These included:
- Expanding and improving Park & Ride services, including 24/7 access and smart ticketing.
- Introducing a county-wide bus fare and ticketing system across all providers.
- Launching a public information campaign to promote sustainable travel choices.
- Establishing a 'Travel Positive Employer' kite mark to support workplace travel change.
- Enforcing 20mph zones and improving safety, alongside investment in safe, accessible infrastructure for walking and cycling, and employer support for active travel.

Assembly members showed strong levels of agreement across demographics. While some nuance was observed, such as younger members favouring longer-term change and rural residents emphasising local flexibility with engagement, there were no recommendations that significantly divided the group.

The Citizens' Assembly demonstrated that with time, structure, and support, diverse residents can engage meaningfully with complex decisions. Their recommendations were submitted to Oxfordshire County Council in March 2025. A formal response will be taken forward by the administration through their scrutiny and cabinet processes.

# SECTION ONE: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE ASSEMBLY PROCESS

## 1.Introduction

1.1. In February and March 2025, 34 Oxfordshire residents took part in the county's first Citizens' Assembly on travel and transport. Participants were selected through a democratic lottery process to reflect the diversity of the local population. Over the course of 45 hours, assembly members were asked to consider the following challenge:

> *"What steps do we need to take so Oxfordshire's transport system enables our county's health, economy, and environment to thrive in 2050?"*

1.2. The Assembly was convened to generate informed recommendations on how the council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) could be delivered in ways that reflect the needs and priorities of Oxfordshire residents, and other stakeholders.

1.3. Delivered by MutualGain in accordance with best practice guidance in deliberative democracy, the Assembly enabled participants to learn about key issues, deliberate with one another, and produce recommendations on complex transport challenges facing the county.

1.4. Held across fourteen three-hour sessions, with an additional three hours of homework, the Assembly involved a wide range of expert speakers and perspectives. Assembly members developed twenty evidence-informed recommendations. Sixteen of these received more than 80 per cent support, and the remaining four received between 69.7 per cent and 79.4 per cent. These have been rounded up and down accordingly in section 3.

1.5. The recommendations address a range of themes, including congestion reduction, improvements to active travel and public transport, and the integration of transport planning with land use strategy. They were formally presented to decision-makers on 16 March 2025.

1.6. The Council is scheduled to respond to each recommendation through its democratic process following local elections taking place on 1 May 2025.

This report sets out how the Assembly was designed and delivered and provides an analysis of the recommendations that emerged.
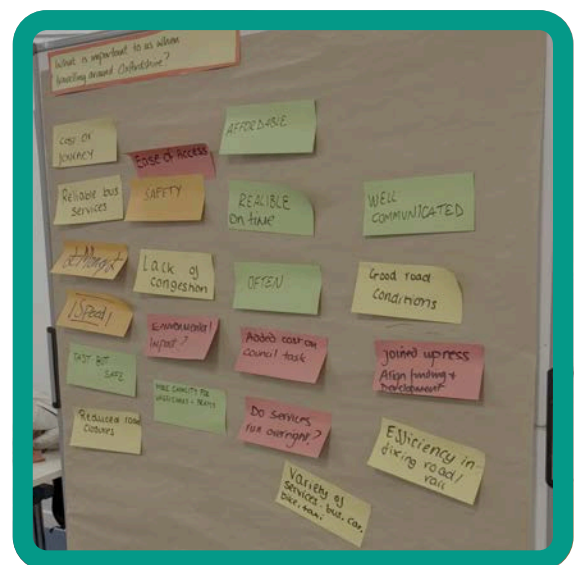


Figure 1: This image reflects early thinking on what is important when travelling around Oxforsdhire

## 1.2 Scope of the Assembly and its Influence

1.2.1 Oxfordshire's first Citizens' Assembly on travel and transport was designed to enable the implementation of the <u>Local Transport and Connectivity Plan</u> (LTCP), the council's long-term strategy for delivering a healthier, more sustainable, and better-connected transport system by 2050. Key targets in the LTCP include:

### By 2030

- Replace or remove one out of every four current car trips in Oxfordshire.
- Increase the number of cycle trips in Oxfordshire from 600,000 to 1 million cycle trips per week.
- Reduce road fatalities or life changing injuries by 50 per cent.

### By 2040

- Deliver a net-zero transport network.
- Replace or remove an additional one out of three car trips in Oxfordshire.

### By 2050

- Deliver a transport network that contributes to a climate positive future.
- Have zero, or as close as possible, road fatalities or life-changing injuries.

**Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022 - 2050**

**July 2022**

Contact: ltcp5@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

1.2.2. The <u>Local Transport and Connectivity Plan</u> (LTCP) provides the strategic framework for a series of Movement and Place strategies (area-based transport plans). The first of these, the <u>Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan</u> (COTP), was used alongside the LTCP throughout the Assembly. This allowed members to consider how policies might apply in practice to citizens living, working, and visiting the central Oxfordshire travel plan area (Oxford, Kidlington, Eynsham, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington and Wheatley). Each participant received copies of both plans to support their discussions about how the strategies could work across urban centres, market towns, and rural areas.

1.2.3. The Citizens' Assembly was originally commissioned as a 30-hour, county-wide process to explore the implementation of Oxfordshire's <u>Local Transport and Connectivity Plan</u> (LTCP). However, prior to its launch, a motion was raised within the Council regarding the Assembly's ability to reflect the unique challenges of the central Oxfordshire travel plan area. In response, **on 21 January 2025 Cabinet agreed to expand the Assembly by an additional 15 hours.**

1.2.4 This decision enabled the Assembly to have a dedicated focus on congestion in central Oxfordshire and the council's suite of traffic management measures (traffic filters trial, the Workplace Parking Levy (WPL), and the expanded Zero Emissions Zone (ZEZ)). The challenge question had already been approved by the Advisory Board "*What steps do we need to take so Oxfordshire's transport system enables our county's health, economy, and environment to thrive in 2050?*" and was broad enough to accommodate these additional topics without altering the Assembly's integrity or neutrality.

1.2.5. Central Oxfordshire was therefore integrated into the Assembly in two ways: first, through dedicated sessions; and second, as a case study across the full programme. This ensured that participants had structured opportunities to explore specific schemes in the COTP while also understanding their implications county-wide.

1.2.6. This approach respected existing Council decisions while creating space to explore how implementation could better reflect local needs. As living plans, the status of transport schemes under discussion in the COTP varied. The traffic filters trial had been formally agreed but was subsequently paused due to the extended Botley Road closure. The Expanded Zero Emissions Zone was still in its proposal stage, with wider consultation expected later in 2025. The Workplace Parking Levy was under exploration by the Council, with expressions of interest registered with central government. Existing decisions about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) were *not* in scope for *reversing* but if the Council were to make any future decisions on implementing LTNs they would use the learning from this process. .

1.2.7. The scope meant the Assembly could not revisit or re-debate settled policy decisions concerning schemes in the COTP, which had been under development for ten years.  They could critically think about how these measures could be implemented in practice, including how they should be phased, how they might be communicated to the public, and what kinds of mitigations or adjustments might be necessary in light of real-world challenges, so that they could be delivered in ways that are fair, effective, and responsive to local conditions.

1.2.8. The 15 additional hours were clearly embedded within the Assembly's learning and deliberation:

- Session 3 (2.5 hours): Explored fairness in road use, focusing on congestion in the central Oxfordshire travel plan area. Participants developed a "Fair Car Use Hierarchy" that informed later recommendations (see section two).
- Sessions 6 and 7 (6 hours): Focused entirely on the COTP including its core schemes. Participants heard polarised perspectives from speakers and developed early recommendations.
- Sessions 8 and 9 (6 hours): Explored public transport strategy, with residents of the central Oxfordshire travel plan area engaged in an integrated transport mapping exercise.
- Session 10 (3 hours): A vision-led design session, led by Create Streets, addressed the design of new developments in the central Oxfordshire travel plan area as a key reference point.

1.2.9 These sessions meant that **the Assembly's deliberations and final recommendations substantially addressed congestion affecting the central Oxfordshire travel plan area,** including the most strongly supported recommendation.

### 1.3 Recruiting and Working with the Advisory Board

1.3.1. The Citizens' Assembly was supported by an Advisory Board to reflect best practice in deliberative processes. The Board played a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the process by ensuring the Assembly was fair, balanced, and methodologically robust.

1.3.2. Its core responsibilities included:

- Ensuring the Assembly question was fair, neutral, and accessible.
- Reviewing the structure and evidence base to ensure diversity of perspectives.
- Acting as a critical friend to the project team, identifying gaps, testing ideas, and strengthening credibility.

1.3.3. A total of eighteen advisory board members participated in six meetings throughout the project. Members were drawn from a wide range of sectors including academia, transport, policing, public health, local government, business, and civil society. Recruitment routes included:

- Recommendations from those originally invited, but who were unable to make dates - this drew from a long list of diverse possible contributions
- Direct expressions of interest
- Professional networks of MutualGain
- Nominations from the project team (their networks and cross-party political representation)

1.3.4. Despite the breadth of experience represented, some gaps remained. Organisations from the faith sector and wider business and transport representative bodies were invited but did not participate.

