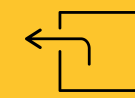


West Midlands Greener Together Citizens' Panel



PANEL MEMBERS



Please note that not all panel members are pictured



The icon above will bring you back to this page throughout the document.

Contents

01/ Executive summary

The Greener Together Panel in numbers

Climate Adaptation discussion topics and main messages

02/ Main messages

Introduction

Session 1:
Dealing with extreme weather events

Session 2:
Living with more extreme weather

Session 3:
Adaptation and nature recovery

Session 4:
Climate resilience in transport

03/ Panel member feedback

'Rose, bud and thorn' reflections

Panel member survey results

Involve | Title



Executive Summary



The Greener Together Citizen's Panel

block 3 in numbers

30 panel members

reflective of the combined authority's population

12 speakers

providing information and evidence about the topic in addition to panel members' own experiences

24 hours

of learning, discussion and creating recommendations



What the panel did

Session 1

Dealing with extreme weather events

The panel looked at and reacted to different types of communication tools that could be used to share information with citizens during extreme weather events. They also considered how they would react in an extreme weather scenario and what they would expect from key organisations.

Session 2

Living with more extreme weather

The panel learned about potential actions that could be taken at a household or local level to adapt to the changing climate and considered what co-benefits these actions could deliver for people and nature. Members then worked in groups to design potential fundable projects for communities.

Session 3

Adaptation and nature recovery

After learning about nature recovery, the panel considered a series of local-level, nature-based climate adaptation schemes and discussed how they would feel if these being undertaken in their local areas. They went on to learn about more regional-level schemes and worked in their groups to prioritise these.

Session 4

Climate resilience in transport

Panel members learned what climate adaptation for transport could include and talked through some of the ways the transport system could increase its climate resilience. In one of the most difficult tasks of the programme so far, groups had to decide how existing transport budgets could be cut to help fund this resilience work.



What the panel said: 10 key themes from Block 3

Looking across discussions block 3 sessions, the Panel tend to be *most* enthusiastic about climate adaptation measures when they:

- 1. Appear to be of good value with visible adaptation impacts**
- 2. Offer co-benefits for the health of people as well
....as nature**
- 3. Bring people closer to nature and improve access
....to green spaces**
- 4. Have a transformative power for localities,
....improving how places look and feel and boosting
....local pride**
- 5. Bring neighbours together**
- 6. Avoid complexity and controversy, with fewer opportunities
for plans to come unstuck along the way**
- 7. Include an element of education and information-sharing
....that will help them land with the public**
- 8. Engage people in decision-making rather than trying to
....impose change**
- 9. Create sense of ownership involving local people in the
....work**
- 10. Take account of fairness and protect people who most
....need support**



Main messages



Introduction

The Greener Together Citizens' Panel exists to help the **West Midlands Combined Authority** to shape its work to achieve a fairer, greener and healthier region.

The outcomes from the Panel are presented to relevant teams within the WMCA, to action and use the outcomes to influence their programme area.

What is a citizens' panel?

A citizens' panel is an established democratic process that is used all over the world. It brings together a randomly selected group of people who broadly reflect the key demographic characteristics of a population. The people who attend learn about issues with input from experts, reflect on those issues together and reach conclusions about how to deal with them.

Once established, a panel can exist over several months or longer, meeting at regular intervals (e.g. once per month with rest periods between topics).





About the panel

The West Midlands Greener Together Citizens' Panel brings together 30 residents from across the West Midlands to deliberate some of the key challenges that we face in creating a fairer, greener and healthier region.

The panel was recruited in Spring 2023 using a sortition approach, where 9,000 invitations were sent to households across the West Midlands region and from those who respond, a sample is recruited which broadly reflects the profile of residents. As some panel members have left the group during that time, others have been brought in to replace them and to maintain the panel's reflectiveness.

Panel members are given a thank you payment for each session they participate in. Extra help in getting to and from sessions is provided for those who need it.

How it works

The panel is convened around a specific theme with specialists invited to present to the panel and answer their questions. During a series of group discussions and activities, panel members then explore ideas, opportunities, tensions and trade-offs relevant to that theme. This can include coming up with a set of preference or priorities, or feedback about different types of policy response which the WMCA, councils and other partners might take.

This report

The panel has previously completed two blocks of work: the first on air quality and the second on retrofitting buildings. This report covers the third block of work on **climate adaptation** and the measures that can be taken to respond to a changing climate, in particular:

- **Responding to and planning for extreme weather**
- **Promoting nature recovery as part of climate adaptation**
- **Adapting our transport system and the ways we get around**

Whilst previous sessions took place online, this block has seen the panel meeting face-to-face over four sessions during the first half of 2024, all in Birmingham City Centre between 10am-4pm on Saturdays.



Session 1 – Dealing with extreme weather events

Purpose

Session 1 looked at extreme weather and its increased frequency as the climate warms.

The purpose of this session was to introduce the concept of climate adaptation (distinct from decarbonisation); to explain the challenges posed to the region by extreme weather, and to explore potential responses that could be activated in different scenarios and at different levels - household, neighbourhood and local.

Activities

Panel members took part in an initial **discovery session** to learn about extreme weather from information boards around the room. They heard presentations from *Luke Martin* from the Local Resilience Forum and *Emma Ferranti* from the University of Birmingham.

Members looked at different types of communication tools that could be used to share information with citizens during extreme weather events and shared their reactions to these.

In the afternoon, members looked at different extreme weather scenarios, reflecting on how they would respond to these and what actions they would expect others to take.



Communicating information during extreme weather events

- Members had different preferences about how visual mapping information should be presented.
- In terms of colour-coding, most members thought red should represent the highest level of risk as people are accustomed to red representing 'danger'.
- Whilst some liked the use of numbers to show higher and lower levels of risk, most thought that numbers would confuse too many people. Simple language – such as low risk to high risk - would be easier for people to understand.
- Overall members thought that showing data at ward level would strike the right balance between detail and ease of use, but that there should be an option to view data at postcode level too.

Information from where?

