

Creative consultation workshops with Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination artists working with young residents to imagine new ways to enjoy being together in our city and inform the Children and Young People's Strategy for Hartree.



Collecting ideas for master-developers, Landsec U+I TOWN, engaged by Cambridge City Council and Anglian Water to develop plans for how Hartree, a new area in North East Cambridge, will be developed.

October 2023

TOWN.



Set Up

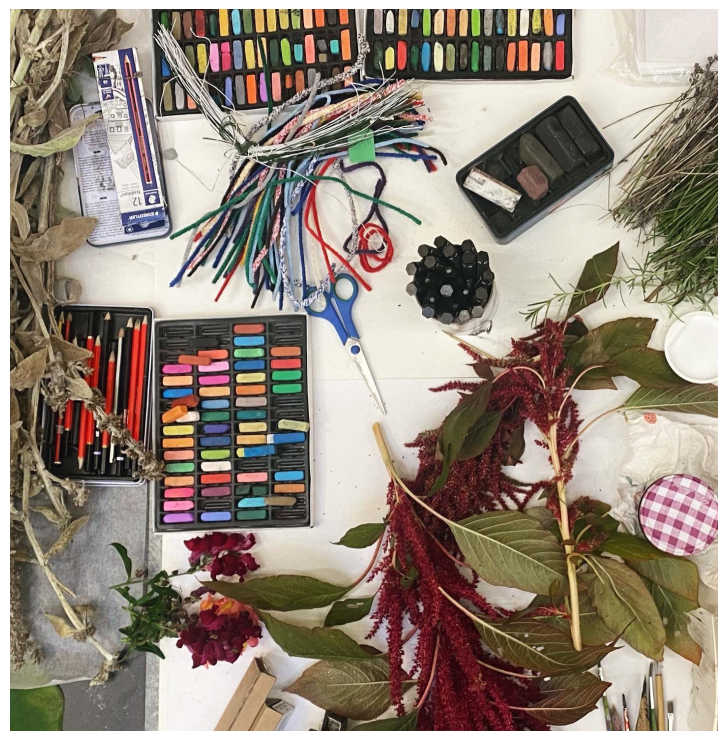
Situated in The Guildhall - chosen as a central site and civic building where the council decisions about Cambridge are made - we prepared the room to be an inviting and stimulating studio space to welcome the groups in to.

We displayed A3 prints of previous CCI **What Makes a Place?** creative work and quotes as well as Hartree information and Fantastical Forest hangings. An AO map of the city was displayed on the centre table as another familiar focus for when the groups arrived. A range of inviting materials were on display. Each wall had a themed area : Streets, Mobility, Public Space and Home. These words were hand written in 'friendly script' on large sheets of paper on the walls and over a table. The fifth theme (an unknown theme to be explored over the two days) would be developed over the sessions and displayed on a large central table in the middle of the room. Contributions were invited on these five themes throughout the sessions in the form of a manifesto to be shared.



Materials

In line with the CCI Environmental Policy, a range of materials to stimulate the senses and creativity were available to the participants: A selection of paper of various sizes, pencils, pastels, clay, wooden sticks, charcoals, graphite and natural ink, as well as a huge trailer full of plant cuttings supplied by the King's College apprentice gardeners.



The Participants

A total of twenty-four young people joined the workshops. This included 15 aged 11 – 15 years and nine young adults aged 16+. The participants came from diverse backgrounds: secondary school pupils, young carers, sixth form students, college students, two college apprentice gardeners, refugees recently arrived in Cambridge and young artists trying to start a career in the city – all with distinct ways of looking at the needs in a city from their own lived experience.

The sessions were facilitated by CCI artists Hilary and Sally alongside CCI lead, Ruth Sapsed. Members of the TOWN team, Frances and Lily, attended each session respectively. Members of Centre 33 Young Carers Group were accompanied by support workers Abi and Mia. A researcher from the Cambridge University Department of Architecture also attended the first session.

