

The role of deliberative public engagement in climate policy development

A report for the Climate Change
Committee

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Executive summary

Public engagement and the climate crisis

Reaching the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions, and living with the impacts of climate change, is already affecting people's lives, and will become more evident over the coming years. Yet, the process of climate policy formation has tended to rely on technical and economic analysis, and input from stakeholders with a direct route to policy, rather than seeking to engage with the population more widely.

In recent years, in acknowledgement of this, there has been a growing interest in ways of engaging people in climate strategy. Recent examples include Climate Assembly UK, the citizens' assembly commissioned by parliament, and numerous citizens' juries initiated by local authorities. However, it is not yet clear how such processes, and other potential forms of citizen engagement, might link to established models of climate policy making.

This report reviews the potential contribution of citizen deliberation to climate policy and governance. We define citizen deliberation as a process of two way engagement between policy stakeholders (government, parliament, advisers and agencies) and publics (meaning different groups in wider society; the term 'publics' rather than the singular 'public' is used to emphasise the heterogeneity of these different groups).

Rationale and methods

This report focuses on the contribution that deliberative methods can make to public engagement on climate policy. This is because one way public engagement is already widely used; it has its benefits, but also limitations. It is also because deliberative methods have potential to gain traction on the overarching challenge of climate action, as well as individual challenges, as we describe below. Although the use of deliberative methods in climate policy making is relatively recent, there is a longer history of such methods in other policy areas. This report draws on experiences in other sectors.

Case studies of deliberation were identified through literature searches and peer recommendations. Twenty nine cases were identified, from a range of countries, sectors and issues. For each, a search of academic and policy literature was undertaken, to gather information on the policy context, methods used, design of the process, recommendations or results and impact on the wider policy process.

Framing the climate challenge: the need for a new social mandate

Developing policy to respond to climate change is both an overarching challenge and a series of individual challenges.

The overarching challenge is to reshape economic and societal infrastructure, to respond to a significant threat. Such a wide ranging change will inevitably produce winners and losers, requires unprecedented cross-sectoral co-ordination and increases

the risk of policy mistakes that may be exacerbated by external shocks as climate impacts worsen.

This overarching challenge then gives rise to a series of individual challenges, each with their own implications, such as the electrification of heating, or changes to diets and farming practices.

Overarching and individual challenges relate to each other in intricate ways, and affect people's outlooks, habits and behaviours.

Taken together, these factors illustrate that the net zero transition is complex and will have benefits, risks and costs that interact. There is a need to engage publics both on the overarching challenge of the transition and on the individual challenges, and to explore and make explicit the links between them.

In short, managing this transition requires public engagement that contributes to a new social mandate, building trust and collaboration between policy actors and publics.

Talking to or talking with?

This report identifies ways in which two broad groups interact. On the one side, there are publics, who can be delineated by geographical location, employment status or demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, (dis)ability, political outlook and so on. On the other side, there are policy actors, including government, parliament, political parties, advisory and regulatory bodies, and others, including some civil society and business groupings. Policy actors set, shape, enact, advise, or play a lobbying or advocacy role on climate policy and strategy.

Much communication between publics and policy actors is currently one way communication from policy actors to publics and includes informational approaches, such as awareness raising campaigns and advertising, as well as advice services.

There is also one way communication in the other direction, where policy actors consult publics through a variety of channels. Informal consultative approaches are separate from formal governance structures, and can take several forms, eg surveys, questionnaires or focus groups, commissioned by policy actors, which aim to elicit a snapshot of people's opinions; or there are initiatives led by publics, such as petitions or protests.

Then there are formal consultative approaches, such as government consultations, select committee inquiries and calls for evidence, which are, in theory, open to anyone to participate. In practice, they favour those with the resources, understanding and motivation to respond, ie established stakeholder groups.

Two way engagement, in the form of a structured dialogue or conversation between policy actors and publics, is less common. The most basic form is the democratic process itself, in which politicians or political parties set out proposals and receive

feedback through the ballot box, with the winning parties or politicians then being answerable to the electorate.

Over recent decades, recognition of the limitations of established democratic processes has led to proposals for an approach termed 'deliberative democracy', in which methods are used to convene a dialogue between publics and policy actors. These normally involve a representative sample of the public, though deliberative methods can focus on particular subsections of the wider public.

Deliberative processes typically involve a learning phase, where participants engage with expert witnesses; a phase of dialogue and deliberation with each other and with experts; and a decision making phase. Examples include citizens' assemblies or juries and consensus conferences. When representative sampling is used to select participants, the method is often called a 'deliberative mini-public' (DMP).

The intention of these processes is not to replace representative democracy but to supplement it, creating a more responsive democratic process in which both sides learn from each other and work together towards a shared goal.

Findings: the uses of deliberative methods for climate policy making

This report identifies seven ways in which deliberative methods can contribute to better climate related policy making.

1. Increasing trust in the policy process

Public acceptance of some of the more significant changes required to meet a net zero carbon economy will require high levels of trust in the policy process. Deliberative methods can play a role in building trust in decision making institutions. The Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review involves citizens' juries held in advance of referenda. A report from the jury is circulated to all voters as part of their voting pack. This process has been shown to increase trust and the belief that decision makers are listening to people. However, whether deliberative methods increase trust depends on how the results are used. Ignoring the recommendations of a process can decrease trust, rather than increase it.

2. Generating action

One reason that more ambitious climate policy is not forthcoming is that politicians lack confidence that they have the necessary political mandate to take action.⁴ There is growing public concern about climate change, but the link to people's everyday lives and actions – and to policies that affect transport, diets, energy infrastructure etc – may not be evident. Deliberative methods can provide a means of dialogue, between publics and policy actors, about the nature and shape of the mandate. They can increase decision makers' confidence to act, and publics' understanding of why certain measures are being proposed. An example of this is the Irish Constitutional Convention, which brought citizens together to discuss constitutional questions, including equal marriage and abortion. The issues were discussed in a formal process involving representative

citizens, and the results were communicated widely, with a referendum being held for each issue. In this case, deliberative methods helped policy actors to develop a better understanding of people's views and values, creating confidence to proceed to a referendum. There are, however, questions over the extent to which dialogue which takes place within the confines of a particular process (such as an assembly or jury) can be replicated across wider society.

