

*People. Planet.*

**Positive**

Engagement Charter

When we first launched our community engagement charter (Positive Space) back in 2019, it highlighted that communities deserved more from developers, and that trust had to be earned through action, not words.

Since then, we’ve come a long way.

This updated charter builds on the basics and pushes us to go further with many of the original commitments now embedded in how we work day-to-day.

Across the sector, there’s been progress too; public confidence in developers and planning authorities has increased from 2% to 16% today<sup>1</sup>. It’s moving in the right direction, but there’s still a long way to go.

Trust remains important. It is still fragile, and it needs care and consistency to grow. But our focus today is broader, and engagement has moved on from being about getting planning permission. Meaningful engagement is fundamental to delivering on ‘People Positive’, our social impact and community strategy. By building a deep

understanding of local need, we can direct our time, investment and partnerships toward actions that deliver real, lasting impact.

There’s no single recipe for getting this right, but it’s not rocket science either: treat people with respect, listen actively, and recognise communities as experts on where they live and work. When we get that right, we can invest more purposefully and create social outcomes that respond to genuine need.

Engagement runs through everything we do: from identifying needs and originating projects to address them, to the day-to-day running and long-term stewardship of a place. We work alongside communities, including our customers

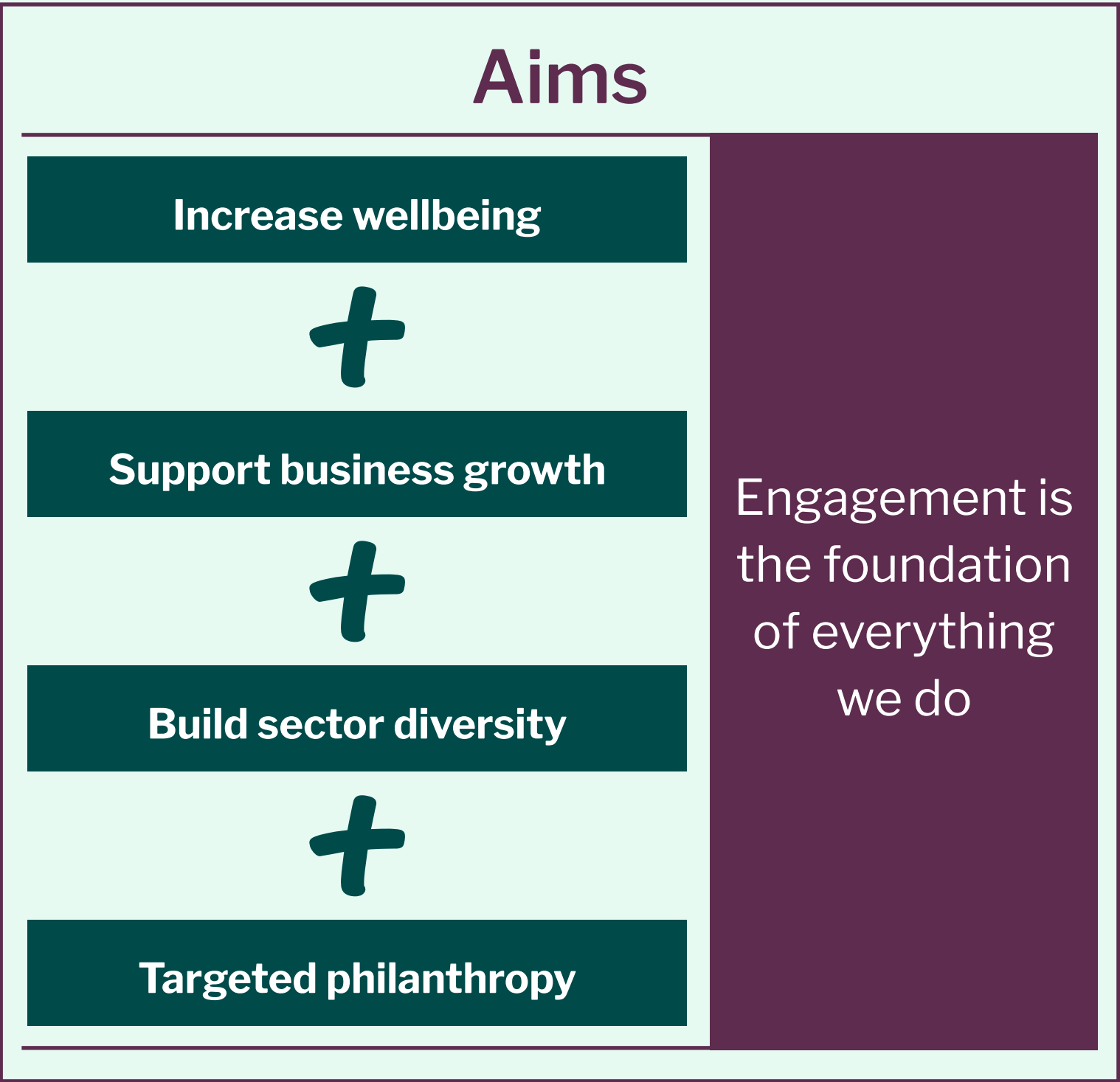
and partners, in planning, programming and managing neighbourhoods, sharing priorities and shaping decisions together.