The 11 – 15 year old participants received an art pack of clay, graphite, sketch book and pastels and a £10 voucher by way of thanks. The older group received a £20 voucher. Juice and snacks were provided throughout the day and pizza was delivered for lunch.

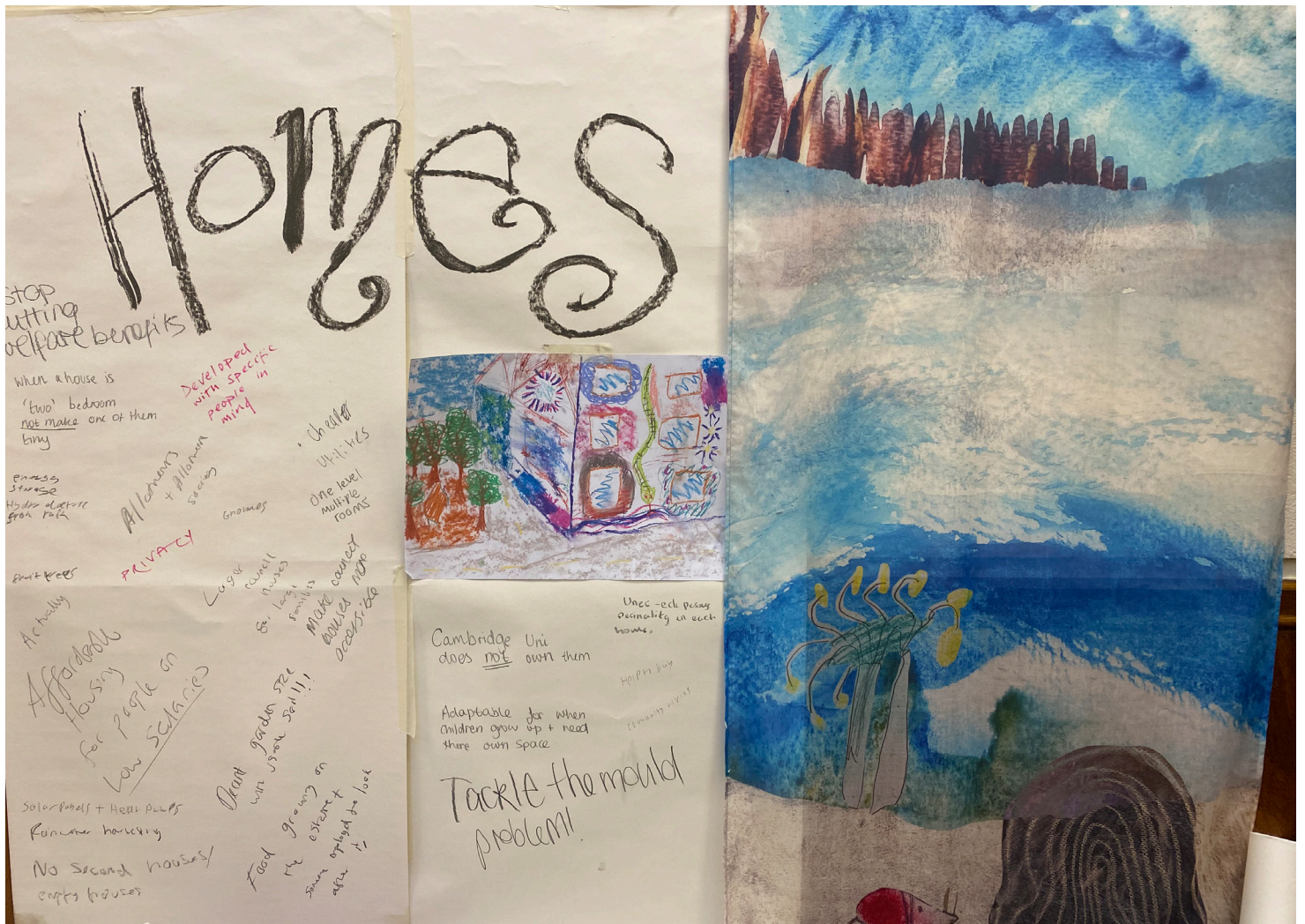
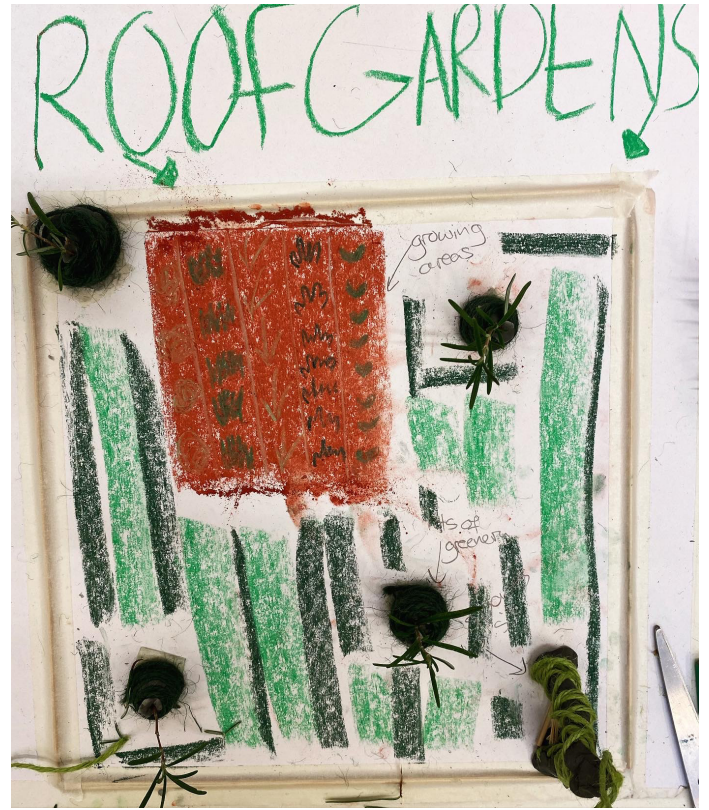