3. Ensuring representation

Deliberative methods can be structured to ensure that wider publics are properly represented, as a representative sample of the public in question can be recruited. Groups who may be under-represented can be sought out for inclusion. For example, a deliberative exercise in British Columbia on the use of biobanks specifically included representatives from First Nation communities; the Bank of England has also run specific engagement exercises for demographics it does not typically hear from, such as young people. For climate policy, processes could be designed to ensure involvement from groups who will be particularly affected by policies, such as workers in the oil and gas industry, or people on low incomes who might not be able to afford to switch to lower carbon technologies such as heat pumps or electric vehicles.

4. Defusing conflict

Policy debates carried out through the media, social media or between political parties often result in entrenched and opposing points of view. Deliberative methods can bring different sides of a debate together, so that a mutual understanding is developed, even if there is no consensus. Examples include the Danish Board of Technology's consensus conference on genetically modified crops, which developed a framework for the introduction of the technology, and Jersey's citizens' jury on assisted dying. There is obvious relevance here for climate policy, where there are often strong and divergent views, such as on dietary change, aviation and car use.

5. Testing policy arguments

It is not always possible to predict whether a policy proposal will be controversial. Deliberative methods can be used to elicit feedback on an idea, by testing it with a representative sample of people, which entails thinking about how the policy is framed and introduced. The UK parliament's citizens assembly on social care, held in 2018, provided a good indication of the sensitivities around funding. Such testing of climate policy would be particularly beneficial for subjects that might be controversial, such as changes to taxation.

6. Assessing the full policy mix

A deliberative process provides time and space to allow consideration of the interactions between policies, and to propose linked or complementary policies. New South Wales' Public Accounts Committee commissioned citizens' juries to consider the future of energy generation, which included discussion of the distributional effects.

Climate Assembly UK included discussion of how policy measures across different domains, including transport, energy and land use, interact.

7. Governance of new technologies

It is difficult for people to develop views on technologies that they are not familiar with, such as novel medical technologies. Deliberative methods can be used to talk about the technology and its proposed applications and to provide input into a governance framework. For example, in 2012, Sciencewise ran a public dialogue on the use of IVF-based mitochondrial replacement techniques to prevent disease transmission. This informed the government's approach to licensing the technology. In the climate field, negative emissions technologies, which remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, are one group of speculative technologies which could benefit from this approach.

What to consider when undertaking deliberative public engagement

There are several factors to consider when designing effective deliberative public engagement. Consideration of these can help to ensure that the results of the process are taken seriously and acted on.

Match engagement to the stage of the process

Deliberation can be used to set the agenda and define the scope of the approach to an issue. Many local citizens' juries on climate change have been used in this way. Deliberative engagement can also be used to assist policy making in specific areas. This might include how to govern novel technologies, such as the Sciencewise dialogues on mitochondrial transfer, or to assess different policy proposals. Some processes cover both broad and narrow questions, for example, Climate Assembly UK both set out overarching principles for action on climate and offered detailed recommendations in different policy areas.

Set out commitments and expectations

Participants in deliberative processes should have a clear understanding of what they are being asked to do, and what will happen as a result of the process. Policy actors should set out how they will use of the results, so participants have a good understanding of the value of their work and so there is clear accountability.

Engage policy actors in the deliberation

The Irish Constitutional Convention included sitting MPs as part of the assembly. For many processes, policy actors join as advisers, and attend to watch sessions and talk to participants. There is evidence that close familiarity with the process can help to build trust and support for it.

Consider how to link to the wider public

This can happen through effective media coverage, as well as structured processes, such as participants speaking at public meetings, or an online platform which allows interaction between the process and wider society. Linking to the wider public is

beneficial because it builds trust that decisions are being taken carefully, in a way that involves ‘people like them’ and helps to build support for the proposals put forward.

Develop institutional capabilities

Developing a dedicated public engagement team within public bodies and ensuring broad understanding of engagement methods, helps to guarantee that processes are well run and effective.

Suggested actions

This report concludes with actions that could be taken by the Climate Change Committee and the government to embed deliberative public engagement into their work. These are summarised below, with further details in section 5.

Actions for the CCC:

1. Undertake an audit to identify areas for deliberative engagement.
2. Undertake a series of deliberative exercises to assist with scenario development work for each Carbon Budget reporting cycle.
3. Increase awareness and expertise around deliberative engagement amongst committee staff.
4. Review the government’s use of deliberation as part of wider public engagement assessment in future progress reports.
5. Support initiatives by the government and parliament.

Actions for the government:

1. Increase central oversight of public engagement efforts on net zero across government.
2. Amplify public awareness of existing and future engagement using deliberative and consultative processes.
3. Increase awareness and expertise around deliberative engagement amongst relevant civil servants.
4. Develop cross departmental guidelines for the use of deliberative methods.
5. Provide funding for local government and public bodies to carry out deliberative public engagement.
6. Establish and resource a standing citizens’ panel to feed into progress reporting cycles, in partnership with the CCC.

1 Introduction

Action to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change are already affecting people's lives and will become more evident over the coming years. There will be ongoing changes to how people live: in their homes, how they travel, what they eat and what the land around them looks like.

To date, in the UK, the biggest successes in greenhouse gas reductions have come from sectors which indirectly affect most people, such as switching away from coal-fired generation in the power sector and efficiency gains in technologies for heating, transport and industry. Future changes, however, will be very noticeable. They will require people to take part, either through changing their habits, such as travel routines or diet; or, less directly, through their understanding and consent to wider changes, such as legislation to phase out high carbon technologies, shifts in taxation or different forms of government spending and investment. It is clear the challenge of responding to the climate crisis will be more than just economic or technical.¹

Furthermore, despite years of progress in technical understanding and increasingly stark warnings from the IPCC, no country has a policy programme consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.^{5,6} Despite strong political statements and ambitious targets, politicians still seem reluctant to consider the full implications of climate change and act accordingly.⁷

The process of climate policy formation has tended to rely on technical and economic analysis, and input from stakeholders with a direct route to policy, such as businesses and professional associations, rather than engaging with the wider population. Yet, public concern about climate change is high and rising, and people may be more willing to change their behaviours or support new approaches than decision makers may have thought.⁸

Conversely, policies and technologies that work well on paper or in modelling may face stiff resistance and opposition.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in ways to engage people in climate strategy and policy formation. Recent examples include Climate Assembly UK, the citizens' assembly commissioned by parliament; and numerous citizens' juries initiated by local authorities.