1.3.5. The Board was initially formed to oversee a 30-hour county-wide process. Following the Council's decision on 21 January 2025 to expand the Assembly's scope (to include a dedicated focus on congestion in central Oxfordshire) the Board continued to provide guidance. Although the expansion came *after* the Board's core work was complete, those previously invited with a specific Oxfordshire focus (and did not accept) were re contacted and invited as expert contributors during the Assembly sessions.

1.3.6. Over the lifecycle of the project, the Advisory Board:
- Shaped the final challenge question
- Recommended a diverse mix of expert speakers
- Supported the learning and deliberation design
- Proposed creative methods such as personas and participatory budgeting
- Attended sessions as observers and, in some cases, as expert contributors

1.3.7. Their guidance ensured the Assembly remained inclusive and credible, while also helping to reflect Oxfordshire's wide-ranging transport priorities and lived experiences.

## 1.4. Recruitment of Experts and Evidence Givers
1.4.1. Speakers were drawn from a wide range of sectors to ensure the Assembly was informed by a balance of professional expertise, lived experience, and community perspectives.

1.4.2. Breakdown of contributors:
- Academics: 16 invited across 9 institutions, with 8 delivering evidence.
- Business representatives: 21 contacted, including sole traders, SMEs, and major transport companies. 10 delivered evidence.
- Civic life representatives: 26 invited, including voices from community and advocacy organisations. 18 delivered evidence.
- Public sector representatives: 23 were invited, including senior council officers and local public service representatives. 12 delivered evidence
- Faith leaders: 3 faith leaders from Oxfordshire were invited. Unfortunately, none were able to present at the assembly.

1.4.3. Expert speakers played a critical role in the Assembly's learning phase, helping participants to understand key transport issues, explore contrasting perspectives, and engage with the real-world implications of policy decisions. Each expert was selected to contribute to a balanced evidence base, reflecting diverse views and experiences on current and proposed transport measures.

1.4.4. Speakers presented in various formats:
- Live presentations and Q&A sessions
- Pre-recorded five-minute videos (the most common format)
- Goldfish bowl discussions and participatory workshops
- Specific workshop design that reflected expertise

1.4.5. All expert content was structured to be accessible and engaging. Where possible, sessions featured speakers with opposing views or contrasting experiences, helping participants examine issues from multiple angles.

1.4.6. No speaker was excluded. Every individual or organisation invited, and willing to participate, gave their perspective. Contributions ranged from technical expertise to personal testimony, with equal value placed on both. All video content shown to the Assembly can be found in the links below.

1.4.7. Participants were encouraged to engage critically with the material, ask questions, and reflect on the evidence within their group discussions. Time was dedicated to peer discussion and deliberation after presentations - a key hallmark of deliberative assemblies - ensuring participants had space to process information, exchange perspectives and develop collective recommendations. This deliberate mix of expert input and peer deliberation helped ensure that final recommendations were grounded in both technical insight and community values.

Contributors to the assembly and their video links can be found in section two of this report.

## 1.5. Recruitment of Assembly Members
1.5.1. Assembly members were recruited through a civic lottery process known as sortition, managed by the independent organisation Sortition Foundation and subcontracted by MutualGain. Sortition is a globally recognised method for ensuring fairness, independence, and demographic balance in deliberative processes.

1.5.2. How the process worked:
- 8,000 randomly selected households across Oxfordshire received invitation letters.
- Interested residents registered via post, online, or telephone.
- From those who responded, 40 participants were selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring representation across age, gender, ethnicity, education, geography, disability status, driving frequency, and climate views.

1.5.3. This recruitment method avoids bias and helps create a group that reflects a wide range of lived experiences and viewpoints.

# SECTION TWO: WHAT DID THE ASSEMBLY COVER?

2.1. The Assembly met for a total of 45 hours, across three weekends and three weekday evenings. Each session was designed to build on the last, with a strong balance of expert input, group dialogue, hands-on exercises, and creative problem-solving. Over time, participants developed a working knowledge of key policies in Oxfordshire's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) and explored transport's practical, emotional and policy dimensions. The session summaries that follow capture the flow of learning and the key ideas, priorities, and values that shaped the final recommendations.

Key features of the learning phase included:
- **Small group discussions** (5-6 assembly members) with expert facilitation
- Equal weighting between **expert input and peer deliberation**
- Direct engagement with the **LTCP and COTP documents** to ground discussion in real policy framework. From session 5 onwards, assembly members were given page references to relevant sections of both the LTCP and COTP, allowing them to locate and consult policies being discussed in each session.
- Learning about Oxfordshire's unique transport challenges and opportunities as well as **drawing on international examples**.

2.2. Session 1 to 4 focused on building a shared foundation amongst the assembly members, participants got to know the Citizens' Assembly process, explored Oxfordshire's unique transport challenges and were introduced to some of the key themes of the question such as economy, environment and health. A specially commissioned video introduced a specific focus on how transport can meet the needs and preferences of Oxfordshire's diverse population. These early sessions introduced the policy context of the LTCP and laid the groundwork for deeper exploration of specific policies and interventions in the sessions that followed.





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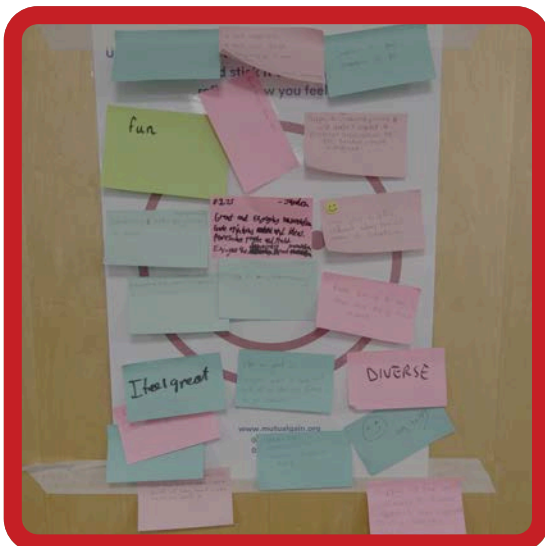
1.5.4. 52 individuals were onboarded. Twelve replacements were made during the pre-assembly period due to withdrawals for personal reasons. Care was taken to ensure demographic continuity during replacements.

- 36 participants attended the first session.
- 2 withdrew later in the process due to personal reasons.
- 1 further withdrawal (for personal reasons) at the very end of the process, resulted in 33 residents completing the full Assembly.

This final number remains within standards to ensure rich and diverse deliberation.

1.5.5. The table in appendix II outlines the intended and actual demographic breakdown of the Assembly.

1.5.6. Onboarding and Accessibility Support: Onboarding calls were conducted with every participant by the MutualGain team, to build rapport, understand needs, and provide personalised support.

- **Five participants identified as disabled:** those with disabilities were offered tailored support based on their needs. Facilitators adjusted methods in real-time to support a range of learning and communication styles, using visual, verbal, and participatory techniques to ensure all participants could engage meaningfully
- **Two participants identified as autistic:** one engaged confidently in groups with tailored facilitation; the other contributed through drawing and voice notes with dedicated one-to-one support.
- **Digital inclusion:** adjustments included postal and phone communication for those without email.  In the few instances where digital input in session was required, technical support and alternative devices were provided.

1.5.7. Beyond access needs, the cohort represented diverse experiences, including views that spanned the political spectrum (surfaced through dialogue). This diversity enhanced the credibility and depth of the Assembly's discussions and outputs.

The table below provides a session by session outline, including speakers and outputs. Where videos were provided, links are included in Appendix III.