The panel thought that advice and information during an extreme weather event would be most impactful if it came from the NHS, police or fire service; the BBC or Met Office, or – less frequently mentioned – the council. These were seen as trusted and/or familiar sources of information. Emergency texts to people's mobile phones in the most at-risk areas would also be useful.

Information about what?

Panel members said they would want to understand what high or low risk means in practice – e.g. *what am I likely to see happening on the motorway, in the town centre, in my street? How is local transport going to be impacted? How long is disruption likely to last?* Knowing this information would help people to decide how to react.

Information when?

If people are going to make the best use of information in an emergency, they need to be prepared. This means educating people now so that they are ready to seek out and receive information when an extreme weather event is on its way. That includes which websites or apps to go to and, at a street level, knowing which neighbours may need help.

Task

Panel members thought about information in an extreme weather event. They considered from where, about what and when they would like to receive information.

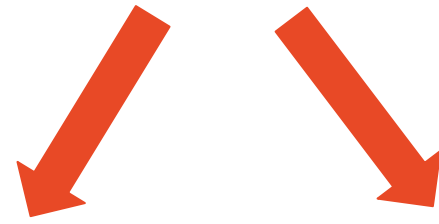


Task

Panel members shared ideas about how people could prepare for extreme weather events and what roles different organisations, individuals and communities could play in preparation and in the moment.

Exploring extreme weather scenarios: reactions and expectations

In preparation



Councils or emergency services should widely communicate where people can find information about preparing themselves (e.g. the West Midlands Prepared website)

Housing providers – whether council, housing association or private landlords – should be making sure their properties are as resilient as possible to extreme weather, with minimum standards set

Individuals should be encouraged to keep certain essentials stocked at home (e.g. a 3-day survival kit)

Schools could help young people to be prepared (e.g. ‘how can you be ready for a scenario like this?’)

Whoever will be coordinating a response, e.g. council or emergency services, should have a register of vulnerable residents most likely to need help.

At street-level, groups of residents should be ready to act as per the WhatsApp groups that sprang up during the pandemic. ‘Do we know who may need help in our street? What specific problems might we experience here?’

In the moment



The organisation coordinating a local response should prioritise contact with vulnerable residents on their register.

Most people should know where they can access information quickly and should know what actions they can take to protect their own homes and families

Neighbourhood networks should then kick in with people checking in on their neighbours.



Session 2 – Living with more extreme weather

Purpose

Following on from Session 1, this session explored the medium and long-term measures we can take in our homes and local environment so that the region is more resilient to extreme weather.

We wanted to understand what panel members thought about those different measures, which they would be most enthusiastic about in their areas and why.

Activities

Panel members heard presentations from *Ellie Murtagh* from the British Red Cross (BRC) who shared insights from the BRC's emergency response teams. Working in groups, members learned about and reflected on potential actions that could be taken at a household or local level to adapt to the changing climate. They then thought about the co-benefits that these actions could deliver for people and nature.

After a presentation from *Thony Thaper* (WMCA) on the Community Environment Fund, members spent the afternoon designing a climate adaptation project to present to the room.



Considering potential measures

Posters around the room introduced panel members to potential measures for adapting to a changing climate.

1. Conducting a climate risk assessment to help communities decide which measures to prioritise
2. Establishing a network of 'cool spaces' for vulnerable people to take refuge in extreme heat
3. Create sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to help capture rainwater during heavy rain
4. Retaining or installing permeable surfaces in gardens and driveways to help rainwater drain safely and reduce urban heating
5. Installing green walls – i.e. vegetation – on the sides of buildings to support cooling and drainage
6. Establishing community gardens or wildflower meadows to support cooling and drainage
7. Installing water butts at home to reduce use of mains water consumption in our gardens
8. Building exterior shutters or heavy-duty curtains / blinds to block sunlight and reduce overheating at home
9. Installing rain gardens in public places and on residential properties to hold and drain rainfall and – when used in gardens – reduce water consumption
10. Installing green rooves to cool otherwise hard surfaces and slow the entry of rainwater into guttering in heavy rain, or mini-green rooves on sheds, bin stores or cycle storage
11. Producing a learning pack to raise local awareness of climate risks and adaptation measures that could be adopted individually or collectively.
12. Developing a community emergency plan to improve local responses when extreme weather events occur
13. Carrying out neighbourhood check-ins led by volunteers who can visit vulnerable neighbours before and during an extreme heat event to provide help.



Discussion

Panel members considered the different measures to help people live with more extreme weather, along with the co-benefits they could deliver and shared their reflections on which they were most enthusiastic about and why.

Considering potential measures: which are the most popular and

why?

Water butts -

low cost, easy to set-up

There were high levels of positivity about **water butts** as a measure that was relatively cheap, easy to implement and which delivered visible, practical benefits. Whilst some of the measures raised concerns – about cost, maintenance, the potential for scams – **water butts** were something simple and familiar that did not appear to throw up any risks or anxieties.

Greening neighbourhoods

Panel members were positive about measures they thought would improve the appearance of their local area whilst also supporting climate adaptation, especially **SUDS and rain gardens**, though some members had concerns about impacts on parking availability.

Wider benefits for the health of people and nature

Panel members were on the whole positive about measures which seemed to offer health benefits and/or improvements for nature by increasing habitat. Members were positive about **community gardens** and **meadows** for these reasons.

Bringing people together

Positivity about community gardens also related to their potential to bring neighbours together, which was an attractive co-benefit. This also applied to cool spaces, neighbourhood check-ins, and those measures that implied neighbours planning a local response together, i.e. learning packs for communities and local risk assessments.

...and what caused the most concerns?

Whilst there was at least some positivity about all the measures presented, panel members were least enthusiastic when:

- **Costs were judged to be high**, especially when being picked up by individual households
- **Ongoing maintenance** appeared to create a burden which cash-strapped councils may not be able to sustain (such as green walls) or which implied a burden on volunteers who may disappear.



Discussion

Panel members learned about the **Community Environment Fund** and were asked to work-up a potential climate adaptation project which the Fund could support.

Project pitch summaries

Group 1: **The Wellbeing Together Hub**

This **community garden** would support climate adaptation directly through the **natural cooling and drainage benefits** of green space, and indirectly as a local centre for **educating and galvanizing people** around climate challenges.