This growth has been mirrored in other policy areas, leading the OECD to proclaim the surge of a 'deliberative wave'.⁹ Between 2000 and 2020, at least 105 deliberative mini-publics (or DMPs; see below for the definition) were convened across Europe, with environmental issues being the most frequently discussed topic.¹⁰

However, it is not yet clear how such processes, and other potential forms of citizen engagement, might link to and alter established models of climate policy making. The UK government maintains an approach to climate policy development centred on standard consultation processes. These tend to involve stakeholders and interest

groups with the necessary resources and expertise, excluding a large part of the population.¹¹ Yet, the UK government's Net Zero Strategy also acknowledges the importance of giving people "opportunities to participate in and shape our plans for reaching net zero, thereby improving policy design, buy-in and uptake of policies."¹² (p.276). Against this background, our report reviews the potential contribution of citizen deliberation to climate policy and governance.

1.1 About this report: approach and method

This report begins, in section 2, with a discussion of the ways in which publics and policy actors currently interact. The phrase 'publics' rather than the singular 'public' is used, to emphasise the heterogeneity of different groupings, with people belonging to different geographical communities and social groups and having different demographic characteristics. The term 'policy actors' is used to describe government, parliament, official advisers and agencies, as well as wider stakeholders who play a role in the formal policy process, such as business groups.

The report then focuses, in section 3, on the role that deliberation can play. This can be seen as two way interaction, or dialogue, between policy actors or publics, in which both sides learn from each other's expertise and evidence.

The term 'deliberative mini-public' (DMP) is used to describe a formal process which encourages deliberation, convening a representative group of people to enter into dialogue with government (See Box 1 for more detail).

Deliberation should not just be thought of in terms of these formal processes, however. More informal deliberation can occur in debates between citizens, eg in the media and politics, though the deliberative quality of debate in some of these settings is often lacking.

Political theorists refer to a 'deliberative system' as an ideal type of democracy, in which publics and policy actors are respectful of, and informed about, each other's positions; and where policy formation develops through a dialogue between these two groups.¹³

Box 1. Deliberative mini-publics

Deliberative mini-publics (DMPs) are formal processes which encourage deliberation between publics and policy actors. Citizens' assemblies, citizens' juries, consensus conferences and citizens' panels are all examples of DMPs. They vary in purpose, size, length and structure but have four broad characteristics in common:

1. They are **representative** of the public or group in question. This is typically achieved through random sampling (sometimes called sortition). This makes them different from other fora such as town hall meetings or consultations, which anyone can attend, and which tend to attract people and organisations who are already interested, engaged and able to take part.
2. They involve a **learning phase**, allowing participants to consider evidence and hear from witnesses or experts to develop their understanding of the issue in question. An independent advisory group typically oversees the selection of evidence and witnesses to ensure balance.
3. They involve **deliberation**, a structured discussion typically led by trained facilitators. Discussion between participants and with experts and witnesses enables participants to consolidate their knowledge, develop their views and collaborate in generating outputs.
4. They normally produce **conclusions or recommendations**, which may be reached through consensus building, voting or a combination of both.

Adapted from Willis, R., Curato, N. & Smith, G. Deliberative democracy and the climate crisis. WIREs Climate Change e759 (2022).

This report focuses on deliberation, rather than wider forms of public engagement, because one way public engagement has a longer track record of being used in UK climate policy making and is better understood. However, deliberation is much less used and has the potential to respond to some of the challenges involved in climate policy, including questions of fairness, as discussed in section 3. There is a need to evaluate and learn from recent experiments, including Climate Assembly UK and many other local assemblies and juries, and to think systematically about the role of deliberative methods in climate policy making.

Though the use of deliberation is relatively new for climate issues, there is a longer history of such methods being used in other policy areas, dating back at least to the 1980s. Study of these can offer insights into the challenges deliberation has been used to address, and the factors underpinning successful deliberative engagement.

We undertook a review of DMPs, and similar forms of engagement from a range of policy areas, to draw out lessons for climate policy making. Case studies were identified through a combination of literature searches and peer recommendations. Table 1 summarises the commissioning body, policy area, method and host country for each of 29 cases identified. For each case study a search was then conducted to identify relevant policy reports and academic publications related to the case. From these, data

were collected on the policy context, the methods used and the design of the process, substantive recommendations resulting from the engagement and its impact on wider policy process. Data recorded in the latter category, 'impact on the policy process', were then rationalised into a series of codes to identify the main contributions that deliberative methods have made to policy challenges. The results of this analysis are presented in section 3.

Section 4 then discusses common features of successful engagement from across the cases, and section 5 suggests possible actions for both the Climate Change Committee and the UK government to move to more deliberative forms of climate policy making.

All case studies are presented in the appendices. Appendix 1 outlines all the standalone deliberative methods reviewed. Appendix 2 outlines the cases where deliberative methods have been embedded into decision making institutions. Appendix 3 lists cases that do not deploy explicitly deliberative designs but nevertheless exemplify how mixed methods can be combined to reach a range of different audiences.

Table 1. policy area, method and host country of the 29 case studies identified

Commissioning Body	Policy Area	Method	Country
Regional government (11)	General (6)	Citizen assembly/ jury (19)	UK (13)
National government (6)	Health and Social Care (5)	Mixed (4)	Canada (4)
Public body (4)	Climate (4)	Citizen panel (2)	Australia (3)
Parliamentary committee (3)	Novel technology (4)	Public dialogue (2)	Italy (2)
NGO/ Charity (2)	Utilities (2)	Consensus conference (1)	Ireland (2)
Research institute (2)	Constitutional reform (2)	Citizens council (1)	Denmark (1)
Regulator (1)	Housing (2)		Iceland (1)
	Electoral reform (1)		Spain (1)
	Monetary policy (1)		UK (1)
	Transport (1)		France (1)
	Flood defence (1)		USA (1)
			Belgium (1)
			Poland (1)

2 Public engagement and the climate crisis

2.1 Framing the climate challenge: the need for a new social mandate

Achieving net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner, and adapting to a warming climate, requires changes in every sector of the economy and to many aspects of people's lives.¹⁴ Developing policy to respond to this is both an overarching challenge and a series of individual challenges.

The overarching challenge is the reshaping of our economic and societal infrastructure to respond to a significant threat. It encompasses a series of individual challenges, each with their own set of complicating factors and associated stakeholder groups and interests. For example, the electrification of home heating and dietary change are two distinct and different challenges. Electrification of heat requires reckoning with differences between homeowners and renters, and with differences in the capacity to absorb high one-off costs. Dietary change, particularly meat consumption, divides the population along more cultural lines, and has implications for the agricultural sector.