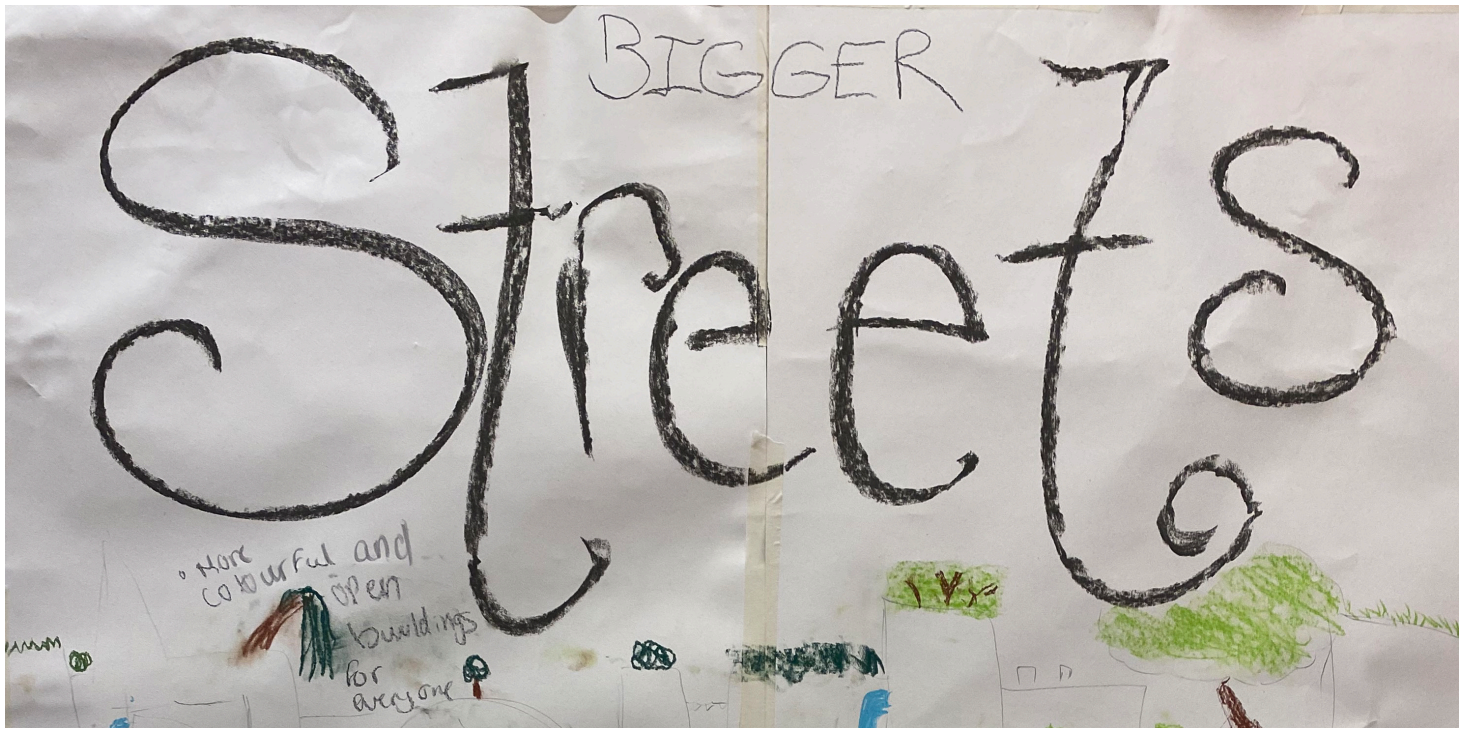
'Being with others made me feel like I was getting involved with something big.'