The group envisaged a **beautiful, relaxing space** where residents would want to spend time; a place that could host **public engagement events, workshops and training** where local environmental projects could be developed; and a place that built the **skills and ambitions** of local people.

The Hub would primarily be volunteer-led, powered from within its community, but with a paid coordinator to manage volunteers, oversee projects and lead on public engagement and education.

This would have an estimated cost of **£70,000**.

Group 2: **Can't see the Wood End for the Trees**

The overall aim of the project was to **future-proof a neighbourhood 'one street at a time'** whilst using a climate adaptation scheme as a vehicle for **transforming the appearance** of the Wood End of Coventry.

Focusing initially on one street, the group wanted to **create six rain banks** over a distance of c.300 meters. Each would comprise a 10-foot long wooden planter with reservoir beneath. Residents would also be given **water butts** for their own properties.

'We want to change Wood End from an eyesore to a sight for sore eyes.'

The group envisaged that the project would improve the look and feel of a neglected area, would **'bring a community vibe and bonding'** amongst residents; would contribute to people's **health and wellbeing** and would improve **air quality**.

This would have an estimated cost of **£25,000**.



Discussion

Panel members learned about the **Community Environment Fund** and were asked to work-up a potential climate adaptation project which the Fund could support.

Project pitch summaries (continued)

Group 3: **Benjamin's Dreams Community Garden**

This **community garden** project was envisaged for a brownfield site in an area of social housing in Birmingham. It was named in honour of local poet Benjamin Zephaniah.

The group wanted their project to contribute to residents' **well-being and quality of life**, and to improve local **air quality**. They imagined **shaded areas** for hot days; a meadow area that promoted **biodiversity**; and an area for **growing vegetables**.

Learning and socialising were also important elements of the project, with the garden as a place for people to meet, work together and exchange skills. As part of this there would be a 'Walk of Knowledge' which educated people about plants, composting and circularity; as well as wider carbon literacy.

Group 4: **Buzz Stops**

This project would install **green rooves** on bus stops along Ulster Road – a busy route with high levels of traffic. The aim would be to:

- Absorb **rain water**
- Contribute to improved **air quality**
- Provide **shade**
- Create **habitat** with bug hotels included as part of the design
- Use digital displays – powered by solar panels – to not only convey travel information but also **advice and information** about dealing with extreme weather.

The group proposed that project engineers could train local volunteers to help maintain the green rooves and that a modular design would make it easy to replace damaged sections as needed.

This would have an estimated cost of **£100,000**.



Local projects to adapt to a changing climate

stand-out messages

The projects that panel groups developed along with other panel members' reactions to those projects demonstrate the power of co-benefits as motivators of action. Panel members were especially positive about:

1. **Projects that bring people closer to nature.** All four projects involved greening a part of the urban environment in ways that would create habitat and thus increase people's contact with plants and wildlife on their doorstep, with all the health and wellbeing benefits that implies.
2. **Projects that are transformative for places,** providing new 'green assets' for people to enjoy, improving the appearance of places and helping residents to feel prouder of where they live. A central justification of the Wood End project was to create more positive perceptions of a place felt to be run-down. The two community garden projects were intended to create space for local people to enjoy nature, to improve the experience and image of those and places and generally lift spirits.
3. **Projects that bring people together.** In all four proposed projects, local people had a role in creating or maintaining the scheme. This was partly a means of making projects more financially sustainable, but in the case of three of them was also clearly about building-in opportunities for people to meet, collaborate and own positive change in their area.
4. **Projects that educate people about climate issues and how to deal with them.** It is striking that both the community garden projects did not only seek to bring people together, but specifically to learn together – and specifically about environmental challenges and what they could do about them locally. Even digital displays at bus stops were seen as an opportunity to share information about this.



Session 3 - Adaptation and nature recovery

Purpose

The purpose of this session was to inform the Panel about nature-based solutions to dealing with a changing climate, including actions that can be taken at local and regional levels to support nature using tools that nature gives us to adapt.

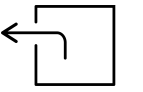
We wanted to understand the Panel's reaction to different types of nature-based solutions, which they would prioritise for investment, and why.

Activities

Panel members heard a presentation introducing nature recovery, why it matters, what it can look like in practice and how it can help us adapt to a changing climate. Working in groups, members considered a series of nature-based solutions which could be implemented at a local level and discussed how they would feel about these being undertaken in their local areas.

The panel then heard about more strategic-level interventions that could help restore nature in the region as part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Going back into their groups, they were asked to focus on a specific set of stakeholders (local government, housing association, utility company or the community) and consider the role each could play in implementing different nature recovery schemes.

They ended the session by discussing which schemes they would want to prioritise for investment and voted on these in their groups.



Discussion

Zooming in: In groups of four, panel members discussed scenarios for five types of neighbourhood-level scheme:

- Nature-based SUDs
- Creating a meadow
- Green infrastructure
- River regeneration
- Community rewilding

Considering potential measures: if this was proposed for your

area?
What information would you want before taking a view on this?

- The scale of environmental benefits that a project can achieve
- The cost and whether this represents good value compared to other projects and outcomes
- The level of disruption it will create
- How well this has worked in other areas
- How long it will take to see results
- Where responsibility lies for maintenance over time
- How involved local people can be in the process
- Carry out a poll of residents

What would excite you?

- If it results in new green spaces that people can enjoy or opens-up access to existing ones
- If it helps nature / biodiversity
- If it improves the look and feel of a neighbourhood and gives people pride in their area
- If it gives residents an opportunity to get involved in their area with neighbours

What would concern you?

- If it makes daily life more difficult (e.g. removing on-street parking to install SUDS)
- If it becomes an eyesore or becomes misused if not properly maintained
- If it is inaccessible to most people

How should decisions about these schemes be made?

Panel members mostly emphasized the need for residents who would be most impacted by a scheme to be involved in making the decision – partly because that seemed fair, and partly because it would make it more likely that they would support and maintain it once in place. They often proposed holding a poll of residents, with some adding that sharing information and holding engagement events first would be important so that people made informed choices.