Overarching and individual challenges relate to each other in intricate ways and affect people's outlooks, habits and behaviours. Overall, the transition to net zero has significant implications for public engagement.

2.1.1 Winners and losers

Previous transitions, such as the first industrial revolution, or the more recent shift to a mobility system based around car use, have been accompanied by significant reorientations of social and economic relations.^{15,16} They inevitably produce winners and losers between individual businesses, commercial sectors, geographical regions and social classes. The transition will involve new jobs and opportunities, but there is also the potential for significant public disquiet. In acknowledgement of this, there is now much discussion of a 'just transition', with institutions such as the Just Transition Commission in Scotland.

2.1.2 Cross-sectoral coherence

Decarbonisation strategies within a sector must take account of decisions made in other sectors. Approaches that may make sense in isolation, may not when considered within the wider policy mix.¹⁷ For example, if people are to form a judgement on the use of hydrogen for home heating, they need to think about the context, potential uses of hydrogen across the economy, including for transport and industry, as well as the other options for home heating. This has implications for research into public attitudes. Asking people, in a survey or focus group, if they support the use of hydrogen for home heating, is of little use without this wider context.

2.1.3 External shocks

As in any economy, the UK is susceptible to external supply and demand shocks for energy sources, manufactured goods and perishable consumables. These shocks can intersect with domestic decisions around decarbonisation and climate adaptation to seriously disrupt people's lives.

Climate change produces additional exogenous shocks in the form of extreme weather events affecting the UK or its overseas supply chains. These are not entirely controllable with domestic policy levers and present another risk to public support for the net zero transition. The upsurge in gas prices which began in 2021 is an obvious example: continued dependence on natural gas has left the UK vulnerable to this supply shock, which itself was partially driven by increased global energy demand due to extreme weather events. There have been some attempts to seize on these price rises to criticise the ongoing transition to renewable energy generation.

2.1.4 Policy mistakes

Previous energy transitions were driven by technological change and industrial relations, and they have taken hold across the economy relatively slowly.^{15,16,18} The unprecedented nature and huge complexity of rapid decarbonisation makes policy mistakes almost inevitable. Indeed, several have already occurred in the UK and internationally, such as the switch from petrol to diesel engines, encouraged by differential taxation, which resulted in worsening air quality; and the failure of the Green Deal energy efficiency scheme in the 2010s. Without adequate understanding and trust, these mistakes will undermine support for the transition.

2.1.5 Social inertia

The speed at which people experience changes to their lives influences the likelihood of acceptance. The number of concurrent changes the climate challenge requires poses an inherent problem for public acceptability. Involving people in the design of these changes is crucial to maintain popular support.

These challenges mean that public discussion about the principles and values that underpin the government's approach to transition is essential. It is also necessary to cultivate a higher level of trust in the political process and institutions. Increased trust can make people more likely to accept changes and even policy mistakes.

Therefore, public engagement on climate change needs to address the overarching challenge of climate change, as well as the individual challenges and policy questions. The task of public engagement can be seen as developing a new social mandate for the net zero transition. This may, in turn, support public engagement around the individual challenges. A social mandate for net zero will lead to greater understanding and acceptance of individual changes needed, such as installing heat pumps.

In short, if people understand the reasons for a proposal, they are more likely to accept it.

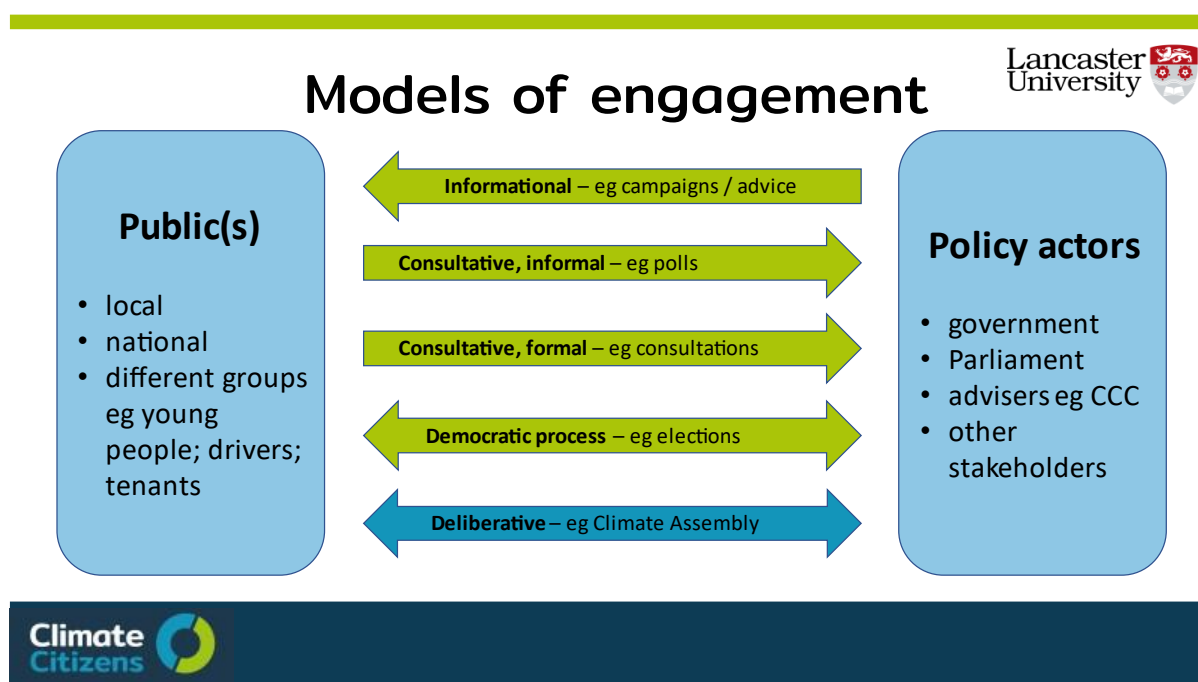
2.2 Different models: talking to or talking with?