We’re sharing this charter not just to hold ourselves to account but to support others across the sector. It comes with a practical engagement toolkit with a step-by-step guide for anyone who wants to do this well, even without specialist resource.

We hope this helps others learn from our experience so that they too can champion the importance of engagement. Because better engagement means better places, and better places make life better for everyone – especially those who need it most.

# People. Planet. Positive

## At a glance



Click here to find our accompanying People Positive Engagement Toolkit.

<sup>1</sup> Social Value Portal, 2025 Real Estate Wellbeing Survey

# 01. Listen first

Actively listening means really hearing what matters to people, so that decisions we make are informed by local life and real experiences, not guesswork, and can have a greater impact as a result.

In practice, listening first means that we will:

- Take time to listen to a wide range of people before acting - especially those most in need - so that decisions are shaped by diverse perspectives rather than assumptions.
- Create space for communities to share their experience of place before projects or interventions are defined.
- Regularly carry out research to give us a comprehensive understanding of local priorities so resources can be directed to need and where they will have the most impact.
- Work closely with local experts who have deep knowledge of their neighbourhoods, including residents, business owners and workers, community leaders, and political representatives.
- Support local organisations to carry out their own listening activities, providing resources or facilitation where helpful and incorporating their findings into our own decision-making.
- Listen with awareness of the bigger picture, so that local perspectives are understood in the context of wider national issues





# Listening to understand community wellbeing

Wellbeing is a key measure of societal value and central to People Positive, our social impact and community strategy.

What defines positive impact varies between neighbourhoods and can change over time, which is why meaningful engagement is so important. It helps us understand evolving local priorities and respond in relevant and effective ways. By combining robust data with on-the-ground listening (especially to underrepresented voices) we ensure that community insight guides our actions and delivers lasting, place-based impact.

Our 'People Positive Wellbeing Index' assesses local need using 20 ONS measures and other benchmarkable data across four themes: community, enterprise & employment, environment and empowerment. Building on baseline research from 2021 with Simetrica-Jacobs, we partnered with Social Life in 2024 to reassess wellbeing in Mayfair and Belgravia. More than 1,200 people took part, sharing how their neighbourhood affects their daily lives through surveys and community workshops to help us get under the skin of local issues.

The research highlighted local priorities focused on perceptions of safety, sense of community and accessible green space; we address these through wellbeing action plans using Theory of Change principles – linking local priorities with tangible outcomes and maximising impact for those who need it most. We also provide funding for community-led projects through our partnership with the London Community Foundation. This has granted £960,000 over the past decade to projects benefitting Westminster communities ranging from greening interventions, intergenerational programmes and employability workshops. Funding decisions are made in partnership with local stakeholders, ensuring support goes to the most relevant and impactful causes.