Discussion

Zooming out: each group focused on one stakeholder group

- Local government
- Housing associations
- Infrastructure companies & national bodies
- Individuals and the community

...and considered six types of schemes they could invest in.


Prioritising nature recovery schemes for different stakeholders


For each of the six types of schemes they considered, groups were given information about the relative costs, contribution to climate resilience, biodiversity impact, complexity and amenity value (example to the right).











Groups discussed the pros and cons of each type of scheme and apportioned tokens to each, indicating which they thought their specific stakeholder group should prioritise.


After this initial round of resource allocation the groups reflected on the result and negotiated whether they would like to make any changes.



The slides that follow capture the final set of resource allocations agreed by the four groups, along with the key points that underpinned their thinking.

ACTION 2: Support 'green prescribing' initiatives to use 

ACTION 1: Plant trees to reduce the urban heat island effect 

	COST 
	CLIMATE RESILIENCE 
	BIODIVERSITY IMPACT 
	COMPLEXITY 
	AMENITY 

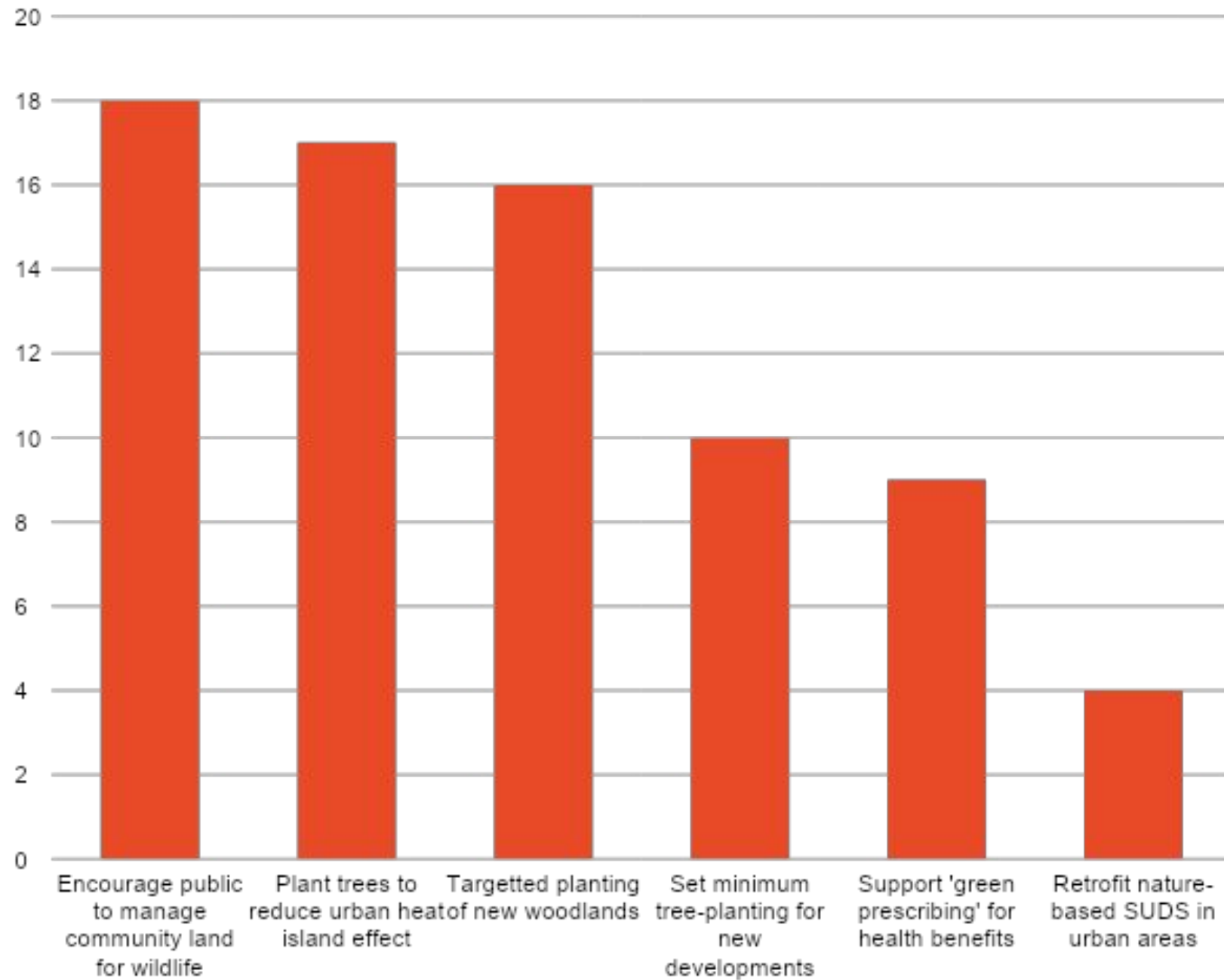


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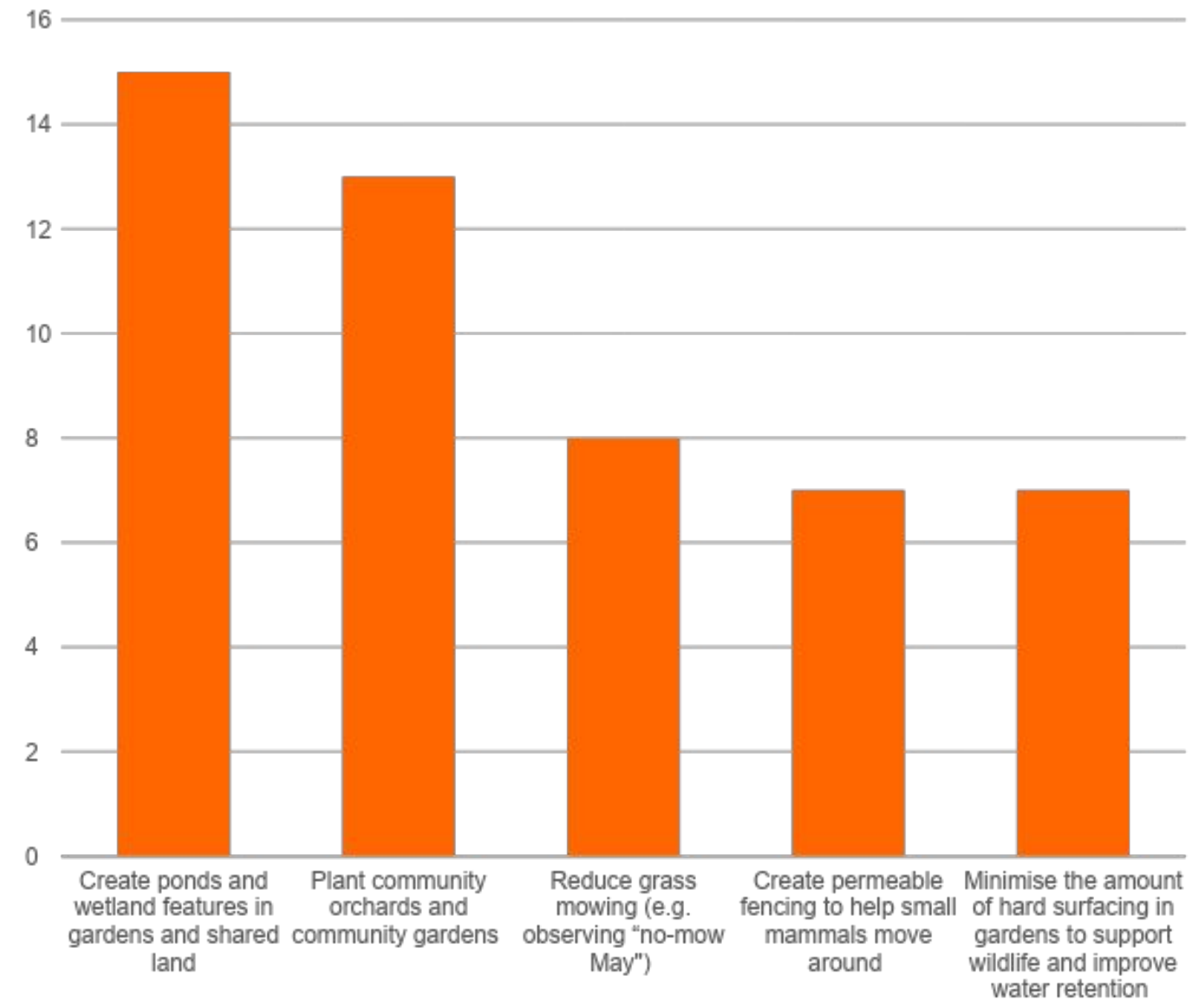
What nature recovery schemes would you want

local government to prioritise?



What nature recovery schemes would you want

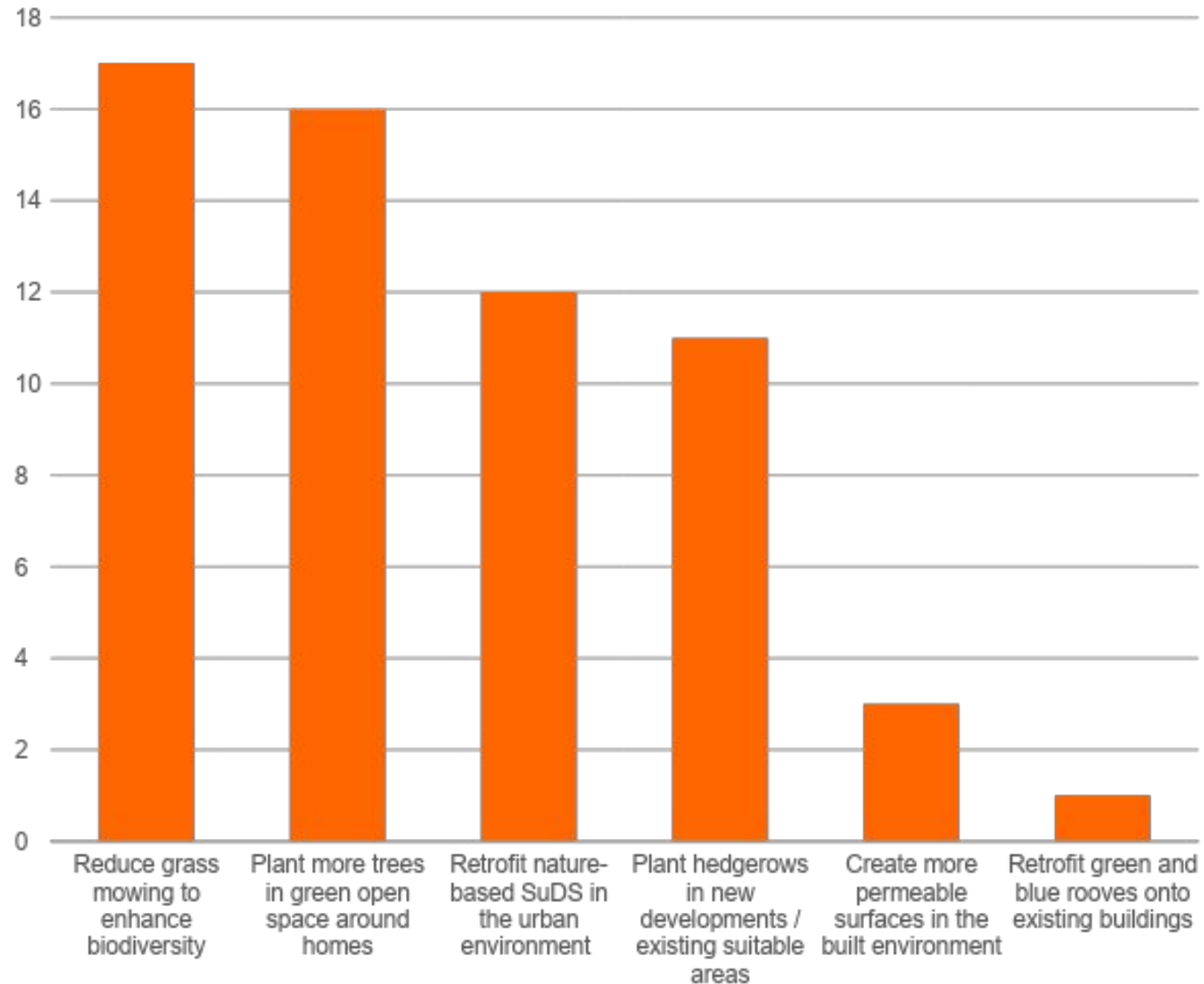
individuals and community groups to prioritise?