As described above, there is a need to link climate governance and public engagement. But what might this look like? There are two sides. On the one is the public (as we describe above, more correctly pluralised as ‘publics’, made up of different demographics, geographical locations and occupation types). Recognising heterogeneity of group interests, competencies and world views helps to shape effective engagement.¹⁹

On the other side are policy actors. These are the decision makers and professionals formally engaged in the policy process. They include civil servants and elected politicians, as well as civil society and businesses. The latter, though not decision makers themselves, have either a formal role in the policy making process, or the expertise and resources to make themselves heard. These stakeholders sometimes make a claim to speak on behalf of publics (eg trades unions or environmental groups). Such claims may or may not be valid.

Engagement between these two groups: publics and policy actors, can be one way or two way. The illustration below expands this basic distinction, showing three forms of one way engagement and two forms of two way engagement (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Primary models of engagement between publics and policy actors



2.2.1 One way engagement

One way engagement occurs where information is flowing only in one direction, either from publics to policy actors or vice versa. We identify three basic types.

2.2.1.1 Informational: policy actors to publics

Informational approaches aim to communicate a specific message or information from policy actors to the public. These often intend to make the public more receptive and understanding of an upcoming or recently implemented policy change. They can also aim to induce behaviour change directly. Examples include:

- Public awareness campaigns
- Leaflets
- Advertising
- Expert advice organisations

The policy problems this approach is suited to are typically those where the public does not have significant influence. In these instances, it may be necessary to communicate the reason that policy changes are happening to increase acceptance. Informational approaches can also be used as part of efforts to shift public behaviour, possibly in combination with incentive shifts such as tax cuts or increases. Information needs to be presented in such a way that the target demographics are receptive to it, and to ensure it speaks to people's underlying values.²⁰

Informational approaches are, however, limited in their effectiveness. They rest on the assumption that individuals are not supportive, or not acting in a certain way, because they lack information; and that, once this information is received, change will follow.

This is often called the 'information deficit' model. Although policy makers often make the assumption of information deficit, it is a misunderstanding of the barriers to perception or behaviour change.²¹

Informational approaches can raise awareness but often do not lead to changes in behaviour on their own. They rest on an individualistic and narrowly rationalistic understanding of human motivation and behaviour, ignoring the influence of factors such as social norms and neighbourhood effects.²² Neither do they account for structural constraints; for instance, people cannot switch from cars to public transport if they live in a badly served rural area.

2.2.1.2 Consultative: publics to policy actors (informal)

Informal consultative approaches gauge public opinion on a topic but are not connected to a formal policy process. There is usually no, or limited, information provided to participants. Examples include:

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups
- Forms of engagement used by publics to communicate messages outside the formal policy process, eg letter writing, protests and petitions

Consultative methods are useful where it is assumed that the public understands enough about the question they are being asked to give an informed view. Respondents are assumed to have relatively well formed preferences on the issue, and the methods are designed to capture a snapshot of these. Information may be provided to assist the respondents, but there will typically not be opportunities to ask questions and discuss the issue with experts or their peers.

Methods such as surveys and questionnaires have the advantage of reaching a large number of respondents. This can lend legitimacy to policy making, with the view that people have had a say. Large sample sizes also allow for statistical analysis of the socioeconomic determinants of different positions and preferences. Focus groups, meanwhile, are used extensively by political parties, to gauge the mood of the electorate, and people's likely responses to policy proposals.

These methods are less suitable where respondents do not have well formed preferences on the issue. This is often the case for complex environmental issues, or new technologies that people that are not familiar with.²³ Without knowledge or experience, respondents will struggle to judge, in advance, how they would react to the policies or scenarios they are being asked about. Once implemented, these policies may be more popular or less popular than imagined.

2.2.1.3 Consultative: publics to policy actors (formal)

Formal consultative methods are those used to elicit public views as a part of the policy development process. These include:

- Public consultations
- Calls for evidence
- Stakeholder workshops
- Select committee inquiries

These share many features with informal consultative approaches in that they provide a largely unmediated snapshot of opinion. Therefore, they have the same weaknesses in terms of preference formation.

Formal consultation has the advantage of a direct link to the policy process, increasing the potential of public views to impact policy outcomes. However, these methods are often self-selecting, meaning those who are most motivated and able to respond are the most likely to. Consultations are often structured in such a way as to make it difficult for non-specialists to engage with them.

Special interest groups, particularly commercial interests, are typically over represented in consultation responses.¹¹ Evidence and views from publics can be fed in from organisations who represent wider groupings, such as trades unions, statutory bodies like Citizens' Advice and health charities representing patient groups. However, these groups vary in their ability to influence and the extent to which their claims of representation are justified.

2.2.2 Two way engagement

In contrast to the one way approaches above, two way approaches involve the exchange of views and information back and forth between publics and policy actors. We identify two main types of two way engagement.

2.2.2.1 Democratic process

In a representative liberal democracy, the most basic form of two way engagement is the democratic process itself. Prospective elected representatives set out proposals at election times and receive feedback through the ballot box. Incumbents have judgement passed on their track record in the same manner.

Since the emergence of representative democracies with universal suffrage, the relationship between the representative and electorate has been contentious.²⁴ As a mechanism for transforming public will into action, representative democracies have a litany of high profile critics.^{25,26}

Democratic theory has, therefore, turned towards remedies focused on more meaningful dialogue between policy actors and publics outside elections. The most dominant school of thought is around deliberative democracy, which has spawned innovations such as the engagement processes recently gaining attention in climate policy making.

2.2.2.2 Deliberative methods

Public deliberation is any form of engagement where members of the public are given the chance to increase their understanding and develop their views prior to putting across their position on a policy issue. They do this both through engagement with experts and information on the issue, and discussion with their peers.

Dedicated deliberative methods typically have several features in common: they select a random representative sample of the relevant publics (which could be people from a specific geographical area, such as a city, or a particular demographic group, such as young people or renters), and they include a learning phase, a deliberating stage and a decision making phase (see Box 1). Examples include:

- Citizens' assemblies and juries
- Consensus conferences
- Citizens' panels

These methods are collectively termed 'deliberative mini publics' (DMPs).²⁷ As discussed above, DMPs emerged from a theoretical tradition focused on overcoming the disconnect between public opinion and decision makers in representative democracies. The intention is not to replace representation, but to supplement it in pursuit of a more responsive democratic process, in which both sides: policy actors and publics, have a clearer picture of each other's positions.