A Manifesto for Homes

- Don't assume all homes are for two parents with children.
- Communal living options.
- Thicker walls in apartments.
- One level multiple rooms.
- More communal growing eg: green roofs, allotments, fruit trees.
- Tackle mould problems.
- No buy to let or empty homes.
- Homes that can adapt as children get older and need their own space.
- Eco designs eg: solar panels, heat pumps, harvesting rainwater.
- Homes for wildlife too eg: swallows, bee bricks, bat boxes, hedgehog runs.

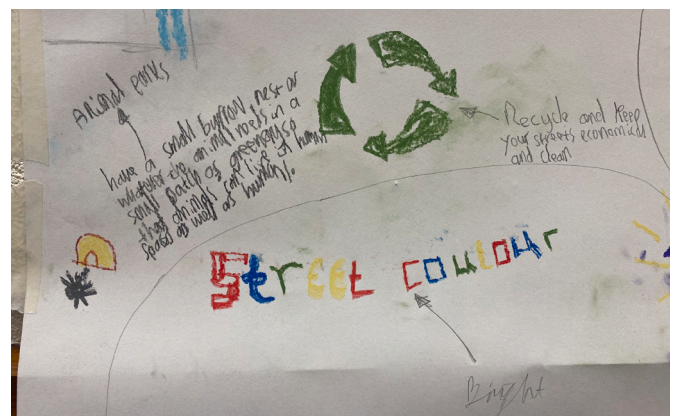




'Diver-city: everyone being able to join together or go somewhere or do something without feeling awkward or afraid - all inclusive and safe filling the world with colour - bright benches, street art & colourful paving.'