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1–2: Orientation & Strategic Framing | Introduced participants to each other and the assembly process.<br><br>Covered the LTCP, COTP, and council's transport strategy.<br><br>Included expert presentations and set expectations around learning and participation. | • Professor Tim Schwanen – Director of the Transport Studies Unit and Professor of Transport Geography, University of Oxford<br>• Lorna Baxter – Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (Deputy Chief Executive) Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)<br>• Robin Rogers – Director of Economy and Place, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)<br>• Ben Smith – Strategic Transport Manager, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)<br>• Professor Alan Renwick – Professor of Democratic Politics and Deputy Director, University College London (UCL) | Shared vision<br><br>An understanding of why this assembly at this time |

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3: Fair Transport Policy | Focused on equitable use of road space.<br><br>Participants created a Fair Car Use Budget hierarchy, ranking users and trip purposes by need. | • Dr Philipp Rode – Executive Director, LSE Cities, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) | Ranked **priority user groups**:<br>1) Disabled people,<br>2) Key and care workers<br>3) Public transport and taxi drivers<br>4) Tradespeople<br>5) Delivery drivers<br>6) Rural residents.<br><br>Ranked **priority trip purposes**:<br> 1) Emergencies<br>2) Health appointments<br>3) Care-related trips<br>4) Freight/delivery<br>5) Education<br>6) Work-related travel. |
| 4: People and Transport Themes | Explored transport's link to the environment, health, and the economy.<br><br>Highlighted under-represented voices and user diversity in transport. | • Commissioned video featuring underrepresented voices in Oxfordshire transport<br>• Insights from the Youth Board<br>• Nina Howe – Senior Engagement Manager, Transport Focus<br>• Ansaf Anzhar – Director of Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council<br>• Nigel Tipple – Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) | Assembly members explored transport through a presentation on national travel perspectives, recorded input from disabled and neurodiverse residents, and visual engagement by young people. Each was randomly assigned an Oxfordshire persona (adapted from DfT profiles) to consider alongside their own needs. |

2.4 Sessions 5 to 11 marked a transition into focused policy exploration. Assembly members examined a range of interventions in greater depth, including active travel investment, traffic management schemes, and proposals for public transport and mobility hubs.

2.5 Each session built on prior learning, encouraging participants to explore trade-offs, assess funding options, and consider both countywide strategy and local priorities.

2.6. Activities included: applying funding criteria, mapping future infrastructure, and discussing real-world case studies. Throughout, the LTCP and Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) remained key reference points, helping participants test ideas against live policy frameworks and long-term goals for the county.

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5: Active Travel<br><br>LTCP reference: Policies 1-9, pp. 35-45<br><br>COTP reference: Actions 9-12, pp.26-31 | Assessed investment priorities for walking, wheeling, and cycling. Participants used eight funding criteria. | • Robin Tucker – Co-Chair, Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoHSAT)<br>• Xavier Brice – Chief Executive, Sustrans<br>• David Calonge – Active Travel Lead, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) | **Top 3 active travel funding criteria** selected:<br><br>1) Improved access to public transport<br>2) Continuity of the network<br>3) Increase in cycling/walking trips.<br><br>Framed investment discussions around fairness over cost-effectiveness. |

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6–7: The Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) and its schemes<br><br>COTP reference: Actions 1-3, pp.17-21 | Reviewed current and proposed demand management schemes (traffic filters, ZEZ, LTNs, WPL) and heard contrasting views through film and live discussion. | • Dr Natalie Tegama – Postdoctoral Researcher in Global Health Ethics, Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health<br>• Richard Parnham – Co-Founder, Reconnecting Oxford<br>• Bernadette Evans – Oxford Business Action Group (OxBAG)<br>• Jeremy Mogford – Chairman, The Oxford Collection & member, OxBAG<br>• Jenny Wells – Mobile Hairdresser & member, OxBAG<br>• Adrian Arbib – Renewables Installer, Electrician & Mobile Tradesman in Oxfordshire<br>• Xander – Independent Shop Owner, Oxford<br>• Zuhura Plummer – Former Campaign Director, Oxfordshire Liveable Streets<br>• Professor Tim Schwanen – Director, Transport Studies Unit & Professor of Transport Geography, University of Oxford<br>• Dr Philipp Rode – Executive Director, LSE Cities, London School of Economics<br>• Craig Rossington – Senior Transport Planner, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)<br>• Hannah Battye – Head of Placemaking, OCC<br>• Joanne Fellows – Place Planning Manager – Central, Economy and Place, OCC | Eight early recommendations for central Oxfordshire developed<br><br>Participants identified challenges to implementation, and shared ground between supporters and critics. |

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8–9: Public Transport and Mapping Mobility Hubs<br><br>LTCP reference: Policies 18-23 pp. 67-79<br><br>COTP reference: Actions 13-16, pp.32-41 | Discussed affordability, access, and area differences in transport needs.<br>This included a mobility hub mapping exercise. | • Dr Brenda Boardman – Oxon4Buses<br>• Chris Hanson – Managing Director at Stagecoach West<br>• Pete Brunskill – Rail Development Lead, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)<br>• Luke Goddard – Youth Engagement and Insight Lead, Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership<br>• Samuel – Representative from the Youth Transport Forum led by Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership (GOCRP)<br>• David Miles – First and Last Mile<br>• Dr Léa Ravensbergen – Assistant Professor in the School of Earth, Environment and Society (SEES) at McMaster University<br>• Michael Solomon Williams – Head of Campaigns, Campaign for Better Transport | Proposed mobility hub locations (e.g. Lewknor, Eynsham);<br><br>Prioritised Park & Ride trials,<br><br>Community mini-hubs, and cross-boundary planning;<br><br>Developed place-specific early recommendations. |

| SESSION NUMBER | SUMMARY | SPEAKERS | OUTPUTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10: Designing New Places<br><br>LTCP reference: Policies 8-14 pp. 46-61<br><br>COTP reference: Actions 19-23, pp.39-52 | Explored infrastructure for future growth. Focused on planning tools, car clubs, and integration of transport into development. | • Nick Small – Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure (Central and Southern England), Go-Ahead Group<br>• David Milner, Director and Robert Kwolek, Senior Architectural Designer, Create Streets<br>• Dr Hannah Budnitz – Research Associate, Transport Studies Unit<br>• Hannah Battye – Head of Placemaking<br>• Joaquim Muntane – Technical Lead (Movement and Place) Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) | Mapped new community layouts with integrated walking, cycling, and public transport; explored EV car club feasibility; refined long-term place-shaping recommendations. |
| 11: Safety, Health and confirming Consensus<br><br>LTCP reference: Policies 15-16 pp. 62-65 | Reviewed safety and healthcare access.<br><br>Used a 'Collective Thinking' document to consolidate shared insights. | • Ruth Purdie – Chief Executive, UK Road Safety Trust<br>• Andy Ford – Station Manager, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Caroline Coyne – Project Manager for Vision Zero (OCC)<br>• A video featuring a series of perspectives from often underrepresented voices focusing on accessing hospitals and healthcare (this was specially commissioned for the assembly)<br>• Annie Skinner – Resident of Oxford | Developed thinking on safety<br><br>Confirmed Assembly's shared positions;<br><br>Developed and refined draft recommendation criteria to include:<br>• Affordability<br>• Clarity<br>• Community Benefit<br>• Connectivity<br>• Fundability<br>• Integration,<br>• Sustainability |

**2.7**. **Deliberation and Recommendation Development**
In its final phase, the Citizens' Assembly shifted from learning to decision-making. Over the course of three final sessions (Sessions 12–14), participants applied what they had heard and discussed, to create a set of informed, values-driven recommendations for the LTCP and the COTP.

.7.1. **Session 12** explored perspectives through role play. The session opened with a presentation by <u>Professor Thomas Hale</u>, Professor in Global Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government, who offered practical guidance on how to draft a good policy recommendation. He emphasised the importance of clarity, feasibility, and evidence, as well as the need to balance ambition with realism.  His talk introduced key elements of effective policymaking, helping Assembly members consider not only what they wanted to recommend, but to include their rationale to show how actionable it might be for decision-makers.

2.7.2 Following the presentation, the assembly engaged with a structured role-play exercise designed to help Assembly members understand the complexity of policymaking from multiple perspectives. Each participant selected one of five stakeholder roles:
- **Data-Driven Policy Team**: Focused on evidence-led innovation, smart transport technologies, and data accessibility.
- **City and Town Residents of Today**: Emphasised road safety, affordability, air quality, and protection of small business needs.
- **Rural Residents of Today**: Advocated for fair access to services, reliable public transport, and infrastructure investment outside the city.
- **Residents of Tomorrow**: Represented future generations, prioritising sustainability, climate resilience, and community design.
- **Big Employers**: Called for staff connectivity, infrastructure consistency, and revenue policies that do not burden operations.

2.7.3. Each group received a detailed briefing and a toolkit of materials from earlier sessions, including LTCP/COTP excerpts, expert slides, and key outputs like the Fair Car Use hierarchy to prepare their case. They presented their positions to a mock council panel made up of facilitators and Advisory Board representatives, role-playing as political, technical, and community leadership representatives that reflected the highlights of what had been heard through the learning phase.

2.7.4. The exercise was energetic and constructive. Participants voiced their stakeholder priorities, challenged opposing views, and proposed compromises. A number of final recommendation themes emerged, notably the concept of a "kite mark" accreditation scheme to highlight transport-friendly businesses. The session helped Assembly members see the policy process from new angles, deepening their appreciation for trade-offs and the need for fair, feasible solutions.

**2.7.5.Session 13: Budgeting for the Future:** The afternoon session introduced a participatory budgeting exercise designed to bring Oxfordshire's transport priorities to life. Each group was given a fictional Council transport budget of £1 and a menu of costed options, based on real figures and expert advice (*The £1 figure is symbolic. It represents the full relevant council budget scaled down for simplicity, not an actual spending limit.*) Participants had to prioritise investments, justify trade-offs, and consider revenue mechanisms if needed. A summary of their choices is set out below to illustrate the thinking that informed their deliberations.