Local priorities can change over time and so the research will continue to be repeated every three years. We hope to see where improvements have been made as well as where we need to focus efforts to continue to target our actions where need is greatest.

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02.

# Active participation

By working with communities to make things happen together, we can create better outcomes and more resilient neighbourhoods.

In practice, active participation means that we will:

- Embed participation into the ongoing management of neighbourhoods not just when change is proposed so communities can help strengthen places over the long-term.
- Leverage local expertise by collaborating with communities and other organisations to shape and deliver targeted interventions that meet neighbourhood priorities, such as safety initiatives, greening projects, or community events.
- Recognise when local people or groups are better placed to lead interventions and supporting them to do so.
- Fund grassroots and community-led projects through our People Positive Community Fund to improve local wellbeing whilst building capacity for groups to lead change in the future.
- Facilitate opportunities for local businesses and other partners to deliver positive impact too, including through local recruitment, volunteering and community investment.
- Participate in and help sustain local forums, creating space for shared decision-making and dialogue across sectors and between public and private organisations to deliver last impact together.





# Actively involving young people

Young people are often among those least likely to be heard in conversations about where they live, despite being the generation who will live longest with the outcomes of today's decisions.

Our own research found that 89% of 16–18-year-olds have never been asked for their views about their neighbourhood.

To help change that, we developed **Voice. Opportunity. Power.** an open-source toolkit co-created with the TCPA, Sport England and ZCD Architects with practical steps for involving young people meaningfully in placemaking and managing.

We routinely apply these principles in our own work such as our People Positive wellbeing research where we recruited and trained four local 16-19-year-olds as youth researchers. With support from Social Life and 2-3 Degrees, they were trained in ethics, communication, and interviewing techniques

before leading fieldwork and peer workshops to understand what wellbeing really means to young people living, working, and studying in Mayfair and Belgravia.

Their insights highlighted priorities around belonging, safety, and access to shared spaces, which helped inform our social impact actions and partnerships. Just as importantly, the process built confidence and local connections for the young people involved, ultimately creating a foundation for them to more actively participate in neighbourhood life.

By engaging as an ongoing part of place management, not just a one-off exercise when change is proposed, we've been able to build stronger relationships, deepen trust, and work more constructively with communities. This active participation moves engagement from transactional to transformational, helping to ensure the neighbourhoods we're part of succeed in the long term.

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03.

# Make it easier

Getting involved should feel simple and accessible. By removing barriers and giving everyone a voice we can maximise our impact and improve outcomes for more local people.

In practice, making it easier means that we will:

- Ensure everyone has a meaningful opportunity to participate, regardless of age, background or ability so decisions are made with all needs in mind.
- Use demographic and participation data to monitor who is engaging and take targeted action to reach those missing from the conversation leading to more representative outcomes.
- Formalise involvement from young people and accessibility advocates to hold us to account on the inclusivity of our engagement practices and wider projects.
- Invest in tools and technologies that can help us grow the conversation and potential impact both deeper and wider, including interactive digital platforms like Commonplace.
- Hold activities in accessible and familiar locations, going to where communities are rather than expecting them to come to us, and recognise their time through reimbursement where appropriate.
- Coordinate engagement and communications such as a dedicated webpage or noticeboard to avoid overwhelming people with repeated requests and to deliver a clear, joined-up experience.
- Contribute to raising standards in engagement and make it easier for others across the sector by collaborating openly and sharing practical resources including [Voice.Opportunity.Power](#) and the [People Positive Engagement toolkit](#).





# Lived experience panel for South Molton

South Molton is a major mixed-use development in Mayfair, including new office, retail, leisure and public realm improvements.