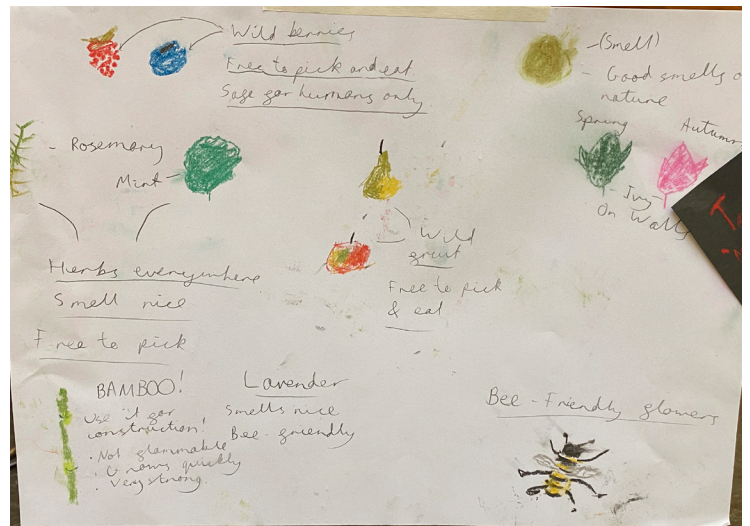
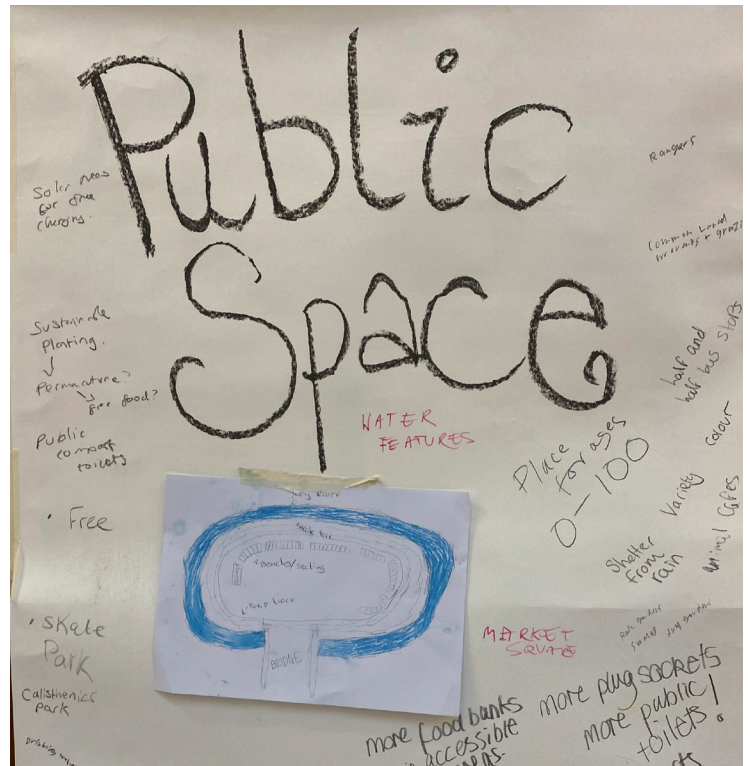
A Manifesto for Streets

- Prioritise Human Connection: make streets wider so people can walk and have conversations, so that there is enough room for wheelchairs and buggies, too, without having to go in single file. Wider pavements are also safer, away from traffic and pollution.
- Remember that streets are our public spaces too.
- Stimulate the senses: more colour, the smell of wild plants, less traffic noise, different textures, wild food to eat.
- Accessible for all.
- Good lighting - solar panels - for safety whilst also considering nature.
- Let nature be! Rights for Nature eg: animal shelters, animal crossings, green roofs and solar panels on bus shelters,
- Pocket Parks
- More wild food to pick and eat: Free, healthier, better for the environment, smells good, bee friendly.
- More rubbish bins and recycling.
- More reusing and community initiatives: eg street libraries.



