

Camden Neighbourhood Assembly Ideas roadmap

November 2019

Purpose of this document

These roadmaps give a summary of all three ideas that were generated by the Neighbourhood Assembly, and how they can be developed further. It includes:

- A simple description of the ideas and how they work,
- what the ideas aim to achieve,
- and the necessary steps needed to develop them further.



Conversation Spaces

Conversation Spaces idea description



What is the idea?

Conversation spaces are regularly scheduled social events hosted in an easily accessible space in Camden. They provide residents with an opportunity to connect with each other. They are held in the same place, usually in a Camden Council-owned building or community space like a Library.

The programme is funded by the council but it is run by a host who is representative of and embedded within the community.



Why this idea?

Camden residents are concerned about social isolation and a lack of connection between residents in their neighbourhood. By creating a comfortable, accessible, regularly scheduled space explicitly intended for human connection and conversation, the Assembly hopes to address these issues in Camden.



Who is this idea for?

Conversation spaces are for everyone, but we're aware that certain themes will draw in specific groups of people.

Conversation Spaces idea description

How it works

1



Each conversation space will have a topic. A specific topic will ensure the conversation spaces are attractive and that there is something to motivate conversation. Topics will vary and can be specific or broad. Topics will be crucial when establishing conversation spaces and growing interest in them. Activities and tools that encourage engagement should be available at each gathering for attendees to use if they don't want to participate in discussion.

2



The conversation space will generally have a host who is responsible for welcoming attendees, explaining the event, and setting the conversation off. The host ensure attendees are comfortable and sets everything off but allows conversation to take different directions. The host is a well-equipped member of the community who is well-versed in the topic at hand. The host will also capture feedback from attendees and encourage people to provide it in an anonymous comment box.

3



Conversation spaces should be hosted in spaces that are relatively quiet, and easy to access. The same space should be used so attending the conversation space becomes familiar to attendees and they get comfortable in the space. Initially, conversation spaces should be in areas of Camden that are underserved, in terms of services and resources.

Potential partners:

TALK FOR HEALTH

Talk for Health

An organisation that teaches the skills and attitudes that allow for more deeply connective talk between individuals. Talk for Health runs conversations groups and are trying to grow and get into the community.



Camden Council

- The Council should ensure appropriate spaces and supplies are available to the organisers of the Conversation Spaces, but play a support role to Conversation Space organisers.
- This initiative should be seen as community-led and potentially supported by Community Connectors. That being said, council-owned spaces
- The Council should cover the costs of the Conversation Spaces.

Most important parts of the idea

- Regularly scheduled
- In the same space
- Hosted & themed as a starting point
- Accessible
- No cost to participants
- Comfortable seating & refreshments

Things we don't know yet

What's the best way to advertise these spaces?

- Some ideas included the New Camden Journal, South Kilburn Radio, social media, Next Door, word of mouth, library notice board and other notice boards, mailing lists (especially those affiliated with a community centre), GP surgeries, and Tenant Resident Associations

What does success look like for these events?

- Is it the number of people in attendance, how people feel after participating, or something else? How do we then adjust the model to meet those needs?

Testing

Short-term activities for testing

- Visit Camden Think & Do pop-up space to understand their operating hours, what the uptake is like, what a 6 week pilot would look like, and to understand the cost. Identify what works and what could be emulated in the Conversation Spaces
- Consider the timing of the space's operating hours, try one or two times and measure attendance (likely weekday afternoons and Saturday)
- Meet with Talk for Health to discuss prospective partnership. Understand what the workshop would look like and what success would look like for this partnership.

Long-term activities for testing

- Test using Hidden Spaces as venues for Conversation Spaces when they are established
- Road test a version of the Conversation Space that does not have a topic



Community Wellbeing Notice boards

Community Wellbeing Notice boards idea description



What is the idea?

Community Wellbeing Notice boards are physical and digital boards that display up-to-date information about the activities and services available in a particular area that support the wellbeing of the community. The boards are administered and updated by a team called Community Champions.

Community Champions are a team appointed by the council, whose role is to make all residents aware of support services and recreational activities in the local area, and to make everyone feel welcome to participate in them.



Why this idea?

Mental health conditions are common across all age and social groups in Camden and are the leading cause of ill health and disability among working age adults. There is a huge spread of services available in Camden, created to support people with their mental health and wellbeing. Despite this, neighbourhood assembly members found that residents were largely unaware of services available in their area.

People need help to access these services or might need the confidence to make the first step. Many people who are homebound for physical or mental health reasons can also find it difficult to leave their home to socialise with others.



