



Annual Review 2022 Shared Future CIC

**Citizens Inquiries, Climate Change,
Participatory Budgeting, and SFCIC News**

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many inspiring people, project leads and service providers that we have come across in the course of writing this annual review.

In the end there was just too much to fit in but we hope we give a sense of how dynamic and innovative the UK's social enterprise sector can be, and provide some new ideas for other organisations to take forward.

This annual review has been produced by Jez Hall.

Front Cover Image: Blackburn with Darwen Peoples Jury, Credit: The Shuttle.

About Shared Future

We are a community interest company, based in the North West of England, with associates all over the UK.

Our aim is to provide an excellent service that makes a difference to communities and individuals and works towards a fairer, more equal society.

Through our commitment to creating a fairer and more sustainable world, we decided to set up Shared Future in 2009.

We've built a team of experienced consultants and practitioners with a diverse range of skills. We work together on worthwhile and stimulating projects that reflect our personal values.



www.sharedfuturecic.org.uk

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Introduction

In our Annual Review of 2022, we recount some of our work in an extraordinary year.

2022 has been a year like no other. Economic, environmental and political turmoil defined the last 12 months. In our 2021 report we began by saying that political trust was at an all-time low.

We couldn't have conceived that things could get any worse but they did.

We witnessed 3 Prime Ministers in less than 12 months, a war in Ukraine, economic uncertainty following Brexit, escalating national debt, increasing price hikes in the cost of living, followed by the death of the longest serving monarch in our history.

More than ever, we believe everyday citizens of the UK need to have input into how institutions redefine our society, embody our shared values and strengthen our democracy to function better and flourish.

Deliberative and participatory processes remain an excellent way of strengthening the democratic process. They encourage citizen involvement and provide a bridge between 'the people' and those with 'power', ensuring many voices can be heard.

Our 'mini publics' achieve greater individual & collective authority, autonomy and bring local institutions closer to their communities so they can shape local policy and infrastructure together.

Despite the never-ending drip-feed of depressing news in mainstream media, Shared Future, and our peers within this space witness and deliver meaningful and inspiring projects. They give us good reason to remain hopeful and optimistic for our shared futures in the UK and overseas.

With the amazing support of our team of expert [associates](#) we ran major projects across all corners of the UK. Some of them are listed in this report.

Given the scale of the climate emergency, our facilitation work in the last 24 months has primarily focused on climate change. However, this is not our only area of specialism. If you'd like a healthy dose of optimism, read on...

Here's our recap of 2022 – A year of seismic change.

1. Southwark Climate Change Citizen's Jury

Southwark council asked SF to facilitate a citizen's jury to answer the question:

'What needs to change in Southwark to tackle the emergency of climate change fairly and effectively for people and nature?'

After a robust recruitment process where the Sortition Foundation sent over 5,000 letters to random registered addresses throughout Southwark, we ended up with a Jury of 25 people. All were selected to reflect the diversity within the borough in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, housing tenure and attitude to climate change. The Jury met 8 times, six of which were online and two in person during December 21 and January 2022.

Collaborative and Creative facilitation

To help bring everyone together, foster an environment of collaboration and encourage lateral thinking, we used play as a central element of the process. You can [read more about](#) how using play can encourage democratic involvement in our blogs.

For example, we invited participants to use junk and art materials to illustrate some of the problems they faced. After various exercises like this and in sessions listening to expert commentators lots of deliberation followed. Over the eight weeks, our Jury agreed on their 4 core recommendations to go back to the council:

- Remove barriers to local residents walking.
- Affordable, accessible and appealing public transport.
- Improve the energy efficiency of housing.
- Increasing transparency and accountability on council activities.

The Jury met between Nov 2021 and February 2022. You can [read the full report](#) on the Southwark council website.

Project Highlights

Finding Consensus – Extract from the Jury's collective statement

"Having had, through this jury process, the opportunity to learn more about the impacts of climate change on Southwark and beyond, as well as the many potential solutions, some of us feel let down and overwhelmed because the gravity of the situation was not made clear to us in the past.

We feel worried, angry and disappointed and are concerned that we are not acting like this is an emergency.

We must have change and we must have a future.

We are passionate about being part of Southwark and care about the future of our borough".



Members of the Southwark Citizens Jury consider their future recommendations with Mara, one of our facilitators

2. Climate Change Committee / Lancaster University

Between April and June 2022, we facilitated a Citizen's Panel of 25 people in Birmingham to deliberate on how private homeowners could reduce emissions within their own homes

The aim was to help achieve the UK's Net Zero targets between 2030-2050. The panel were tasked with answering the question:

What needs to happen to bring home energy use in line with the need to tackle climate change?

We were commissioned by Lancaster University working in partnership with the Government's climate advisory body, the Climate Change Committee ([CCC](#)). The project aimed to target the policy gap around owner occupied homes.