A Manifesto for Public Space

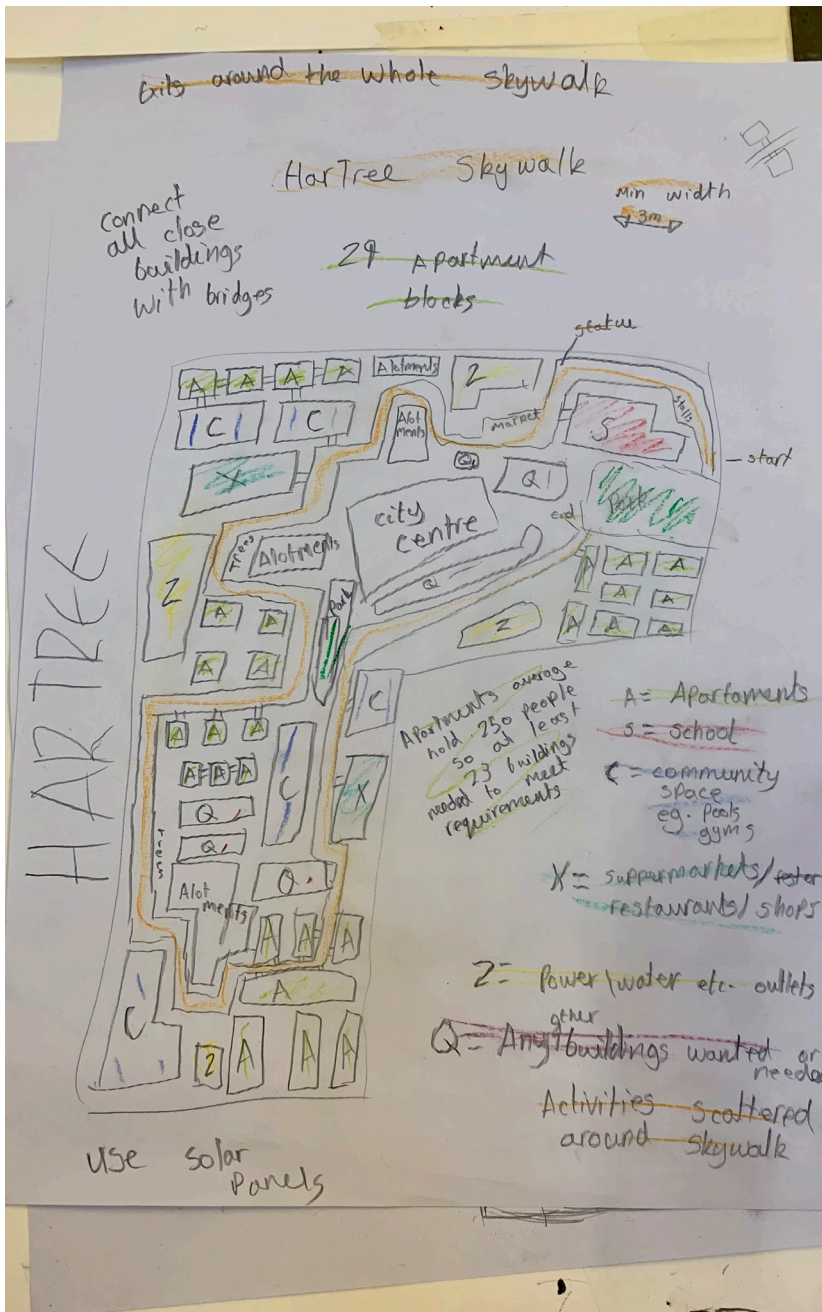
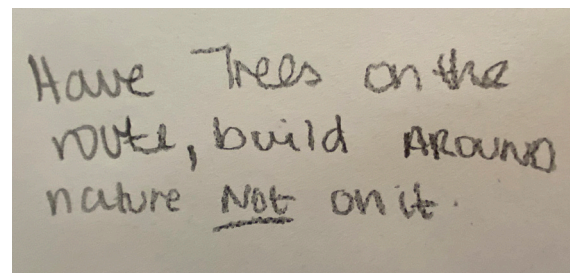
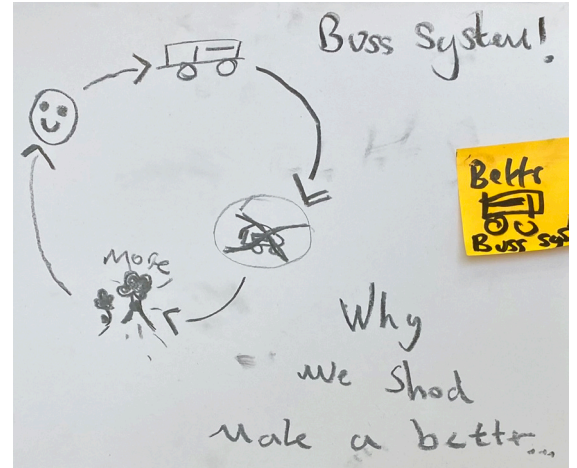
- Public space should be accessible to all BUT some public spaces should also be more private for people to be alone, to be quiet, to just be young people together, to feel safe.
- If public spaces felt more personal they would be less vandalised.
- Wi-fi, plug sockets and chargers in public spaces (eg on the arms of benches and sides of bus stops).
- Common land for grazing and community orchards and art.
- Integrated spaces: shops, play, cafes, quiet spaces.
- Local shops and more local trades and markets.
- Spaces for affordable studios and art. Community art resources. Spaces to make and exhibit.
- More public toilets. Free sanitary products.
- Water features. CLEAN water for swimming.
- Allotments for creativity and community connection as well as food and health.
- Skateboard ramps and bike tracks designed WITH young people
- Night gardens
- Stimulate the senses with colour, texture, smelling and edible plants.