Many claims are made for the contribution deliberation can make to the democratic process. These include a more judicious use of expertise, decreased influence of

economic interests, instilling greater trust in the political process and a longer term decision horizon than electoral politics allows.^{28,29}

DMPs have also drawn a wide range of criticisms, in particular for engaging only a small number of participants and for their ability to affect policy outcomes.³⁰ What comes through most clearly from the existing literature is that the efficacy of DMPs and deliberation is greatly determined by the manner in which the process is embedded into decision making.^{30,31}

Concurrently with real life experiments in climate deliberation, a literature has emerged linking the theorised benefits of deliberation to the challenges posed by the climate crisis.^{1,32} Yet, to date there has been relatively little detailed discussion of how exactly deliberative practices can or should be embedded in the existing apparatus of climate policy making.

3 Uses of deliberative methods

This report draws on findings from 29 cases of DMPs, or similar deliberative methods, from across a range of policy areas, including climate change, health and medical issues, novel technologies, constitutional questions and economic policy. We identified seven ways in which DMPs can contribute to more robust policy making, as follows:

1. Increasing trust in the policy process
2. Generating action
3. Ensuring representation
4. Defusing conflict
5. Testing policy arguments
6. Assessing the full policy mix
7. Governance of new technologies

In the following sections we discuss these with illustrations from the case studies and a discussion of their relevance to climate policy. More detail on each case study can be found in the appendices.

3.1 Increasing trust in the policy process

3.1.1 The problem

Since at least the mid-1980s, public trust in the British government has been in steady decline. As of 2019, the proportion of people who believe the system governing Britain could be improved a great deal was at an all time high of 79%.³³ When people do not trust that decisions are being made with their interests at heart, they are less likely to be accepting of policy change.

3.1.2 The use of deliberation

Deliberation has been promoted as a mechanism to increase trust in decision making.⁹ It can do this in two ways. One, by giving those directly involved in the exercise the opportunity to develop their opinions, debate issues with policy actors and have their voices heard, which often leads to an increase in trust in the process. However, the small number of people involved in a DMP limits how much this effect can assist with the wider challenge of political trust.

Second, and perhaps more significant in relation to political trust, is the potential spillover benefit that DMPs can have for the wider electorate. If DMPs are widely known about, there is potential for a much larger impact on societal trust levels as people believe that 'people like us' are being listened to and have had a say.⁶

One of the most well studied deliberative processes in our review is the [Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review \(CIR\)](#) (case 24). This is an ongoing initiative in the US state of Oregon instigated to provide voters with better information ahead of state referenda. Before

the vote on a ballot measure, a citizens' jury will convene to deliberate over the measure. A report is published including their verdict and the most compelling arguments for and against. This is circulated to all voters as part of their voting pack. Exposure to the CIR report has been shown to increase both internal and external political efficacy, even for those who do not participate.³⁴ Internal efficacy refers to the belief a person has in their own capacity for effective political action, and external efficacy is the belief that officials and decision makers are listening to the public.

Though the case of the Oregon CIR appears to support the idea of DMPs increasing trust, this is just one example. A recent meta-analysis of the spillover benefits of DMPs gave a more mixed picture of the wider societal trust that DMPs can instil.³⁵ Indeed, it is possible they can backfire, leading to greater resentment if there is no action following the deliberative exercise. As discussed previously, the design and level to which a DMP is embedded in the policy process appear to be vital in ensuring it improves public trust.

3.1.3 Other evidence of trust being increased

[Bank of England Citizens' Panels](#) (case 28) are an ongoing series of engagement panels used to gain a better understanding of how people experience the economy and explain the bank's work. Participants report better understanding of what the bank does and greater trust in its work.

3.1.4 Relevance for climate policy

As discussed in section 2, the scale and pace of change required to respond to the climate crisis pushes up against natural social inertia, and it also increases the risk of policy mistakes. A higher level of trust in the political process will help to develop and maintain public support for rapid change and reduce the risk of a backlash if mistakes arise. The evidence suggests that deliberative exercises that are firmly institutionalised and widely understood can help to increase public trust in decision making.

3.2 Generating action

3.2.1 The problem

The UK has announced decarbonisation targets broadly in line with a global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C. However, credible policy plans cover only 39% of required emission reductions to 2037.³⁶ In adaptation policy too, the UK is lagging behind.^{37,38} Policies on potentially contentious issues such as phasing out gas boilers have been slow to develop. One reason more ambitious climate policy is not forthcoming is that politicians are not confident they have the political mandate to act.⁴

People's concern about climate change is refracted through their lived experiences and usually does not manifest in a direct way. For example, they are more likely to be concerned about immediate health risks like air pollution, or about how a climate policy may impact their lives.³⁹ There is, therefore, no direct link between the growing public

concern for climate change and people's voting actions or political priorities. This can decrease the degree to which politicians feel empowered to enact climate policy. Although polling data shows high levels of concern about climate change, members of the public who actively campaign on climate are a small minority.⁴⁰

3.2.2 The use of deliberation

Deliberative exercises are an opportunity, outside elections, for politicians to build a mandate for action. DMP members are selected through sortition to represent the wider public. This gives them a claim to legitimacy not available to other voices in the political process.

Having conducted a deliberative process, policy makers can then talk about the DMP, and make it clear that its participants were involved in developing the policy. People typically say that if 'people like them' have come to this decision, they trust the outcome. This type of heuristic is a common strategy for people navigating complex political and policy questions. It is also likely that similar arguments and counterarguments will form part of the public discourse as a policy is developed and scrutinised. Having the chance to rehearse these debates in a DMP can help policy makers to present policies in a way that builds support for them.

Of the case studies we looked at, two of the most substantive changes achieved came from the [Irish Constitutional Convention](#), an assembly of citizens and policy makers convened by the Irish government to debate changes to the Irish constitution, held between 2012 and 2014 (case 3). As a result of this assembly, two referenda were put to the electorate, one to legalise gay marriage and the other to legalise blasphemy. Both were passed, leading to substantive changes in the Irish constitution on previously contentious issues. Two factors that were deemed particularly important in achieving this were that the assembly was held by the government of the day, giving it significant political standing, and that MPs were included in the assembly. Although including MPs was originally questioned, fears that they would dominate debates were unfounded and participation is likely to have increased their willingness to act on the assembly's recommendations.^{41,42}

This pattern, of a DMP followed by a referendum, is common when substantive changes are proposed. Deliberation is usually seen as complimentary to, not a replacement for, the existing practices of representative democracies.