2.7.6. Three groups spent exactly £1 but still chose to invest in a combination of revenue-generating mechanisms. Their approaches differed slightly: one group combined a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) with a Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ), another combined a WPL with traffic filters, and another combined all three: WPL, ZEZ, and traffic filters.

Groups exceeding the £1 spending limit spent:
- £3.64, proposing to reopen a rail line and fund improvements to the Oxford rail corridor. They suggested using all three revenue mechanisms (WPL, ZEZ, traffic filters) to fund these more expensive, longer-term projects.
- £2.73, reopening a rail line but limiting reliance on levies, using ZEZ income only in the short term.

2.7.7. Despite different paths, consistent investment themes emerged:
- **Upgrades to bus stops** for safety and accessibility were popular with all groups.
- **New bus routes and community transport services** were chosen unanimously.
- **Free Park & Ride trials,** particularly for one year, were supported by four out of five groups.
- **Segregated bike lanes**, although considered 'expensive', were chosen by most for their long-term safety and climate benefits.

2.7.8. Some less popular but considered proposals included:
- Rail schemes: not included as they tend to exceed Council level budget limitations.
- EV car clubs, selected only once, reflecting concerns about over-dependence on cars, even electric ones.
- Greenways were not included as much as groups would like because assembly members questioned whether the cost could be justified given the limited number of people they believed would regularly use them.

2.7.9. This session highlighted how different values and local needs shaped participants' decisions. By balancing ambition with feasibility, the Assembly developed a nuanced sense of what a fair and effective transport investment strategy could look like. Drawing on the insights collected across the learning phase, they went on to develop a first draft of recommendations that received assembly wide feedback.

2.7.10. **Session 14:**  In this session, participants reviewed, refined, and voted on the recommendations once again. They revised and applied their co-created set of assessment criteria in this session, including affordability, clarity, community benefit, and sustainability to test the strength of each proposal.

2.7.11. The session concluded with a structured vote using SurveyMonkey, confirming the final set of recommendations that would be submitted to Oxfordshire County Council.

2.7.12. After sharing the recommendations with a range of decision makers, a dialogue followed for decision-makers and the advisory board members to better understand how the assembly came to the conclusions it did.
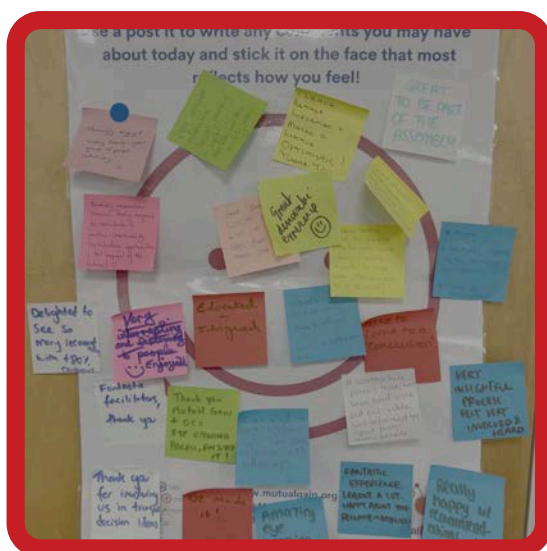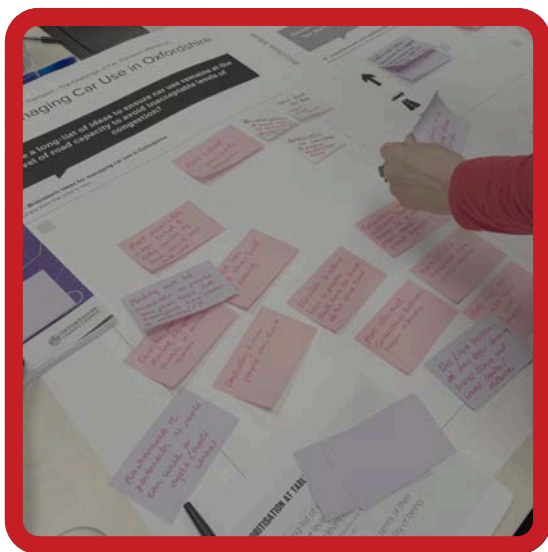
# SECTION THREE: RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Assembly members developed 20 recommendations based on their deliberations. Each small group of 5–6 assembly members was initially tasked with producing:
- One recommendation for Central Oxfordshire, and
- One for the wider county.

3.2 In the final stages of recommendation development, assembly members could choose where to sit and who to work with, creating space for fresh conversations and a blend of voices. This open approach helped ensure that different lived experiences and priorities were brought into the room, building on the learning and dialogue developed throughout the Assembly, including through the role play activity, the budgeting task and the Collective Thinking summary of insights.

3.3. Once both recommendations were completed, groups had the freedom to create additional recommendations on any other priorities they felt were important. To gauge the level of collective support, all 20 recommendations were put to a vote using Survey Monkey.

Assembly members indicated their level of approval using the following scale:
- Strongly support
- Support
- Do not support
- Strongly do not support

3.4. We define "support" as the combined total of those who 'supported' or 'strongly supported' a recommendation. Recommendations that received more than 80% support are considered to reflect consensus among the assembly.

3.5. In total, 16 recommendations achieved over 80% support. MutualGain uses this threshold to suggest that the Council can feel confident these recommendations would likely receive similar support from a wider population, given the same information and time to deliberate.

3.6. Four recommendations received under 80% support and are listed at the end of this section.

| No. | Recommendation | % support |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | To reduce congestion and emissions in Central Oxfordshire by maximising the use of park and ride: - Use of shuttle services to businesses, schools and hospitals from park and ride - Improved cycle connectivity to park and ride and safe cycle storage - Increased frequency of buses from park and ride and incentivised use by making them free.  - Improved connectivity between park and ride.  This should commence within 12 months. | 97% |
| 2 | Implement standardised ticketing across all of the bus companies in the county. This will make buses easier especially for younger and older people, visitors and people whose first language is not English. Increase overall bus use. | 94% |
| 3 | Sell the vision to the public: inform them about transport and active travel options, and their benefits. Examples: information stands with live feeds, social media campaigns, posters and billboards, regional news and radio, advertising on taxis and public transport. | 94% |
| 4 | Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to create and administer a 'kite mark' / standard called 'The Oxford Travel Positive Employer' for large companies (e.g over 100 employees). This will generate revenue for OCC to contribute to a ring-fenced fund for active travel, traffic reduction, and low emission travel. Criteria could include introduction of shuttle services for staff, use of EV vehicles, encouraging staff to use buses, shower and change facilities, and encouraging car sharing, with Gold, Silver and Bronze levels for the employers | 94% |

| No. | Recommendation | % support |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Invest in educating and informing the public about transport and active travel options and their benefits. To sell the vision of a healthier and more connected travel network and increase public buy in for effective implementation. People need to be inspired by the benefits and opportunities of active travel and public transport. Offer carrots in order to make effective change.  Education: school programmes, information roadshows, social media campaigns, posters, billboards, advertising (on buses and taxis). Information: Information points in town and city centres with live data, maps, links to support, accessibility features (vision impaired etc.), information about where to find trains, buses, taxi ranks, bicycle rentals etc.  Make public knowledge of information points through social media campaigns, regional radio and news (etc.) | 94% |
| 6 | To improve connectivity in rural areas by ensuring that local communities are listened to by involving them in decision making. Considerations should be given to active travel options and repurposing bridle paths for greenways, rural hubs, car sharing, community travel (mini buses and cars), any other needs identifies by the community, first and last mile options. In terms of accountability evidence MUST be shown that community voices have been listened to in the decision making. | 91% |
| 7 | Improve community infrastructure in the medical sector.  Why? less congestion and reducing car journeys, and reduce number of people coming into Oxford. This is line with liveable neighbourhoods thinking. | 91% |

| No. | Recommendation | % support (rounded up or down) |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | Reduce road fatalities and serious injuries by encouraging behaviour change through, for example, enforcements of 20mph limits, using ANPR, more use of speed warnings 'face' signs. Support for residents who want to get involved in community traffic watch initiatives and speed humps. Implement in residential areas, outside schools, and other road fatality hotspots. | 88% |
| 9 | Implementing a franchise model between county council and bus companies so that the council takes back control of bus routes, timetables and pricing so that it ensures that it is driven by needs and services, not just profit. Similar to London and Manchester models. | 88% |
| 10 | Build new housing developments so that major facilities are within walking distance. This will reduce traffic, encourage health habit, build community and create jobs. We acknowledge sometimes it is supportive for well being for people to get out of their immediate neighbourhood - this proposal does not remove the possibility of people doing that. | 88% |
| 11 | A designated road just for a bus system (exceptions for cyclists, emergency vehicles, blue badge holders and taxis during certain hours).  - Frequent service and stops - Subsidies for 60+ - Under 16s- incentivise families. City centre location - moving towards a car free city centre.  Reserved/exclusive to buses - not new build, existing roads Long term behaviour change. Depends on a 1st class service, has to be accessible, frequent and affordable (an alternative to having a tram). | 88% |