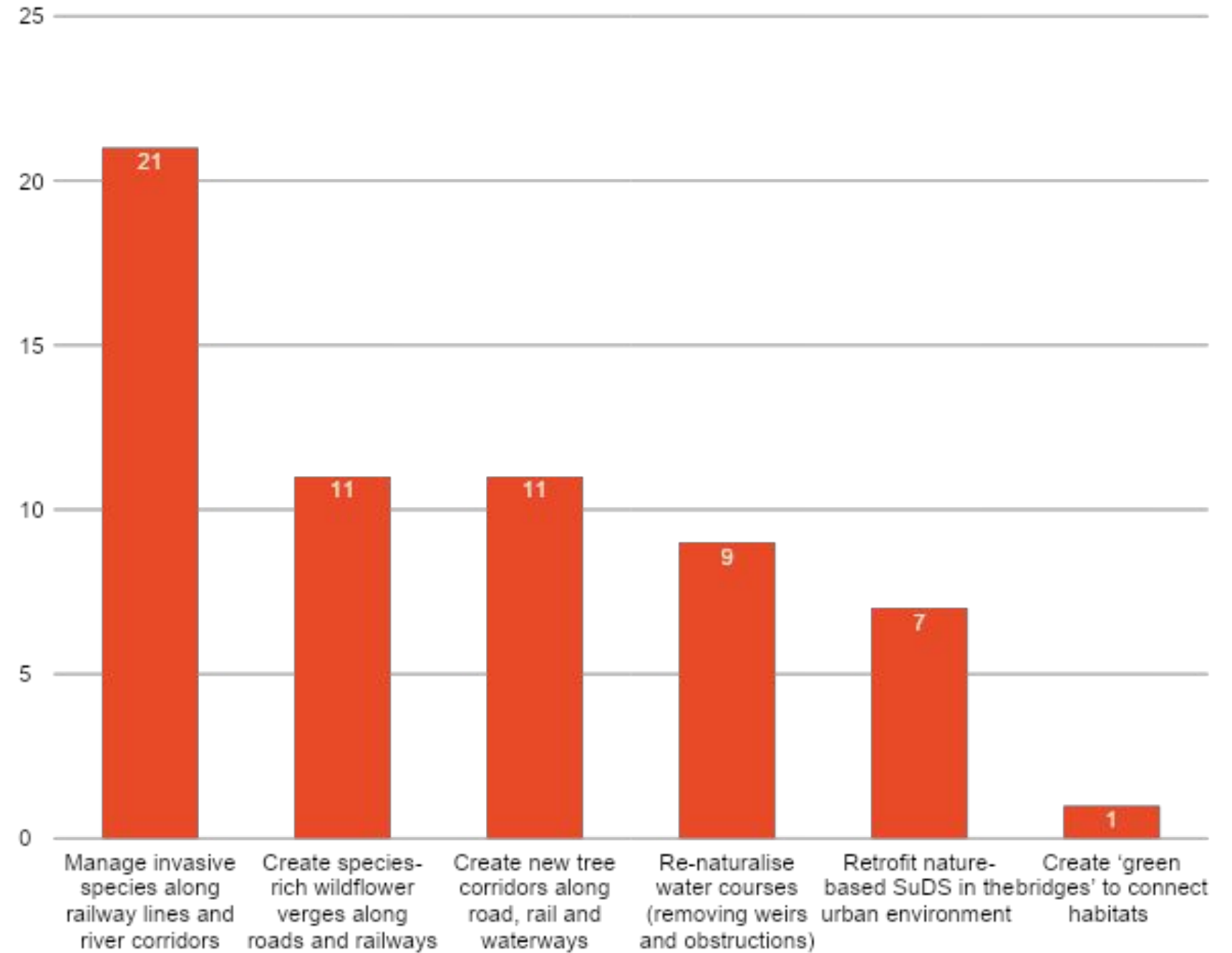
What nature recovery schemes would you want

housing associations to prioritise?



What nature recovery schemes would you want

infrastructure companies and national bodies to prioritise?





Priorities for nature recovery schemes: stand-out messages

- **Cost, value and impact:** big tree-planting schemes seemed to be good value for the impact they could have, especially considering the co-benefits for wildlife and communities. For the Housing Associations group, reducing grass mowing was so popular because it would even save the organisation money.
- **Creating resources which communities can enjoy together:** for groups 1, 2 and 3, schemes which resulted in new local amenities were amongst their top priorities, reflecting their enthusiasm for projects which could improve people's daily lives and build social connections.
- **Involvement:** for the Individuals and Communities group, schemes that involved people *in creating local resources together* were most appealing. For the Local Government group and projects which gave local people opportunities to get involved were thought more likely to be successful than those which excluded them. This helped to make public management of community land for wildlife the most popular scheme for this group.
- **Engagement and ease of gaining support:** it was often said that if local residents are unsupportive of schemes there is less chance they will come to fruition, so organisations should do proper engagement early to build understanding and support. Retrofitting SUDS, for instance, seemed like it might get caught up in lots of local opposition and would be harder to deliver, so was less of a priority for the Local Government group.
- **Timeframe and complexity:** across the groups, schemes which appeared to be less complex and with fewer barriers to implementation were more popular, and especially where they seemed to have the potential to be delivered relatively quickly and at scale – whether that be tree planting, rewilding of public land or other kinds of habitat creation. This reflected the impatience and sense of urgency amongst some panel members.



Session 4 – Climate resilience in transport

Purpose

The purpose of this session was to explain why and how the region's transport should be made more climate-resilient; and to invite panel members to propose where they would reduce current spending in order to divert resources into climate adaptation schemes. The result was a set of proposals for how transport budgets could be re-prioritised and justifications for those.