3.2.3 Other cases with evidence of action

Following the constitutional convention, Ireland held another [citizens assembly](#) (case 20) between 2016 and 2018 to look at five further policy areas. This resulted in a referendum where it was decided to abolish the legal restriction on abortion and the development of a national Climate Action Plan.

[Danish consensus conferences](#) (case 25) are a form of citizens' jury. They are used by the Danish Board of Technology, a public body with a mandate to evaluate novel

technologies, including their social acceptability, on behalf of the Danish parliament. Their findings have influenced government action, including on the issue of GM crop regulation, and genetic screening in hiring and insurance decisions.

As a direct result of the recommendations of two [citizen's juries](#) commissioned by the Public Accounts Committee of New South Wales (case 4), the parliament took moves to expand renewable generation in the state by seeking funding from the Commonwealth Clean Energy Finance Corporation.

In 2012, the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services ran a series of public engagement sessions, including a [panel of local condominium residents](#) (case 17). The panel was tasked with making recommendations for a new Condominium Act based on the outcome of their deliberations and public input through submissions and town hall meetings. The panel's findings were instrumental in shaping the provisions of the new act, including a new fee structure for condominium owners.

Although not the norm, there are cases where elected officials have given DMPs direct decision making power. This was the case in the [Polish city of Gdansk](#) (case 18), where the mayor agreed to implement any recommendations that received above 80% support during an assembly on flood responses in the city. After a flooding event in 2017, it was widely agreed these changes had improved the city's response.

3.2.4 Climate policy relevance

Deliberative processes allow participants to codesign climate solutions that link and reconcile their concern for climate change with more immediate priorities. Politicians can see that the outcomes and recommendations of these processes account for the lived experience of different demographics in their electorate and may feel more empowered to act.

More controversial decisions that impact people's life choices, such as flying or dietary change, have been thought of as difficult areas to tackle by politicians, who fear controversy. Equally, the cost of a net zero transition, and its distribution, is seen as contentious. But climate related deliberative exercises have revealed significantly stronger public support for action in this area than expected, and a willingness to confront the issue of cost.⁸ Deliberative methods may, therefore, give politicians the will to act, and a more nuanced understanding of what is possible.

Involving politicians in the deliberative process, either as participants or observers, is seen as important to raise their confidence to act on the findings of a DMP.³¹

3.3 Ensuring representation

3.3.1 The problem

In formal consultative stakeholder and public engagement processes, groups with the motivation and capacity to engage tend to dominate.¹¹ Many people's voices go unheard. This is both an instrumental and ethical concern. From an instrumental point of view, including the views of a wider range of people ensures relevant knowledge is drawn upon, which supports good policy design. There is an ethical issue in excluding a section of society likely to be affected by a policy.

3.3.2 The use of deliberation

Deliberative methods are designed specifically to ensure that no single interest group is heard above others. This is achieved primarily through a selection process, such as sortition, where every member of society has an equal chance of being selected, and the final participants are representative of broader public demographics and any other characteristics deemed relevant (for example, views on a particular issue).

Beyond this, deliberative methods can be used to counteract existing biases in which groups have their voices heard (or ignored) in policy debates. Processes can be designed to select for under-represented voices, either as part of a DMP or in a separate forum, as part of a wider engagement exercise. For example, a deliberative exercise run in [British Columbia on the use of biobanks](#) specifically recruited members of First Nation communities (case 16).⁴³ This followed the experience of an earlier assembly on [electoral reform in British Columbia](#), where the initial selection process did not produce any First Nation representatives (case 16). In this instance, the selection process was re-run and designed to ensure First Nation peoples were not excluded. This shows the importance of ensuring that historically marginalised voices are not accidentally excluded through the selection process.⁴⁴

An alternative approach is that used by the [Bank of England](#) in its public engagement exercises. It runs specific sessions for demographics it typically does not hear from, as well as a youth council (case 28).⁴⁵ This approach may work for more consultative approaches. However, the [British Columbia](#) example has the advantage of ensuring that the deliberative body is representative of the wider electorate.

3.3.3 Other cases studies focused on expanding representation

The [Scottish Climate Assembly](#) did not allow those aged under 16 to participate directly (case 12). However, the assembly received inputs from the Scottish Youth Parliament and held joint workshops to ensure young people's views were considered and captured in the final recommendations.

The [Northern Housing Consortium](#) is working with a series of housing associations in the North of England to run a citizens' jury specifically for social housing tenants on the decarbonisation of social housing (case 10). This is focused on retrofitting and how it could be carried out in a way that works for social housing tenants.

3.3.4 Climate policy relevance

If poorly handled, the net zero transition could exacerbate existing inequalities. For example, costs could be unfairly borne by those least able to pay; or people with mobility issues may face new barriers if policy has not focused on their needs. Avoiding these policy failures requires listening to all groups in society, to understand how they will be affected by different proposals. Deliberative methods can ensure such voices are heard and that these groups are actively engaged in designing policy that works for them.

3.4 Defusing conflict

3.4.1 The problem

The usual channels for policy debate, such as between political parties, traditional media and social media, can result in entrenched and opposing points of view. Such conflict makes it difficult to formulate policy with a wide support base that reflects the complexities of an issue.

3.4.2 The use of deliberation

Deliberative methods can bring different sides of a debate together, so that participants empathise with and understand opposing views, even if they do not reach a consensus. In fact, the aim of such processes is often not to reach a consensus but to understand the whole spectrum of views, and to make policy that takes account of the full context.

For example, the course of the debate on genetically modified (GM) crops took drastically different directions in different European countries. Denmark avoided a divisive debate. Since 1987, the Danish Board of Technology (DBT) has provided insights to the Danish parliament on contentious science and technology issues. To gather public input to its work, it convenes [consensus conferences](#), a form of citizens' jury (case 25). These meet over four days and then report their findings to the media and parliament through several channels. Given their long history, consensus conferences are now widely known about and respected by Danish publics and policy makers. The DBT has survived under successive governments, despite rounds of cuts to many other public bodies.⁴⁶

In 1999, as public debate on GM crops heated up, the DBT decided it would be useful to provide a balanced public view and convened a consensus conference. This came to a reasoned position of controlled entry for GM crops to the Danish market, with safeguards around labelling and corporate funding for GM research. Its recommendations were broadly reflected in the eventual approach taken by the government.⁴⁷

3.4.3 Other cases where conflict has been defused or avoided

The [Irish Constitutional Convention](#) was successful in achieving a high degree of social consensus on the previously contentious issue of same sex marriages (case 3). The [citizens' assembly in Ireland](#) achieved a similar feat when it led to the repeal of a legal ban on abortion in the country (case 20).