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| No. | Recommendation | % support |
|---|---|---|
| 12 | Make the city centre car free while being fair and not disadvantaging key groups. The aim would be to reduce congestion, cut emissions, improve environmental and human health and make the city more visitor friendly. Those mainly impacted by this would be car drivers. The intention is to create alternatives for drivers, implementing policies in a phased way so that they have alternatives to use. Alternatives include: strengthening bus networks, making cycling safer, and making the Park and Rides into mobility hubs). It is likely disincentives (sticks) would be needed to encourage people out of cars. | 88% |
| 13 | Promote generational change over the next 15 years to shift the next generation to think active travel first, bus second, car third by making bus and bike travel affordable, extending bike programmes for schools, education programmes from primary school all the way through, and children travel free on public transport. This also helps change behaviour of parents. | 87% |
| 14 | Introduce mobility hubs types 1 and 2 to make cycling safer, reduce congestion, improve rural connectivity Specifically, type 1 in Banbury and Didcot Type 2 in Chipping Norton, Abingdon, Witney, Wantage. | 85% |
| 15 | Introduce a graduated Workplace Parking Levy which must be paid by the employer rather than the employee, and which facilitates reductions and award 'Kite Marks' to those employers that contribute to the COTP and LTCP - exemptions to be decided in a consultation process. | 82% |

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| No. | Recommendation | % support |
|---|---|---|
| 16 | What: reduce driving by commuters, short trips, and school runs.  Why: in order to improve health and the environment, and reduce traffic fatalities by:  How: 1. Introducing a workplace parking levy to generate income for other travel schemes  2. Encourage car sharing by business, schools and other organisations by introducing apps etc and advertising car share schemes. Reflect in the employer kite mark.  3. Introduction of mobility hubs at train stations. | 82% |
| 17 | Subsidised travel for 60+ ensuring it is accessible in peak times. Children under 10 free, children 10-16 (or 18) free during school times, funded by WPL and ZEZs | 79% |
| 18 | Implement a congestion charge to cut car usage coming into the town centre and raise money for the county council. This should be in addition to the ZEZ. This would encourage us to use the park and ride.  It is important to have alternatives to car use before this is implemented. For instance using the money that is raised to incentive other transport options. There will need to be exceptions. | 74% |
| 19 | Trams: develop a north - south and east- west in Oxford that links the park and rides. Trams are sleek, modern, spacious and carry more people than buses. Their energy consumption is also much lower than that of a bus. They provide more capacity than buses and additional room for wheelchair and bicycle users. A tram would help maximise usage of park and rides. | 74% |
| 20 | Generate income to enable the recommendations approved yesterday (Saturday), recommendation 12 and 14. We will do this by evolving the ZEZ into a wider congestion zone within the ring road, with fair exemptions/concessions by late 2020s. | 70% |

# SECTION FOUR: RECOMMENDATION ANALYSIS

4.1. This analysis draws on several key sources of data collection throughout the assembly. Each recommendation was developed using a structured template that included space for participants to explain their rationale. These rationales have been used as the primary basis for the analysis, supplemented by notes and clarifications from facilitators where needed. Where relevant, insights from the learning phase and deliberations have been incorporated to further contextualise each recommendation.

4.2. SurveyMonkey was selected as the voting tool. This provided a more detailed analysis of support based on demographics. Where relevant, notable trends are highlighted.

4.3. Across the board, recommendations were supported by a wide cross-section of participants. There was no single proposal that deeply split the Assembly. However, the analysis did reveal nuances in emphasis, conditional support, and implementation concerns.

4.4. A particularly noteworthy finding is that all participants who take two or more car journeys per week supported several key recommendations aimed at reducing car dependency. These included calls for council investment in viable alternatives, such as improved park and ride infrastructure, standardised ticketing across bus operators, public education on transport options, and expanded support for active travel and rural mobility solutions. This suggests that regular drivers were open to shifting their behaviour, provided that practical, accessible alternatives were in place

> 72% of participants who take two or more car journeys a week strongly supported Park and Ride expansion, including investment to improve connections by bike, foot, and public transport

4.5. Participants living in rural areas consistently championed locally designed solutions that could reflect the realities of life with limited public transport, for example, isolation and infrequent services (varies from one bus a day or one a week)
- The need for more dialogue, not just digital surveys
- Fair exemptions from schemes like congestion charges or WPL

> 100% of rural participants supported the call for local co-design of transport plans (Recommendation: Involve rural communities in designing local solutions)

4.6 Support for ideas like mobility hubs and shared investment in mini-Park & Rides was strong, but conditional on place-sensitive implementation.

4.7. Participants living in urban areas, particularly those based in Oxford, demonstrated strong support for measures that shift public space use, reduce emissions, promote active travel and increase safety. These included:
- A dedicated bus-only road in the city centre
- Investment in mobility hubs and active travel infrastructure
- Active travel campaigns and education
- Enforcing 20pmh limits using ANPR cameras and more speed warnings 'face' signs

'95% of participants living in urban areas support 20 mph limits to help reduce road fatalities and serious injuries

4.8. However, they also supported ideas that originated from rural groups, especially the call for more inclusive design processes, suggesting a broad county-wide sense of fairness and responsibility.

4.9 Assembly members under 35 were among the most enthusiastic supporters of:
- New mobility ideas like EV car clubs
- Behaviour change campaigns in schools
- Investment in generational shifts, even where impact is not immediate

4.10 They saw value in bold, visionary interventions, but were also pragmatic, supporting ideas like employer incentives and affordable travel for low-paid workers.

4.11 For participants from market towns, priority was placed on:
- Affordable and more frequent buses
- Real-time information infrastructure
- Shuttles to and from employment hubs

4.12. They echoed rural concerns around declining service coverage but were more focused on enhancing existing options rather than building new systems from scratch.

4.13. This demographic lens adds some texture to the Assembly's headline findings. In particular:
- There is readiness for change across all user groups, including frequent drivers.
- Fairness and flexibility are essential for winning support especially for rural communities and lower-income workers.
- Policymakers can expect high support for incremental, visible improvements (e.g. better P&R, more buses) and respectful dialogue to shape longer-term transitions.
- Demographic specific communications and implementation, e.g. co-design in rural areas, employer engagement in cities, will be vital to turning recommendations into successful action.

**Policy Insight**
Support for every major recommendation crossed demographic lines. Implementation strategies, not the recommendations themselves, will make or break public trust.

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**Tackling Congestion**

4.14 A clear priority across the Assembly was the need to reduce traffic congestion, particularly in and around Oxford. Participants proposed a layered approach that combined:

- Disincentives such as parking levies and congestion charges
- Incentives like enhanced, affordable public transport options
- Infrastructure investments including active travel routes and mobility hubs

4.15. Rather than relying on a single solution, recommendations blended behaviour change, strategic planning, and equitable access.

**Connecting Communities**

4.16. Connectivity emerged as equally vital, especially for market towns and rural communities where residents face isolation, infrequent services, and few viable alternatives to car use. Assembly members understood that a successful transport strategy for Oxfordshire must go beyond Oxford itself.

4.17 Improved bus services, better integration across modes, and investment in mobility hubs were seen as key tools for addressing this disparity. Importantly, participants recognised that tackling congestion in cities would only be fair if those outside them had access to effective, reliable alternatives.

**Strategic, Fair and Realistic**

4.18 Across the 14 sessions, Assembly members repeatedly demonstrated a pragmatic, strategic mindset. A central question underpinning discussions was: "What would make me get out of my car?" While there was consensus on the need to shift away from private vehicle use, assembly members were also attuned to the challenges and barriers that different communities face in making such changes. From this sprang three principles that shaped their recommendations:

*4.18.1 Strategic Thinking*

Participants sought a phased roadmap for transformation, balancing long-term ambition with practical, short-term steps. Many proposals were intentionally interconnected, building on one another to create momentum. For example: Recommendation 15 builds directly on the idea of the "Oxford Travel Positive Employer" kite mark (Recommendation 4), linking employer action to funding mechanisms like the Workplace Parking Levy (WPL). This illustrates a layered and systems-focused approach to change. Crucially, strategy wasn't just about infrastructure: it included a deep understanding of behaviour. **Participants discussed motivation, incentives, and barriers, recognising that achieving modal shift means supporting not just the ability to travel differently, but also the desire to do so.**

### 4.18. 2. A Commitment to Fairness

Equity was a constant thread. Assembly members challenged proposals where they saw the risk of unintended harm, particularly for those with low incomes, mobility challenges, or limited access to alternatives. Key equity considerations included:

- Rural connectivity gaps (e.g. areas with only one bus a day or week)
- Essential travel exemptions from schemes like WPL and ZEZ
- Support for lower-paid workers, such as hospital staff and carers

Assembly members often asked: "Who benefits, and who might be left behind?" This lens shaped recommendations to include exemptions, targeted support, and criteria for prioritisation rooted in need rather than visibility.