Activities

Panel members heard a presentation on what climate adaptation for transport could include. Working in groups, members were invited to consider a series of ways in which the transport system could adapt to a changing climate and increase its resilience to those changes.

A second presentation introduced Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM), its remit and aims. This helped to set-up the afternoon activity which tasked groups with reallocating resources away from existing spend so that they could be reinvested in climate adaptation.



Discussion

Panel members were asked to consider information about the following four schemes to make transport more climate-resilient:

- Green tram tracks
- Climate-resilient buses
- Early warning systems
- Cool pavements

Each group covered two of the four schemes

Considering ways to make transport more climate-resilient in the West

Midlands

Panel members' reactions to four types of transport scheme

Green tram tracks

Seems expensive – is the benefit worth the cost?

Questions about practicality in city centres where traffic uses the same routes

Would it look good over time?

Climate-resilient buses

Benefit but uncertain if it was worth the cost.

Concern this would increase ticket prices and make buses less appealing to travellers

Concern that if it could only be funded by reducing services, this would be counterproductive for getting people out of their cars

Early warning systems

More information was needed to understand how this would work – as it was presented, a lot of panel members felt it resembled existing information sources that people can find online.

Cool pavements

Depends how effective this is – would it be so impactful as to warrant the cost?

Several panel members thought heavy rain is a bigger risk than extreme heat so this would not be a measure they would prioritise in the West Midlands.

Doesn't do anything to improve biodiversity or drainage so seems that money could be better spent.



Discussion

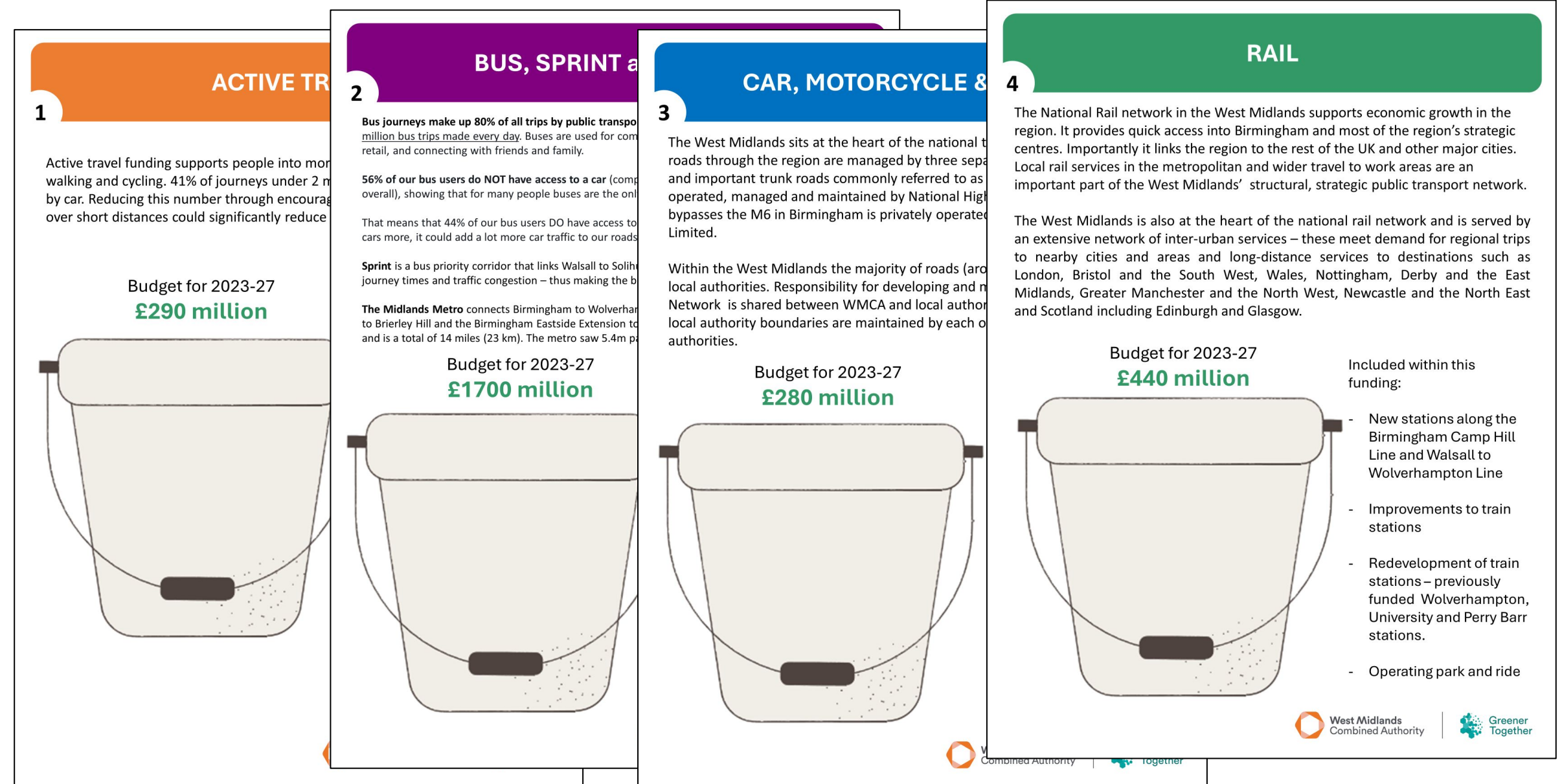
Panel members worked in their groups to discuss how resources could be moved from existing transport budgets to fund necessary climate resilience interventions on the transport network.

The transport budgets were:

- Active travel
- Bus, Sprint and Metro
- Car, motorcycle, PHV/taxi
- Rail

Hard choices: how to find money for climate resilience from existing budgets

Panel members had already heard that whilst work to make the transport network more resilient to climate change will be necessary, it is unlikely that significant amounts of additional money will be available to fund that work. When given information about some existing budgets, where would they be most willing to take money away in order to find the money for resilience projects?

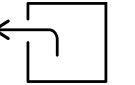




What did panel members protect and what did they cut?

The table shows the final position of each group after taking out £200m for climate resilience work. Circled in yellow are those budgets which groups have most drastically cut in the process.