Who is this idea for?

This idea is intended for all residents, however it is designed to engage those who are isolated or often excluded from community activities.

Community Wellbeing Notice boards idea description

How it works

1



Community Champions should have a deep local knowledge and make themselves and their role known within the community by forming relationships with community organisations, services and residents. They should partner with existing programmes, e.g. NHS GP Link workers and Community Connectors, who are doing similar roles.

2



Community organisations as well as residents can submit information flyers for activities that they want to be included on their local notice boards. They can do this to a physical desk in a community space or email an inbox. Activities submitted should be related to community wellbeing and social connection, (e.g. workshops, fun days, sport activities) and should be ran out of an established community space or Camden building.

3



Every fortnight, Community Champions coordinate a team of volunteers to update the physical and digital boards with new information and activities.

4



The physical boards are located primarily outside libraries, parks, outdoor spaces with a lot of foot fall. They can be cases with printed flyers in them, or be electronic kiosks where people can interact. Boards are also available online, where people can search a calendar of events. Online boards include a longer list of information and activities.

Potential partners:



Camden Council

Project to run by Camden Digital team to put digital notice boards up outside the front of each Camden Library. Content managed centrally by sending to a single email address. Opportunity to learn from first trial in Kentish Town and contribute to roll in west Camden.

Community Wellbeing Notice boards roadmap

Most important parts of the idea

- Residents should feel they are able to contribute to the content of the boards
- Activities on the boards should be related to community wellbeing
- Notice boards need to be tailored/related to the area which they are in.
- Notice boards have to include relevant and up to date information.
- Community Champions should be a paid role, to ensure their relationships are sustained.

Things we don't know yet

- How do we manage the maintenance of the boards, i.e. if they are vandalised?
- What's the most realistic frequency for updating the boards?
- How do we manage submission of content for the boards? (e.g. how do we manage rejecting submissions? What medium is best for submission?)
- How do we manage updating physical as well as digital boards?
- How do we plan for precarious volunteers?
- How do we engage with isolated, hard-to-reach people, and physically get them to the activities or events?
- What are the cost implications of physical boards vs. electronic boards vs. a mixture?
- How do we ensure the Community champion role is long-term, and the relationships they create are not lost if they move on?
- What's the best size of area to have a noticeboard for?

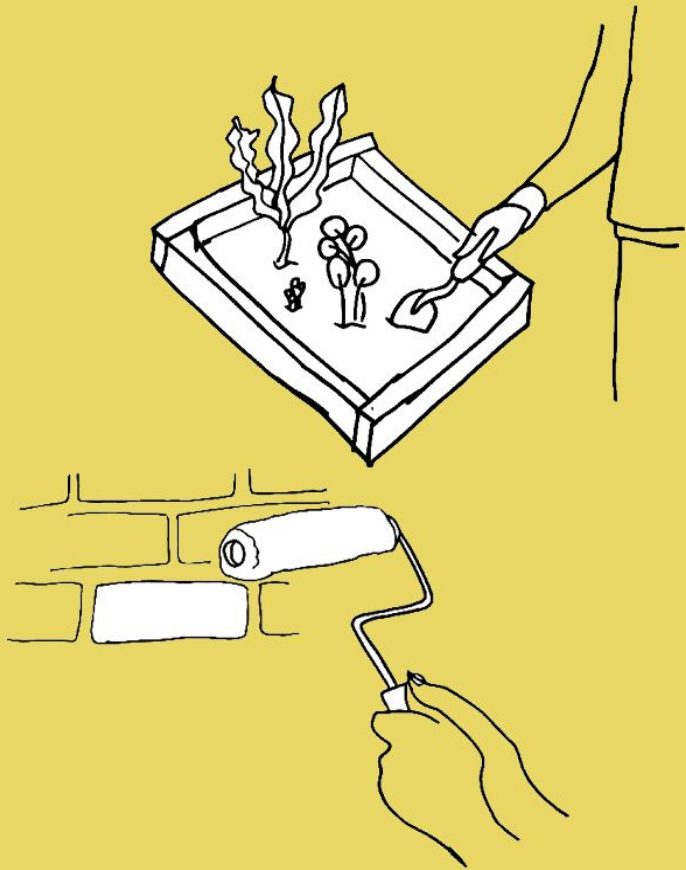
Testing

Short-term activities for testing

- Research and learn from other community notice board projects, to understand: what challenges do they have? How often do they update them? How do they maintain them?
- Work with the Camden Digital team on their trial in Kentish Town to understand the logistics of organising a notice board.
- Test how a simple online noticeboard could work. E.g. ask for submissions through an email and post activities on a newsletter or on a social media page.