### 4.18 3. Realistic and Actionable Proposals

The budgeting exercise grounded deliberations in financial reality. Participants used fictional, costed interventions to simulate real-world decisions, choosing how to allocate a limited 'transport pound.' Some participants welcomed the exercise as a tool to focus their thinking and avoid "blue sky" proposals. Others found it constrained to the here and now, but all recognised the need for trade-offs. As a result, many recommendations reflect a mix of ambition and feasibility. For example: While a tram system generated interest, it received less support than investment in buses which was seen as more flexible, cost-effective, and better aligned with current constraints and jurisdiction. Appetite for a tram was evident in the Assembly, but participants heard from different experts sharing alternative views on its viability and they wanted to ensure their recommendations could be achieved within their knowledge. As a result, the recommendations focused on improving and developing existing alternatives to the car in Oxfordshire, both expanding provision and making better use of existing infrastructure.

4.19 These principles reveal a Citizens' Assembly committed to transformation, but not at any cost. Participants showed a clear appetite for reducing car use and enhancing connectivity, underpinned by a strong desire for equity and realism.

4.20 **They did not view congestion as a city problem or connectivity as a rural one: instead, they advocated for a joined-up, county-wide response rooted in shared responsibility and shared benefit.**

**Policy Insight**

Assembly members - from rural villages to Oxford city centre- supported action to shift how people move around. The message is clear: **if alternatives are fair, reliable, and well-designed,** the public is ready for change.

# KEY IDEAS

4.21. The following section explores some of the Citizens' Assembly's key ideas. Each reflects a balance of ambition and pragmatism, grounded in participant learning and lived experience. These ideas do not stand alone: they were developed through collaborative exercises, prioritisation activities, and direct dialogue with expert speakers. They demonstrate how the Assembly built a shared vision of change rooted in fairness, behaviour change, and deliverability.

**Recommendation**: Reduce congestion and emissions in central Oxfordshire by maximising the use of park and ride.

**Support**: 97.% of participants

- 72% of participants who take two or more car journeys a week strongly supported this recommendation (100% supported it)
- 81% of participants who live outside of the city strongly supporting it (100% supported it)

## Maximise the Use of Park & Ride

4.22. Park & Ride sites were widely seen as underutilised assets with the potential to deliver rapid, visible gains in congestion reduction. Assembly members proposed practical enhancements, including:

- Free-to-use services and increased bus frequency
- Shuttle links to businesses, schools, hospitals
- Improved active travel access and secure cycle storage
- Better connections between existing Park & Ride sites to create a network

4.23. They shifted from a more expensive proposal of building new sites to a more financially realistic strategy of enhancing what already exists, demonstrating cost-conscious adaptation.

**Implementation note:** This recommendation was most strongly supported by those who typically rely on cars, provided it offers reliability, convenience, and value.

**Policy Insight**
Park & Ride could be a gateway to multimodal travel, not just a car park with buses

## The Oxford Travel Positive Employer

4.24. Although the 100+ employee threshold was not a major focus of discussion, it reflects the assembly's broader commitment to fairness and strategic impact, targeting employers with the greatest capacity to invest in sustainable travel and who contribute most significantly to traffic volumes.

**Recommendation**: Establish a 'kite mark' to recognise and incentivise large employers (100+ employees) that support low-emission and sustainable travel practices.

**Support**: 94% overall
- 100% support from regular car users and rural/market town participants

4.26. Born from the Assembly's role-play exercise, this idea quickly gained traction. It combines behaviour change with reputational incentives, offering Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels for actions such as:
- Providing shuttle services
- Promoting bus or EV use
- Offering cycle facilities including showering and changing facilities
- Supporting car share schemes

4.27 The scheme was compared to the Fairtrade mark: credible, visible, and values-led,  and viewed as a tool to shift workplace culture and reduce peak-hour congestion.

**Implementation note:** Participants stressed that any revenue raised must be transparently reinvested in active travel, traffic reduction and low emission travel.

**Policy Insight**
Businesses should be part of the solution, and rewarded for it

# Introduce a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL)

**Recommendation**: 15 & 16 support this measure:
**Support**:
- 82% endorsed, particularly those living in market town and rural areas
- Incorporated into 4 out of 5 groups budgeting choices

**Policy Insight**
The WPL must be fair, transparent, and part of a bigger shift, not just a tax

**Implementation note:** Fair and transparent reinvestment in sustainable transport, especially for non-city and low-income commuters, is key to public support for the WPL.

4.28 The WPL was seen as a necessary tool to shift commuter behaviour and fund transport improvements. Participants supported the levy on the condition that:
- Clear exemptions and mitigations are developed for essential workers
- Revenue is transparently reinvested
- Recommendation 15 specified that the levy should be paid by the employer rather than the employee. Recommendation 16, and the interim proposals developed during Session 6, did not include this condition

4.29 During deliberations, the question of who should pay was widely debated. Some participants strongly supported requiring employers to cover the cost, citing the need to promote fairness, ensure organisational accountability, and protect lower-paid staff or those without viable alternatives to driving. Some participants acknowledged that, in practice, the cost of a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) might be passed on to employees. However, they were only willing to accept this trade-off on the condition that the revenue was reinvested fairly and effectively in improving sustainable transport options, particularly for those most likely to be affected, such as residents of market towns and rural areas.

4.30 Popular reinvestment suggestions included:
- Shuttle buses from Park & Rides to major employment zones, ensuring that these shuttle buses were cheaper than the WPL charge, providing a genuine financial incentive to leave the car at home.
- Offering unlimited free travel for under-18s and over-60s, and reinstating the £2 single bus fare cap
- Reduced fares for low-income workers, families, and young people
- On-demand services, particularly in rural areas

4.31 Participants proposed accountability mechanisms such as ANPR enforcement and carbon offsetting schemes tied to workplace travel.

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# Reimagining the City Centre: bus only roads and a fare free core

**Implementation note:** Bus-only roads were preferred over a tram system for reasons of cost and deliverability. Many participants referenced the Cowley rail extension and expressed confidence that rail was already being addressed. .

4.32 Participants developed bold proposals for transforming Oxford's transport spine, including:
- A dedicated bus-only corridor into and within the city centre (88% support)
- Fare-free bus travel from Park & Rides (97%)
- Franchised, simplified ticketing across operators (94%)
- Longer-term vision: a city tram network (74%)

4.33 These ideas were framed as both behavioural nudges and infrastructure changes, making the alternative to driving not just possible, but preferable.  'Participants also acknowledged that disincentives to driving would likely be necessary to achieve long-term change, but emphasised that these must be applied fairly, with appropriate exemptions for those who genuinely need to rely on a car.

4.34.The following ideas and tensions shaped their proposals.

## Public Transport: A Viable and Attractive Alternative to the Car
4.35. Participants consistently emphasised that public transport must be a credible, convenient, and cost-effective alternative to private car use,  particularly for those with regular commutes or constrained mobility.

4.36 Key Recommendations and Support Levels in this theme:
- Introduce standardised bus ticketing across operators – 94%
- Franchise model for local authority-led bus services – 88%
- Dedicated bus-only road in Oxford city centre – 88%
- Free, frequent Park & Ride buses – 97%
- Subsidised travel for over-60s and free travel for children – 79%
- Tram system linking Park & Ride sites (long-term) – 74%

4.37 Participants preferred buses over rail and trams due to lower costs, greater geographic coverage, and local authority control. The bus-only road proposal was especially compelling: one parent of seven said it was the only option that could persuade her to leave the car at home.

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**Implementation Insight:**
"If you want us to switch, it has to work for families, shift workers, and older people."

**Shift to Active Travel: Changing Behaviour Through Education and Design**
4.38 Education and infrastructure were viewed as essential partners in reducing car use and promoting walking, wheeling, and cycling.

4.39. **Key Recommendations:**

- Active travel education campaigns – 94%
- Behaviour change programmes in schools – 87%
- Cycle connectivity and secure storage at Park & Rides – 97%
- Create multi-modal mobility hubs in towns – 85%
- Repurpose rural bridleways for community routes – 91%

4.40 Participants saw early intervention, especially among young people, as key to long-term culture change. However, several active travel options (e.g. bridleways, greenways) were perceived as costly and did not feature strongly in the budgeting activity, suggesting implementation must be balanced with practical feasibility. These types of infrastructure were more likely to be considered worthwhile if they contributed to a wider strategic network and improved connectivity to public transport, aligning with the Assembly's top funding criterion for active travel (developed in session 5): improving access to public transport

**Involving People in Strategic Decision-Making**
4.41 The Assembly heard clear calls for locally designed, place-based transport solutions, particularly from rural participants. These voices were among the most consistent and urgent.