Community involvement has continued since the project was granted planning permission, with local people invited to help progress detailed design elements.

To ensure the public realm in and around South Molton reflects the needs of all users, we partnered with inclusive design consultancy Motionspot to convene a panel of people with a diverse range of lived experiences of disability and neurodivergence — all with a connection to Mayfair. Participants were reimbursed for their time, recognising their expertise and value of their contributions.

The panel reviewed a digital flythrough of the proposed design and provided feedback on elements like signage, lighting, seating, and landscaping. The session was guided by inclusive design themes and structured to

encourage open, honest dialogue. It helped uncover critical design considerations that might otherwise have been missed. Key insights included the importance of predictability in public space, multisensory wayfinding, and seating that enables social connection for wheelchair users. Participants also stressed the value of real time pre-arrival information, as well as clutter-free pathways and clear regulation of any spaces that may be shared with cyclists.

This is one way we're delivering on our Inclusive Spaces and Places commitments, particularly to “understand and engage with current and future users of buildings and spaces who have lived experience across a range of characteristics”. Lived experience panels are a valuable engagement approach because they bring direct insight from people who navigate spaces differently and help to surface overlooked barriers as a result. In this case, the feedback directly shaped the next design phase, helping to ensure South Molton will be as welcoming and inclusive as possible.





04.

# Be accountable

We do what we say and explain the reason for our decision making. Being open with communities about what's working (or what isn't) helps build trust and understand competing priorities so that actions can deliver the greatest benefit for people and places.

In practice, being accountable means that we will:

- Openly report our progress in delivering our People Planet Positive strategy.
- Regularly assess satisfaction with our engagement approach, gathering feedback from direct tenants and wider communities.
- Commit to closing the loop after engaging communities, explaining what was heard and what will change as a result – or when feedback can't be accommodated, explaining why.
- Use data to inform decision-making, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative evidence to demonstrate how and why choices are made.
- Support transparent governance by establishing or participating in local groups that help monitor delivery and guide future decisions.
- Invest in training the people in our business and our service partners that work closely with communities so that we consistently deliver and keep getting better at local engagement.
- Embed accountability through our supply chain, requiring contractors and other partners to engage meaningfully and support community initiatives as part of their delivery.





# Staying accountable through the Grosvenor Square Steering Group

Grosvenor Square is being transformed into an extraordinary urban garden.

As an important public space prioritising nature alongside positive social outcomes, from the outset we were also committed to delivering an extraordinary engagement process.

7,000+ people helped shape the redesign, participating through a range of methods that coupled traditional approaches with the more innovative - including 3D visualisations, immersive planting exhibitions, audio tours, the launch of a youth forum, and a pilot educational programme.

As part of the engagement programme to inform the redesign, we established the Grosvenor Square Steering Group with a commitment that the group

would evolve with the project as it moved into delivery, and ultimately into operation and management. In addition to Grosvenor, the Steering Group is made up of representatives from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (whom Grosvenor manages the garden on behalf of), the 9/11 UK families support group, the local neighbourhood forum, the resident association, the city council and occupiers of properties fronting the square.

It started as a valuable forum to complement wider consultation and involve local people in the developing designs. During initial project phases, the design team were actively involved in the meetings to test and refine emerging ideas. Having various stakeholders come together as one group enriched the collective conversation as members could hear and appreciate different perspectives in the round. As the

project moved into the delivery, the Steering Group continued to meet quarterly, but these sessions were complemented by monthly contractor liaison meetings to ensure interested parties received more detailed updates when needed. This allowed the Steering Group to maintain a strategic-level discussion while keeping the flow of information open and accessible to those that wanted to find out more.

When Grosvenor Square reopens in 2026, the Steering Group will continue to play a crucial role focused on the ongoing operation of the space, its educational programming, and maintenance. By embedding this kind of structured, long-term and evolving governance model, the Steering Group will help ensure that Grosvenor Square continues to involve and welcome local communities for years to come.





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