'You can see nice vibrant colours in the daytime but at night time you've got textures and smells for if you can't go to sleep and rosemary to remind you of home.'

A Manifesto for Mobility

- A better bus system is better for the environment, creates more space on pavements, easier than driving.
- The Hartree skywalk, which connects all close buildings with bridges and is 3m wide (inspired by New York skywalks).
- More accessibility
- Staggered lights for cyclists
- More guided bus ways
- Prioritise conversation, happiness, nature
- Build around nature not on it!
More trees means more happiness.



'I would like to know more about how our input is going to influence the city planners and how things are done.'



'Living in a village, it is quite hard to go places because of the lack of transport.'

A Manifesto for Nature

- Rights for Nature: Nature First
- Build around nature not on it.
- Incorporate animal shelters, animal crossings, green roofs, sustainable materials and nature friendly lighting, in to all elements of design.
- Pocket Parks in all streets
- More wild food to pick and eat: Free, healthier, better for the environment, smells good, bee friendly.
- Nature reserves.
- Small local street farms, community growing.
- Grow bamboo and other crops for sustainable building materials.



'For me nature is some kind of magic beautiful colourful and special - try always look for eco friendly solutions to a problem.'



'We need nature for Peace.'

- Nature for colour, texture, food and smell...
- Berries, herbs and fruits should be growing at least one per 20m²
- One beehive per 100m²

'More trees means more happiness.'

We need Nature
for peace!




MANIFESTO

BERRIES, HERBS & FRUITS

Berries, herbs and fruits should be growing at least once per 20m². These are completely free to pick.

Why? • It's good for the environment! Producing our own good means that crops take up less space (as there is no need for rooms), they do not need to be transported anywhere and the nature aids biodiversity. • It creates a great good source! No need to buy them in shops. Free good for animals and humans. • It smells nice!

Bees can help us in the task of maintaining these plants. 1 beehive per 100m²?