4 key areas were identified as 'imperative' to shaping a future Government policy to guide UK homeowners:

1. People accept that we need to change our homes and are willing to act
2. People need the government to set out a clear, long-term policy programme
3. People need clear, reliable and detailed communications to inform them
4. People need a range of supportive solutions to help them decarbonise their homes by 2030 and through to 2050, ranging from improved public awareness of the issue, trusted advice and regulations to compel action.

As the CCC advise the Government on what future policy could or should look like, 'deliberative process' like this have the potential to provide vital evidence-based information directly from the people who future policy would most affect.

The Panel met over seven sessions, 5 online evening sessions and 2 full-day Saturday sessions.

Despite their being a huge disparity between the types of homes the Panel live in and their awareness of climate change, they were able to reach consensus. **You can read the [full final report](#) on the CCC website.**

Project Highlights

The results and the process itself gained praise from Lord Deben, the Chair of the CCC.

In a letter to Graham Stuart MP (Minister of State, Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy in August 2022), Lord Deben wrote:

"This work has generated valuable evidence of the types of policies which homeowners wish to see... it also demonstrates the value of deliberative processes' – which involve facilitating a dialogue between citizens and policy experts – in developing solutions to difficult and complex policy problems."



3. Blackburn with Darwen Council’s Climate Jury

We were asked to facilitate this People’s Jury process throughout September – December, for 32 residents from around the borough, reflecting the diverse makeup within that community.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (BwD) first declared a climate emergency in 2019. They set their goal to be carbon neutral by 2030. The People’s Jury forms an integral piece of their “Action Plan”; to get community buy-in to ensure the borough can meet their goals.

The intention of creating genuine engagement and transparency between the council, their residents and local stakeholders was clear from the outset. BwD wanted to ensure local residents had a formal opportunity to have their voices and opinions heard so everyone could contribute towards what the next steps should look like.

Throughout the 12 week process, the panel heard from a range of commentators; academics, campaigners and local stakeholders such as business owners, charities and community groups in 8 online sessions and 4 in person meetings.

The hope is that this process will kick-start a drive towards better local investment, engagement and collective action, where everyone plays an active role in making collective change.



The results so far

The final report has just been issued and the launch event took place on the 24th January 2023. You can read all about this highly engaging work and the deliberations on the [Shuttle](#), the BwD council news site.

We’ve loved hearing how much the residents enjoyed participating and look forward to revisiting this in a couple of years to see what changes this kick-started:

“I joined the group not quite knowing what to expect but I found that people from all different types of backgrounds can work together to bring about change – and that can only be a good thing” –

A member of the Jury



4. Poplar HARCA Green Futures

Poplar Harca, a local social housing provider commissioned us and Urbed, an urban design cooperative.

Over the summer and autumn of 2022, we helped facilitate a 6-month community design project in the Poplar area of London Borough of Tower Hamlets. As anyone familiar with Poplar will know, the community has many significant challenges to overcome in order to transition to a low carbon, greener neighbourhood for residents to live, work and play. Its population is diverse, with the gap between the affluent and those on the poverty line stark. Given this we wanted to help ensure that within the study:

- Existing inequalities weren't made worse, especially in the face of the cost-of-living crisis. Responding to this was a priority for everyone involved in the project.
- Regeneration and local housing were assessed and improved
- Transport and air quality was considered
- Recycling and reducing waste were prioritised
- Local energy generation and energy efficiency were improved.

Aims of the project

- *To help everyone who lives, works or plays in Poplar to take action and benefit from climate-friendly projects.*
- *Guide Poplar HARCA's efforts in supporting the local transition to a low carbon future*

Working with community members, tenants, local businesses and influencers (such as town planners, architects) the project considered what has worked well in similar neighbourhoods and also reviewed the emissions policies to date, to see how they have been performing. From this a set of action plans has emerged.



You can read more about this project on the [Poplar Green Futures](#) website.



Residents meet in Poplar at one of the facilitated workshops and on walkabouts.

6. Supporting Shipley Town Council's Climate Jury

At Shared Future, we're keen to see lots more climate change deliberations, but how? The Shipley TC Climate Jury highlights a possible answer.

Organising climate change deliberations are resource intensive. We need high quality, robust processes that have legitimacy

Is there a way of doing this which draws more on the wealth of resources, experience and passion within a community so that citizen engagement can happen more often? This was the question we explored when supporting the Shipley climate change citizens jury in 2022.

Rather than lead all the facilitation, Director Pete Bryant mentored and supported a team of locally recruited facilitators.

We worked with one of the town councillors to help them identify and train local facilitators, advise on recruitment and co-facilitate two of the jury sessions. We're still reflecting on this approach and will share our thoughts in 2023. To keep up to date [sign-up](#) for our newsletters.

You can also read about what they achieved on the Shipley Town Council's Jury [microsite](#).