4.42 **Key Recommendation**:
Involve rural communities in co-designing local transport solutions – 91%

4.43 Why It Matters:
- Isolation and infrequent services (sometimes one bus per day or week)
- Limited or no digital access: participants repeatedly requested conversations, not surveys
- Policies such as the Workplace Parking Levy or congestion charges could have a disproportionate impact on rural residents, and this must be addressed in the design and implementation of such measures.
- Demand for engagement that reflects hyper-local geography (village-to-village)

4.44 Participants called for more use of deliberative methods like this to conduct community mapping, and tailored listening methods.

## Land Use, Health and Infrastructure Integration

4.45 Participants recognised that travel behaviour is shaped by the environment, and that housing, services, and health access must be designed to reduce car dependency.

4.46 **Key Recommendations:**
- Ensure new housing is walkable and well-connected – 88%
- Improve local infrastructure for accessing healthcare without a car – 91%

4.47 Tensions highlighted
- Central planning vs. community-led development
- Oxfordshire County Council's jurisdiction over planning decisions

4.48 This theme linked closely with urban experiences and rural, reinforcing the importance of local knowledge in future housing and health service planning.

## Workplace Parking Levy: Revenue, Responsibility, and Realism

4.49 Participants saw the Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) as both a lever for change and a funding tool, provided fairness, communication, and ring-fenced reinvestment were guaranteed.

4.50 **Key Recommendations:**
- Graduated WPL paid by employers – 82%
- Use WPL income to fund sustainable travel – 79%
- Combine with employer engagement (Travel Positive Employer) – 94%
- Exemptions for low-paid essential workers

4.51 There was some support for a congestion charge and ZEZ expansion (74% and 70%), but concerns about fairness for lower-income workers dampened support. The WPL received strong backing in both recommendations and budget simulations, but only if clearly linked to improved options for those most affected.

## Safety and Enforcement

Safety was a universal concern, particularly in residential and school areas. Personal experiences shared during the Assembly had a strong emotional impact.

4.55. **Key Recommendation:**
- Enforce 20mph zones with ANPR and signage – 88%
- There was almost unanimous support from urban residents for the introduction of 20mph zones with ANPR cameras and signage

4.56 Participants also called for improved lighting, visibility, and awareness campaigns, particularly in and around mobility hubs. Safety was framed as a shared responsibility, not just enforcement, and an essential precondition for behaviour change.

4.57. In the budgeting exercise participants invested in lots of school streets as a cost effective way to start behaviour change in travel whilst keeping young people and their families safe and healthy

# SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 The Oxfordshire Citizens' Assembly on Travel and Transport marks a significant moment in local democratic engagement. Over 45 hours of structured learning and deliberation, 34 residents from across the county worked together to grapple with some of the most pressing and complex transport challenges Oxfordshire faces. Their recommendations were not only ambitious but deeply considered, rooted in a commitment to fairness, feasibility, and forward-thinking solutions.

Participants showed a strong collective desire to move away from car dependency (even among frequent drivers) provided that alternatives are convenient, affordable, and well-communicated. From buses and bike lanes to workplace engagement and new community design, the Assembly's proposals form a coherent, interconnected roadmap for change.

Support for these recommendations cut across demographic lines. Rural residents and urban dwellers, younger and older participants, regular drivers and non-drivers alike, found common ground around the need for a more sustainable and inclusive transport system. What distinguished the Assembly's work was not just what was proposed, but how those proposals were reached: through dialogue, challenge, empathy, and a genuine attempt to balance trade-offs.

Policymakers now have in front of them a unique and valuable asset: a set of recommendations shaped by residents who were given the time, tools, and trust to engage meaningfully. As the Council responds to these proposals, the test will not be whether each is implemented in full, but whether the spirit of the Assembly - strategic, participatory, and just - is embedded in the decisions ahead.

If Oxfordshire is to thrive by 2050, as the Assembly's challenge question asked, then the insights gathered here must not only inform this moment but shape the culture of future policy design. The Assembly has shown that the public is ready to be part of the solution. The next step is to show they've been heard.

World Café

Interviews

Action learning

Participatory budgeting

Community coaching

Citizens assemblies

Appreciative inquiry

Positive Deviance

ABCD

Asset mapping

Community curators

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# Appendix I: Evaluation

| How would you rate your overall experience on the Citizens' Assembly? (n = 33) | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 19 |
| Really good | 10 |
| Good | 2 |
| OK | 2 |

29 out of 33 participants (88%) rated the experience as Excellent or Really Good, indicating a very high level of satisfaction.

22 out of 33 participants (67%) said their understanding had significantly improved, while a further 8 participants (24%) reported it had improved, and only 3 participants (9%) indicated a slight improvement. This reflects a strong learning impact across the assembly.

| How much has your understanding of travel and transport in Oxfordshire changed as a result of participating in the assembly? | |
|---|---|
| Significantly improved | 22 |
| Improved | 8 |
| Slightly improved | 3 |

**100% said they would recommend signing up for a random selection (sortition) process again.**

*"The facilitation was brilliant. With so many voices in the room, the facilitators did a fantastic job capturing everyone's input while ensuring a truly inclusive discussion. They struck the perfect balance, encouraging those who had a lot to say while creating space for quieter participants to contribute. What stood out most was their attentiveness to individuals with special needs, making sure they felt fully included in the conversation. I've rarely seen facilitation done so well, and it made for a truly engaging and meaningful experience."*

| How would you rate the quality of input during the learning phase (this refers to the films and speakers you heard from up until the final weekend) | |
|---|---|
| 3  stars | 3 |
| 4 stars | 19 |
| 5 stars | 10 |

Participants rated the quality of the learning inputs, including films and speakers, very positively, with 29 out of 32 respondents (91%) awarding 4 or 5 stars.  This suggests that the content was both engaging and informative for the vast majority of participants.

**If you had to tell someone about this process, which three words would you use?**

Participants overwhelmingly described the process using positive language, with the most frequently mentioned words being interesting, informative, enjoyable, and engaging. These words suggest a process that was thought-provoking, participatory, and well-received. Other frequently used descriptors such as enlightening, rewarding, inclusive, and collaborative highlight the sense of fairness, learning, and connection that many participants experienced.

Only a handful of words (five in total) suggested areas for reflection, each mentioned just once. One of these offered a personal perspective that "minorities were not served," which stands apart from the wider group's emphasis on inclusion and prioritisation of underrepresented voices. Two others "rushed" and "limiting" were selected as third-choice words by different participants.  Overall, the feedback strongly affirms the quality and impact of the process, with a small number of responses offering helpful nuance for future learning.

Informative

Interesting

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Rewarding

Collaborative

Engaging

Enlightening

41

Participants were asked to reflect on six different skills or experiences they may have drawn on or developed during the Citizens' Assembly. The results show that a wide range of valuable capabilities were activated through the process, with especially strong results in areas relating to collaboration, learning, and processing information.

| | I did this a lot (%) | I did this a bit (%) | I didn't do this much (%) | I didn't do this at all (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collaborated with people from different backgrounds | 90.9 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 3.0 |
| Learned about delivering policy change | 72.7 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Practiced collective decision-making | 72.7 | 24.2 | 3.0 | 0.0 |
| Used critical thinking to deepen understanding | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Processed complex information | 81.8 | 15.2 | 3.0 | 0.0 |
| Built new relationships | 50.0 | 40.6 | 9.4 | 0.0 |

Participants were asked to reflect on key areas of **skill development and engagement during the Citizens' Assembly.** These areas explored whether individuals felt they had applied or strengthened skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, decision-making, and understanding policy processes. The results show a consistently strong level of engagement across all areas, with the majority of participants reporting that they had used these skills a lot.  Just one participant (3%) felt they didn't engage in this area at all, indicating broad inclusion and engagement.

### Learned about delivering policy change
- 73% of participants said they learned a lot about what it takes to implement change in complex systems, and the remaining 27% said they learned a bit. No one felt they didn't engage with this at all, showing the learning phase resonated widely.

### Practiced collective decision-making
- Again, 73% of participants felt they did this a lot, and another 24% said a bit. Only one participant (3%) said they didn't do this much, suggesting strong engagement with negotiation, compromise, and consensus-building.

### Used critical thinking to deepen understanding
- Two-thirds of participants (67%) reported doing this a lot, and the remaining third (33%) said a bit. This demonstrates the impact of the learning content and discussion structure in prompting participants to question, probe, and reflect.

### Processed complex information
- 82% of participants felt they did this a lot, while 15% said a bit. Just one person (3%) felt they didn't do this much. This suggests that most participants were confident in navigating the materials provided and making sense of the issues under discussion.

### Built new relationships
- While slightly lower than the other areas, this still saw 50% of participants say they did this a lot, and 41% say a bit. Only 9% said they didn't do this much, with no one indicating they didn't do it at all. This shows the assembly offered social value as well as intellectual engagement.