Feedback

The workshop made me think about:

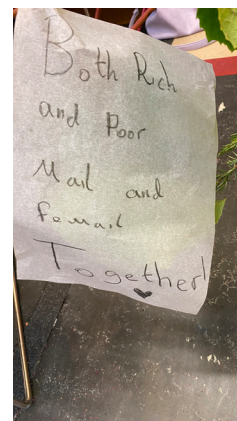
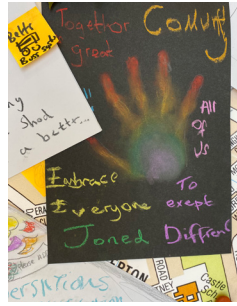
- The new neighbourhood and how it will look.
- How can I improve the future for people to have better lives.
- Space: so things like parking and houses. More in depth. And the importance of having a variety of things in places. It has made me think of more ideas.
- All the different ways that we could improve the city particularly about whether or not those things would be possible. Beforehand I wasn't really thinking about whether or not those things could actually be done or how to counter the negative things so it made me think about that.
- I think it was a really cool experience and it made me think more about lots of different aspect of my life... about how people live and how we can make society fairer.

Being with others made me feel:

- Like it was more a summer camp than a brainstorming session.
- Better and happy.
- Like I was getting involved with something big. And feel like we are working as a community, to come up with ideas for something.
- It was nice to be part of a group and having other peoples' ideas and discussing which made me think about things more deeply.
- Helped me think about things I hadn't thought about before. They raised points that I might not have thought about otherwise

The workshop made me want to:

- Find out about new neighbourhoods being made in Cambridge.
- Think more, be more creative, group up more and be more confident.
- Come up with more ideas for what could make the development better.
- Carry on being artistic and express my thoughts more.
- Continue discussing ideas about the city.



I wanted to know more about:

- What ideas would be sent to the developers.
- How to improve the environment in a safe way that everyone can be happy.
- The company's idea: what they had originally planned and why, since it gives you an idea of how the developers/the people coming up with these ideas are thinking, what they might consider to be beneficial to people. Or maybe who they have in mind, kids only, teenagers? Adults? Are they thinking about only future families or are they considering how the world has changed and not everyone wants a family with a kid, some live with parents and some live with friends. I'd like to know more about what they are considering with their planning. I'd also like to know if they will use any of the ideas or how the end product will look.
- What other people thought – particularly people who were more quiet, I'd like to know what they thought.

Next time it would be good to:

- Get adults involved since they've had more experience and this way you can get a feel of what everyone wants in common, sure they'll have different needs but you'll be able to pin point the main things everyone wants. Adults might have a different idea to what the development team might have, so its just good to hear their thoughts too. You could even do questionnaires, one for kids, young people, adults and the elderly to make it easier, it could be interesting to see what they have in common or how they think.
- It would be interesting to do it again with different people.



Feedback from parents:

- My feedback, as a parent, is that I am on the lookout for any opportunity to get my children to be creative and also to see creativity as a powerful tool to solve real-life problems. I don't think this message is very present in their surroundings (popular culture and school).
- My children enjoyed feeling useful and having a part in shaping the future developments in the area.

Feedback from Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination:

● I was particularly struck to hear the young carers explain the importance of having spaces to walk to that are very nearby, free and peaceful. There were conversations about their need for spaces that could offer them privacy and safety. Listening to them talk about how little time and money they have to travel or pay to do things really made the idea of very local parklets/quiet places to meet and sit with friends feel crucial. **Ruth**

● I've been reflecting on the groups' thoughtfulness about prioritising The Rights of Nature and human connectedness - creating a cycle of happiness and creative thinking. The desire for more allotments, for example, wasn't just for local and healthy food, but also to nurture creativity and community cohesion and stimulate ALL of our senses. Having a variety of backgrounds and ages within the groups helped thoughtful conversations to evolve through challenging and developing ideas. I came away thinking further about the importance of representation and deliberative democracy as we consider the future of our city - not just in including children and young people, but also including nature: a voice for our river, a voice for our trees... **Hilary**

● In both age groups I noticed how everyone was concerned about how to live a healthy and creative life in the city....that you can't have one without the other. They thoughtfully described a future that was less about consumption and more about being makers and creators of their world, and for that to happen cities need to offer easily accessible outdoor spaces in nature, ways of eating much more healthily when out and about (no more junk food!) and a welcoming community run 'studio' space for creative expression. **Sally**