Long-term activities for testing

- Work with the Camden Digital team to use one of their electronic boards to test out a wellbeing specific board in west Camden.
- Test with multiple sizes of communities to see what works best, e.g. set up a noticeboard on an estate vs. in a neighbourhood
- Work closely with organisations and programmes who work with housebound, isolated people, to understand: what are the barriers to them engaging in activities? How can they be better supported to engage with the community?



Hidden Spaces

Hidden Spaces idea description



What is the idea?

A process for residents to identify run down or underused spaces in their neighbourhood and work with other residents to turn them into a space that can positively affect local health and wellbeing.

Anyone can identify a hidden space and others can indicate they want to be a part of the project. Once a space is selected, local residents are encouraged and supported to create a vision for the space. Projects could be collectively funded by businesses, residents or Community Infrastructure Levy and renovated by a diverse group of local people - bringing in specialist skills where needed.



Why this idea?

Camden residents strongly feel that community activities should allow people from different social groups to connect outside people's immediate social circles.

Concerns about safety were one of the most pressing local issues. This fear of crime and antisocial behaviour has a negative impact on people's health and wellbeing and can lead to increased isolation. It is important that people feel safe to be outside and engage with their communities.

Other residents who gave feedback on the idea liked it because they felt it created ownership of spaces, brought people together under a common interest and broke down barriers between groups.



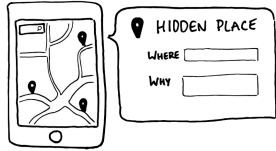
Who is this idea for?

Everyone! The idea should bring-in a diverse group of residents, especially those who are isolated from community activities. The renovated spaces should benefit those experiencing health inequalities.

Hidden Spaces idea description

How it works

1



Anyone can suggest 'hidden spaces' in their neighbourhood that are run down or underused. These could be anything - small or large - including an area of an estate, community centres or run down gardens. Suggestions could be made through a website.

2



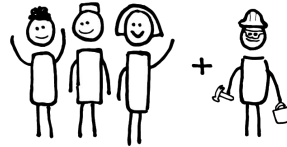
Residents can identify if they are interested in being involved in renovating a space and - if the space is selected - would be responsible for taking the idea forward.

3



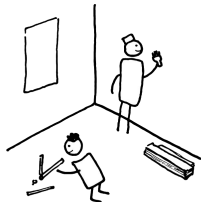
A vision for the place is created through engaging local people and understanding local health and wellbeing needs. This could be done through a number of options or templates for how to improve the health and wellbeing.

4



Local communications and community organisations are involved to bring together a diverse group of people.

5



The space is maintained by the council to ensure it remains in good condition and feels open to all.

Potential partners:

Community infrastructure Levy funds should be used to finance improvements

Commonplace

Common Place platform may be able to be used (again) to identify places that need renovating

goodgym

Good Gym or **Semble** would be good partners to test ways to bring diverse groups of residents together for a certain rebuilding mission/ project

Camden

Camden Council's participation team would be good partners to support the development of the process.

Camden Council maintenance team should be responsible for ensuring spaces stays nice after the exciting part of creating it and make sure the space feels open to all.

Most important parts of the idea

- Using unused or run-down spaces to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing
- Bringing together a group of residents to transform and use a space. Space should be available to, and used by a diverse cross-section of people.
- The vision for the place should be created by the community - not driven by council or business interests.
- This should be a long-term project, with commitment from the council.

Things we don't know yet

- How spaces should be selected to be taken forward, should it be based on a certain criteria, or if local residents say they want to do it?
- What are the most effective ways for a space to improve local health and wellbeing? E.g. outdoor gym, vegetable garden, quiet space.
- What's the best way to bring together a diverse group of residents to renovate a space?
- How can we best prevent anti-social behaviour?
- Who's legally responsible for the spaces?

Testing

Short-term activities for testing

- Run experiments with Good Gym, Semble or other partner in how to bring together a diverse group of people to renovate a space.
- Experiment with how to quickly engage local community to develop a 'vision' for a space. How can you create a bank of different ideas which can improve health and wellbeing?
- Test digital ways to identify spaces that need to be renovated and for residents to signal they are interested. Test out the best way to select a space.
- Support and learn from residents who are already doing parts of this approach.

Long-term activities for testing

- Bring together parts of process together and test and learn with one space
- Create support tools to enable process to happen.

For more information, contact **Henry Langford**
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