One of the facilitators we worked with was **Phillippa Banister**. She wrote an in-depth blog [on our site](#). Some of the standout comments made include:

"I'm convinced the trust created through this genuinely citizen-led process is what leads to the openness to radically shift thinking on local issues relating to climate change such as transport and how we share street space."

"My takeaway from this citizens jury process, is the openness of participants to get behind a vision and passion around the potential of this type of work (specifically how streets and spaces are used) because they are coming to it as the power holders."

You can also read the rest of Phillippa's blog on the [WeAreStreetScape](#) website.



7. PB Youth Accelerator Toolkit

Youth Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a process in which young people have a say over the spending of public funds in a school or community setting.

Between 2019 and 2022 we were partners in the Youth PB Accelerator Project, funded by the EU Erasmus+ programme.

As part of the finished project, we produced a wide range of creative and innovative tools to support youth workers, teachers and educators with our partners to include:

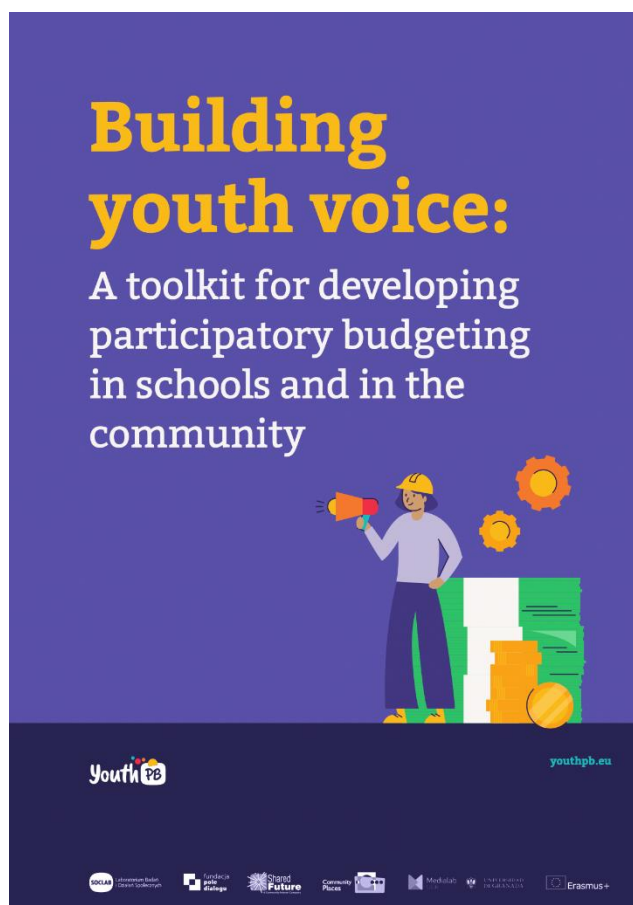
- A [toolkit](#) and [DIY templates](#) – showing how to develop a school or community participatory budget, informed through undertaking practical research in different countries
- A [video](#) promoting youth involvement in participatory budgets
- An [interactive map](#) of good practices in Europe and throughout the world.

The materials were produced in English, Spanish and Polish, reflecting the international nature of the project.

The project also involved a wide range of online events, creating international training to which teachers, academics and educators interested in using the tools were invited. This research partnership was made up of five partners from three countries: It was led by Polish foundation [SocLab](#), with collaborators from [Field of Dialogue](#) also in Poland and the University of Granada's [Medialab](#) in Spain, as well as Shared Future CIC in the UK and [Community Places](#) in Northern Ireland.



Young People involved in School PB in Poland



Our Blogs, Conferences and Reports

Throughout 2022 we have contributed towards new thinking on public participation and democracy.

We continued to network widely through organisations such as the [Democracy R&D](#) network and the global [People Powered Hub](#).

We spent a lot of time attending conferences and hosting learning events and webinars. All designed to help drive forward democratic change and empower local people to take action on the things that matter to them.

We produced new blogs on a range of topics, including [creative facilitation](#) techniques, [youth involvement](#), and the [co-benefits of deliberation](#), amongst many others.

We've also worked extensively with our associates this year, developing new strategies and approaches, and experimenting with online deliberative platforms such as [Pol.is](#). We would like to thank all of them for being part of the Shared Future family.

Our Mission

We are a Community Interest Company based in the North West of England.

With a pool of associates based across the UK, we are able to undertake work anywhere in the country.

Our aim is to provide an excellent service that makes a difference to communities and individuals and works towards a fairer, more equal society.

Our mission is to move those we engage with towards greater individual and collective authority and autonomy, by supporting their ability to act wisely, confidently and in community with others.

Our vision is of a world where everyone feels they can take action to make a better life for themselves and for others.



Some of our directors and associates at our October 2022 strategy day
Whether online or face to face we strive to connect people, whatever their background.

About this report

In this short report we have shared some highlights of our work in 2022. We couldn't include everything but hope it gives you a flavour of our passion for meaningful citizen engagement on themes that will influence our world for generations to come.