Overall, the responses illustrate a rich learning environment where participants not only contributed to the assembly's outcomes but also developed or applied a wide range of transferable civic and social skills. This supports the wider democratic purpose of deliberative processes: to empower people with the tools, experience, and confidence to engage more deeply in public life.

**Were you able to discuss the content of the Assembly with people in your social networks (friends, family, neighbours, clubs)? And followed up with Q10 that asked for an estimated number**

This question aimed to understand whether the Assembly's impact extended beyond the room, reaching friends, family, neighbours, or other social networks. In deliberative processes like this, participants often share what they are learning with others, helping to spark informal conversations and wider awareness of the topic. Capturing this helps illustrate the potential ripple effect that participation can have across the wider community.

Out of 32 responses, 28 participants (88%) said they were able to discuss the Assembly with people in their social networks. Only four said they had not. In follow-up estimates, participants who did engage reported speaking to anywhere from a few individuals to 15 or more.

While the responses were grouped into general ranges (e.g. *less than 5*, *between 5–15*), and a few stated they didn't speak to anyone, a conservative calculation **suggests that at least 150 additional people heard something about the Assembly second-hand through these conversations**.

This suggests that the Assembly not only provided a meaningful experience for participants but also helped to spark wider awareness and dialogue within communities, a key principle of active citizenship and democratic engagement.

# Appendix II

Demographic targets were developed in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, the Office for National Statistics, and the Sortition Foundation. The table below shows the target profile for a full assembly of 40 participants, alongside the actual makeup of the 34 who took part

| Characteristic | Target (40) | Actual (34) |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 20 | 17 |
| Male | 20 | 16 |
| Non Binary or Other | No target set | 1 |
| Age | | |
| 16-24 | 6 | 5 |
| 25-34 | 7 | 5 |
| 35-44 | 6 | 5 |
| 45-54 | 6 | 6 |
| 55-64 | 6 | 6 |
| 65+ | 9 | 7 |
| Ethnicity | | |
| Asian or Asian British | 2 | 2 |
| Black or Black African or Carribean | 1 | 0 |
| Mixed or Multiple Ethnicities | 1 | 0 |

| Characteristic | Target (40) | Actual (34) |
|---|---|---|
| White British | 31 | 26 |
| Other Ethnic Group (aggregated to protect individual identities where numbers were 1) | 5 | 6 |
| Disability | | |
| Yes, limited a lot or a little | 6 | 5 |
| No | 34 | 29 |
| Education | | |
| No qualification, Level 1 & Level 2 | 13 | 12 |
| Level 3, Apprenticeship, Other | 10 | 7 |
| Level 4 and above | 17 | 15 |
| Views on Climate Change | | |
| Not at all concerned | 2 | 1 |
| Not very concerned | 6 | 5 |

| Characteristic | Target (40) | Actual (34) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Fairly concerned | 17 | 14 |
| Very concerned | 15 | 14 |
| Other | 0 | 0 |
| Do they have children? | | |
| No | 28 | 24 |
| Yes | 12 | 10 |
| Driving Frequency | | |
| Five days a week or more | 7 | 8 |
| Two to four days a week | 11 | 11 |
| Once a week or less | 10 | 11 |
| Not driven in the last four weeks, or never | 12 | 4 |
| Geography | | |
| Cherwell | 9 | 5 |
| Oxford | 9 | 10 |

| Characteristic | Target (40) | Actual (34) |
|---|---|---|
| South Oxfordshire | 8 | 7 |
| Vale of White Horse | 8 | 9 |
| West Oxfordshire | 6 | 3 |
| Urban/Market Town/Rural | | |
| Urban | 23 | 22 |
| Market Town | 6 | 6 |
| Rural | 11 | 6 |

\* The target figures were for a 40 person assembly and the actual figures are the 34.

# Appendix III

## Video Evidence from Oxfordshire's Citizens' Assembly on Travel and Transport

This document provides links to all of the video evidence shown throughout the learning phase of the assembly. The videos are all 'unlisted' on YouTube, which means that they can only be accessed by clicking the links below.

Session 1: Getting to know each other and the assembly process

- What is a citizens' assembly for?, Alan Renwick, Professor of Democratic Politics and Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit, University College London (UCL), https://youtu.be/fa7sUtD2kVc

Session 2: Why this assembly now?

- A History of Traffic Management in Oxfordshire and Challenges for the Future Professor Tim Schwanen, Professor of Transport Geography and Director of the Transport Studies Unit (TSU), https://youtu.be/iPgF778_LFg
- Who is the council and what have they got to do with transport and travel? Lorna Baxter, Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (Deputy Chief Executive), Oxfordshire County Council, https://youtu.be/TMoL2-MXSvg
- Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, Ben Smith, Strategic Transport Manager in Transport Policy, Oxfordshire County Council, https://youtu.be/6eBQwwvcq5E
- Connectivity for People, Robin Rogers - https://youtu.be/jJDQathqzKc

Session 3: The Challenge of Fair Transport Policy

- Fair Car Use Budgeting Results, Dr Philipp Rode, Executive Director of LSE Cities, London School of Economics, https://youtu.be/AXRgFKlykG8

Session 4: People in Transport

- Transport and the Economy, Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), https://youtu.be/yBcAMg2x2OY

- Transport User Priorities, Nina Howe, Senior Engagement Officer, Transport Focus, https://youtu.be/r4N1GcOspec
- Hidden Voices in Transport: Perspectives from Underrepresented Voices in Oxfordshire, A series of local voices in Oxfordshire, https://youtu.be/KtobRau8ii0

Session 5: Active Travel

- What is Active Travel, Xavier Brice, Chief Executive of Sustrans, https://youtu.be/2a8dBmswhC4
- The Potential of Better Cycling Routes, Robin Tucker, Chair, Oxfordshire Cycling Network, https://youtu.be/Zc7SrBfpOm0

Session 6: Travel Demand and the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan

- A resident perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Richard Parnham, Co-founder of Reconnecting Oxford, https://youtu.be/QKOCT_sB9pw
- A small and medium sized enterprise perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Bernadette Evans, Secretary of Oxford Business Action Group (OBAG), https://youtu.be/id6w5alZmC8
- A taxi driver Perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Sajad Khan, Secretary of City of Oxford Licensed Taxicab Association (COLTA), https://youtu.be/cs5l57iY1YI
- A resident perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Zuhura Plummer, Campaign Director of Oxfordshire Liveable Streets, https://youtu.be/xivybLS25yA
- A hotelier's perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Jeremy Mogford, Chairman of The Oxford Collection and Member of Oxford Business Action Group, https://youtu.be/OYVf76cNj38
- A tradesperson perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Adrian Arbib, Renewables installer and electrician who runs his own company Evolve Electric, https://youtu.be/YAKo3xIPcac
- A mobile hairdresser's perspective on Transport Schemes in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), Jenny Wells, Mobile Hairdresser, https://youtu.be/lOs5toO_0jY

Session 7:  The Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan, Joanne Fellows - https://youtu.be/_vPlqZZedUo

Session 8 and 9: Public Transport

- Delivering Better Bus Services in the County, Brenda Boardman, Chair, Oxon4buses, https://youtu.be/H0e1DcFx15M
- What role do bus services have to play in Oxfordshire's future transport system? Chris Hanson, Managing Director Stagecoach West & Oxford Tube, https://youtu.be/EqJ1EC4u2fA

- What are community rail partnerships? Luke Goddard, Youth and Insight Lead, Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership, https://youtu.be/AreLri8Bxrk
- Community transport in Oxfordshire, Léa Ravensbergen, School of Earth, Environment and Society, McMaster University, https://youtu.be/bwFVsAzNhjs
- What is community transport? David Miles, First and Last Mile, https://youtu.be/Wg6WVfkfwHA

Session 10: Designing New Places

- An Introduction to Transport, Development and Placemaking, Dr Nick Small, Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, Go-Ahead Group, https://youtu.be/fQOnEG15upo
- Opportunities and Obstacles for EV Car Ownership, Dr Hannah Budnitz, Research Associate, Transport Studies Unit and Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford, https://youtu.be/B8_1GHJkaA8

Session 11: A final focus on safety and health and end of learning phase, start of deliberations

- Transport schemes and healthcare access: A patient's perspective, Dr Annie Skinner, Resident of Oxford, https://youtu.be/EfFeY0RWw3Q
- Hidden voices in transport in relation to accessing hospitals and care, A series of voices in Oxfordshire, https://youtu.be/_9NLRMQxvHk
- Travel and Transport and the Role of health, Kate Eveleigh, Public Health Principle, Oxfordshire County Council, https://youtu.be/ShkRroRUG0o
- How can we reduce the number of serious and fatal collisions on the road? Ruth Purdie, Chief Executive, Road Safety Trust and former assistant chief constable in Cheshire Constabulary, https://youtu.be/cd4POZ3fQ78