



Greater Manchester
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OUR BIG ACTIVE CONVERSATION

5 October 2021



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hosted by TfGM and GM Moving Partners, this was the third quarterly stakeholder conversation. The gatherings bring people and partners across Greater Manchester together to share and explore progress, stories, challenges and expertise as we work together to make Greater Manchester a better place for everyone to walk, cycle, wheel and to live an active life.

OVERVIEW

The focus for this conversation was around the role of active travel in an integrated transport network and how we can work together to deliver a system which is accessible and inclusive for all Greater Manchester citizens and communities.

KEY THEMES

1

Involve people, businesses and organisations from start to finish. By embedding a co-design approach at each project development stage, we can ensure people are listened to and that community needs are met.

2

Maintain consistent dialogue with stakeholders – updating them on progress and next steps.

3

Do more to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, especially voices from under-represented groups. Suggestions involved hosting face-to-face events alongside virtual conversations, giving more people the opportunity to get involved.

4

Future Big Active Conversations allow time for networking and sharing best practice among participants.

A SUMMARY OF GM'S BIG ACTIVE CONVERSATION NO.3

Designing our neighbourhoods
Our streets and our spaces
Designing with, and for all
To create people-friendly places

Safer, more accessible
Economic and social inclusion
Liveable and loveable
A joyful fusion

Space to be active
To connect and to play
A place to live well
For everyone, every day

To build back better
More equal, more fair
Leaders need to be brave
Set out a vision and then dare

We must adapt and respond
One size won't fit all
A blanket approach
Will be our downfall

Visualising, mobilising
Harnessing energy for change
Involving and engaging
At every single stage

In the community
On the doorstep
Know the neighbourhood
Do your prep

It's about people
All of us
Whoever, wherever
We need to build trust

It's about working together
Leading and learning
Listening to what matters
For what are people yearning

Join the dots, be holistic
Change hearts and minds
Building relationships is key
And this all takes time

Any opposition is an opportunity
A chance for a shift
So get comfy with conflict
Be curious, what sits behind the rift?!

It takes data, deeds and
determination
Make it engaging and fun
Get creative, test ideas out
On your kids and your mum

Some things happen slowly, quietly
and by stealth
Change takes place inside and out
So pay attention to the small things
Not just the shout!

Nothing about us, without us
So the mantra goes
Let's keep learning together
So good practice grows

So, who is going to make this
happen?
Who are the 'we'?
We need many people
Far more than three!

Our branches, roots and shoots
Must keep growing
Just like a tree

Eve Holt
Strategic Director
GM Moving



FINDINGS FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Session 1 – Learnings from elsewhere

Hosted by GM Moving the Learnings from elsewhere workshop spotlighted community and stakeholder engagement best practice from Glasgow and elsewhere in the UK. The workshop looked at some principles of approach, as well as tools for practice that could be applied in Greater Manchester.

Summary of key points

To deliver effective community and wider stakeholder engagement activities we must consider the following approaches:





- Connect with forums and networks that can reach diverse communities to collate a range of views and use this insight to inform service delivery. Ensure Equality Impact Assessment principles are considered in this process.
- Visit the location in question as part of the engagement process to help gain insight about the community and taking practical learning back to the design process.
- Whatever the scale of project, ensure engagement approaches include:
 - something physical to touch and contribute to (e.g. survey, diagram, maps with sticky dots etc)
 - something online (e.g. website or survey)
 - something on location in the area to go to
- Work with community champions to share key messages and help involve others.

Session 2 – Nothing about us, without us

Hosted by TfGM, this workshop explored how to ensure community voices are heard within transport decision making; opening up a regular dialogue about what different people face in terms of their access, experience and outcomes in relation to transport, including walking and cycling, and creating solutions which address them.

Summary of key points

Involving and listening to communities requires:

-  Inclusive and accessible engagement and consultation opportunities that are easy to access and accommodating to diverse communities.
-  Accessible digital information sharing, for example images should be tagged and descriptive so that blind or partially sighted people can access the information.
-  Collaboration with smaller organisations who are embedded in the community and can provide local intelligence and support the dissemination of key messages. For example, working with local radio stations, talking newspapers, societies and community newsletters.
-  Maintaining engagement and involving communities from start to end; regular updates on progress and next steps need to be disseminated to those involved in consultation and engagement workshops.

Session 3 – Creative community engagement

Hosted by Groundwork, this workshop used a current local example, Our Streets Chorlton, to facilitate discussion about what works in engaging diverse communities in active travel projects and changing behaviours.

Summary of key points:

Motivation

- > Start where people are at and connect with them there e.g. walking round their neighbourhood with them, discussing their reasons for wanting to walk more.
- > A sense of community ownership is best achieved when using a 'bottom up' approach. We need to acknowledge that it takes more time and effort.
- > Schools are effective places to start and can help to motivate entire families.
- > Make it easy for people to change what they are currently doing.

Communication

- > Framing is key; ensure the work is relevant to local people and their motivations.
- > Communication is needed throughout the process, even at 'quiet' times.
- > Use case studies, people telling their stories of why it matters to them.

Diversity

- > Different opportunities for involvement engage people from different perspectives and areas of interest eg data, schools.
- > Some places have impressive levels of community activism, volunteering and engagement but others are not yet at that level. These areas may need more time, investment and different approaches.
- > Representation from all sections of the community is important and this should be seen in leadership roles.
- > Whilst it is useful to build on what is already working and link with those who are already engaged, we need to make concerted efforts to reach others too.

Session 4 – Active neighbourhoods

Hosted by Sustrans, this workshop explored the challenges and opportunities involved in the design and implementation of active neighbourhoods. This included discussion on the barriers that these projects seek to tackle, as well as the barriers that they face in implementation.

Summary of key points:

- > Active Neighbourhoods seem a new thing but the concept of using modal filters to limit traffic is nothing new, a picture of a roman modal filter was shown to underline this point.
- > The perfect name for this treatment of an area probably still eludes us and there was discussion about how the different terms used can affect how these projects are received.
- > The contributions in the workshop supported the importance of inclusivity, place and people. Engagement with communities is crucial. This includes genuine dialogue with opponents to understand fully their reasons.
- > Trialling of measures is key and any trial needs to be clear on why the measures are being trialled, how long it will be, what will be measured and what the process for deciding on next steps is.
- > There is a lot to be optimistic about with central government policy starting to support ambition for walking and cycling, and with GM's development of its [Streets for All strategy](#).
- > 10GM outlined some of their experience through development of the Active Neighbourhood project in Chadderton and Heaton Park. This is part of a GM-wide TfGM project delivered by Arup, Sustrans and 10GM to develop a series of Active Neighbourhood schemes involving community engagement.

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK ON THE DAY

What's one word you'd use to describe today's conversation?

Positive

Exciting

Engaging

Thought-provoking

Honest

What's one thing you'll do differently as a result of today's conversation?

Advocate for walking as part of the engagement process

Share best practice experiences from other areas e.g. Glasgow

Try to think more laterally when thinking of how to engage with people - what will work best in what situation - not every size fits all

Consider the needs of blind and sight impaired people in consultation

I will think about how to include residents in gathering data and what data should be gathered

Started where people are

Continued communications even if it's just to let people know if the project is still live

Feel more confident about reaching out to other colleagues and partners to share ideas and good practice about Active Neighbourhoods

I will link in with the contacts we have made today to further conversations

Will think about more ways of ensuring communities can be involved in discussions at an earlier stage in planning

Find a local community champion to help promote consultations