	STARTING BUDGET	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4
Active Travel	290m	280 m (- 10 m)	250 m (-40m)	230 m (-60m)	290 m (-0m)
Bus Sprint and Metro	1700m	1670 m (-30m)	1600 m (-100m)	1690 m (-10m)	1680 m (-20m)
Car Motorcycle and PHV /Taxi	280m	150 m (-130m)	250 m (-30m)	230 m (-50m)	210 m (-70m)
Rail	440m	410 m (-30m)	410 m (-30m)	360 m (-80m)	340 m (-100m)



What did panel members protect and what did they

cut?

	<i>Arguments for protecting</i>	<i>Arguments for cutting</i>
Active Travel	<i>"This needs most encouragement and expansion of the right infrastructure. It is good for health as well as the environment. "</i>	<i>"Society should aspire to more active travel but culturally, are we ready? Do weather and safety fears just put too many people off? And is there a risk, therefore, that we invest a lot, but the impact is low?"</i>
Bus, Sprint and Metro	<i>"Public transport is central to getting more cars off the roads. If cuts make services less reliable, frequent or affordable more people will use their cars. Public transport like this is also disproportionately important to older people and those without access to a car."</i>	<i>"This is a big budget so perhaps can better stand cuts."</i> There was most willingness to reduce frequency but keep prices affordable and retain / improve reliability, and to sacrifice the creation of some new routes and new stations.
Car, motorcycle and PHV / taxi	Panel members were keen to protect highways maintenance. There were mixed views on whether to protect EV charging point installation. On the one hand this supports the transition away from fossil fuels but on the other serves a relatively small number of people and will not take cars off the roads.	<i>"Whilst it might be unpopular, we know that we have to make car journeys a less attractive option so of all the options this is the one where we should reduce spend."</i>
Rail	A high-performing rail network will be an important part of getting more cars off the roads.	There was most willingness to lose station improvements as whilst desirable, this felt like something people could live without.



Reallocating transport budgets to fund resilience: stand-out

messages

Some panel members found this exercise difficult as every budget area was arguably important and making cuts would impact lots of people in lots of ways. Some reflected that it forced them into the shoes of decision-makers and made them realise how difficult these choices can be.

Whilst in previous discussions most members have been supportive of public transport and active travel, this discussion forced hard choices which meant prioritising some modes of transport over others. For instance, whilst a few felt strongly that drivers should not be penalised or 'bullied' by policy decisions that made driving more costly or less convenient, more argued that facing up to the challenge meant it was right to invest resources away from drivers.

Education and culture change: some groups thought the potential lack of take-up of active travel in the near future provided a rationale for re-allocating funding elsewhere. Others took the opposite view - that active travel needed more investment to create the conditions where more people wanted to walk and cycle, including educating people about the benefits and long-term behaviour change.



Panel member feedback

“

ROSE

‘It’s eye-opening – I’ve learnt a lot and met like-minded people’

‘Very empowering. I’ve gained confidence and have gained friends’

‘I’ve liked the panel so far. I’ve learned a lot from the people here and not just about the environment’

‘My group has a good democratic process’

BUD

‘I’m hopeful that our opinions influence decisions’

‘How this format could be applied to other areas of the combined authority’s work’

‘I feel listened to and that my opinions taken into consideration and valued’

‘I think I’m developing my confidence in expressing my views and having discussions/debates’

THORN

‘Still a little sceptical that our opinions influence decisions’

‘Challenging to get your head around such complex issues, make big decisions on necessarily insufficient information’

‘It can be uncomfortable, challenging’

‘Who will turn words into action?’

‘How much of a difference am I making?’

”

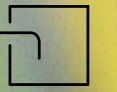


Members' thoughts on the process

At the end of the final session in the Climate Adaptation block, we asked panel members to reflect on their experience of the panel so far.

- ROSE = something positive or enjoyable
- BUD = something that is promising or developing for you
- THORN = something difficult

We have added a selection of responses on the next page.



Survey

feedback

After each session, panel members were sent a survey to record their opinions about the session.

These are summaries of the average response for each question from sessions 1-4.

Facilitation + session format

9.7/10 = How happy are you with the format of the session, e.g. the mix of guest speakers and group work?

9.6/10 = How would you rate the panel session?

9.8/10 = How would you rate the lead facilitator?

9.7/10 = How would you rate your group facilitator?

Support

9.7/10 = How satisfied are you with the support and assistance provided by the organisers at Involve for this first session?

9.6/10 = How satisfied are you with the communication you received about the arrangements in the run up to the weekend workshop?

Communication and purpose

9.8/10 = How clear do you feel about the purpose of the panel?

9.7/10 = I feel I have had enough information to participate effectively.

9.7/10 = The information I have received has been fair and balanced between different viewpoints

9.7/10 = I have understood everything or almost everything that the other members of my small group have said during our discussions

9.7/10 = I have understood everything or almost everything that has been presented by the guest speakers

Deliberation

9.8/10 = I have felt comfortable expressing my views in the small group discussions

9.7/10 = I have had enough opportunity to express my views in the small group discussions .

9.7/10 = feel that my fellow panel members have respected what I had to say, even if they didn't agree with me.

Survey

feedback

After each session, panel members were sent a survey to record their opinions about the session.

These are a selection of responses.

"Good to see people face to face. As last year only on the online sessions."

"Who is going to turn words into action?"

"Enjoying it all, and I am glad I am taking a part in this valuable research!"

"I would like to thank you for taking the extra steps to ensure that I could attend today's session. It made me feel a valued member of the group."

"Being part of the panel has been very rewarding. It is educational and enjoyable. Even though I have lived in the West Midlands since 2015, it has made me feel more embedded within the community of the region."

"Everyone really listens and I'm really enjoying the sessions"

" (...) I'm going to cascade the presentations to my friends and work colleagues so they can improve their knowledge and also be inspired to take action to contribute to climate change mitigation and climate adaptation. "

"The panel is interesting and informative but if the public and the professionals cogitate on reasonable realistic proposals and the government are allowed to over ride centuries of natural growth/planning why are we trying?"

"Great facilitators"