A [citizens' jury on the island of Jersey](#) made recommendations on the issue of assisted dying, achieving a high level of consensus and developing a series of guidelines and safeguards (case 11). Following this process, the States Assembly voted to approve the principle of legalising assisted dying. The legislative process to formalise this decision is expected to conclude in 2023.

3.4.4 Climate policy relevance

Some sections of the UK media contest climate policies they see as being overly restrictive or costly. This has been seen in press coverage critical of the cost of heat pumps, for example. These messages can be echoed by sections of the public and create coalitions opposed to certain policies. Environmental NGOs and campaign groups, on the other hand, seek to use public opinion in pursuit of more progressive climate policy. These debates can be polarising, with both sides claiming public support. In such situations, deliberative exercises can give a much clearer guide to what people think, once they are well informed on an issue. This can provide justification for policy action, and it is a useful barometer of public positioning for all sides engaged in the wider debate.

3.5 Testing policy arguments

3.5.1 The problem

It is not always possible to predict which elements of a policy will be controversial. Announcing proposals that lead to an immediate public backlash because of one aspect of their design can undermine support for the entire package or even action across the whole policy area. Even misunderstandings caused by how policies are first presented can create public hostility that is then hard to reverse.

3.5.2 The use of deliberation

DMPs are an opportunity to hear feedback on a policy and the types of arguments people make for or against it, before presenting it to the wider public. This allows it to be shaped in a way that is more likely to be supported. It also means that how it is presented, or 'framed', can be considered, and counterarguments prepared, before it is unveiled more widely.

One example in our case studies related to a policy that caused the Conservative Party to roll back on a pledge in its manifesto during an election campaign. In the 2017 general election, the Conservatives included proposals to help fund social care. One

that proved contentious was the inclusion of a person's home (regardless of whether they were living in it) in calculations of whether they were entitled to state support for care costs. This was accompanied by assurances that no one's wealth would be reduced below £100,000 in support of their own social care and that homeowners would be allowed to delay the sale of their property until after death. Despite this, the policy was labelled a 'dementia tax' due to the higher social care costs that would be incurred by those with long term degenerative diseases, such as dementia. This forced a retraction of the policy.

In 2018, the Health and Social Care Committee and the then Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee jointly commissioned a [citizens' assembly](#) to look at adult social care funding (case 15). One of its main outcomes was a large majority opposed to the idea of asking people to use wealth derived from their homes to fund social care. If an assembly had been conducted ahead its proposal, the Conservative Party would have understood the likelihood of public backlash.

3.5.3 Climate policy relevance

Backlash against climate policy can feed into arguments against taking any action on climate change. Given the urgency of the crisis, unnecessary missteps in how policies are structured and presented to the public would be harmful. There is, therefore, a strong rationale to test any potentially contentious policy proposals, such as changes to taxation, in a deliberative setting, to see how to design policies that will be supported. Evidence from Climate Assembly UK shows that whether a policy is seen to be fair is crucial to its success.

3.6 Assessing the full policy mix

3.6.1 The problem

The impact and efficacy of any given policy measure is conditioned by the wider policy landscape. Consultative public engagement typically asks about specific measures but does not allow for the exploration of interconnections.

Evidence from deliberative processes shows that members of the public often identify that action in one policy area, or the impact of one policy, will be conditioned by decisions being made in other areas, or by existing policies.

Therefore, gaining informed views on a question can involve discussion of the wider policy mix and interactions between different policy measures. It is not usually possible to deal with this level of complexity in non-deliberative public engagement, such as a poll or survey.

3.6.2 The use of deliberation

Understanding how policies in different areas interact, and using this knowledge to develop an informed position on a given measure, is difficult.

But, through the course of a deliberative exercise, members of the public have experts on hand and time to discuss and develop positions that account for such complexity.

Recommendations can then be based on an understanding of the real world impact of a policy and include subsidiary recommendations on related policy areas.

For example, the New South Wales [Public Accounts Committee](#) commissioned two citizens' juries as part of an inquiry into the future of energy generation in the state (case 4). The recommendations of these juries supported a move towards more renewable generation. The final report included further recommendations on support for low income households and the decentralisation of decision making power, to account for the complexities of dispersed rather than centralised generation.

3.6.3 Other cases where consideration of policy interactions was evident

[Numerous climate assemblies](#) and juries have looked at a broad range of policies, including those around housing and transport, giving participants the chance to consider the connections between these policy areas. Climate Assembly UK included discussion of how policy measures across different domains interact, including transport, energy and land use (cases 12, 13 and 14). For example, it looked at the role of greenhouse gas removal technologies and the extent to which they could or should be used to compensate for emissions that could not be alleviated in other areas.

A [DMP hosted by researchers in Brisbane](#) was established specifically to study the types of policy knowledge that deliberation can generate. Researchers identified the main justifications given for a range of policy positions, highlighting these as useful inputs for policy design and communication.

3.6.4 Climate policy relevance

The need to consider the whole policy mix is most clear when considering economic instruments aimed at changing behaviour. For example, consumption taxes on environmentally harmful goods, or levies on some fuels, can hit low income households hardest and need to be considered alongside social security policies.

Members of the public might reject a carbon tax out of hand for reasons of fairness, but they may accept it if it is considered alongside a package of compensating reforms. Similarly, increases in fuel duty have been politically difficult but may be more publicly acceptable if coupled with compensating measures or adequate investment in alternative transport or home heating technologies.

Deliberative methods allow participants to make recommendations and pass judgement on a series of complementary reforms rather than single policy instruments.

3.7 Governance of new technologies

3.7.1 The problem

Before reaching commercial scale, many technologies are unknown or poorly understood by the public. This poses a problem when trying to design an acceptable governance framework for a novel technology. Low levels of public understanding mean that most will not have well-formed views or preferences about how a technology should be regulated.

3.7.2 The use of deliberation

There are many examples of where DMPs are being used to overcome the problem of governing new technologies. By informing participants about the technology, they can then provide input into a governance framework that should, in theory, garner wider public support.

This issue arises often in medical science, where new technologies can raise very fundamental issues of ethical concern. For example, in 2012, [Sciencewise](#) ran a public engagement exercise on the use of IVF-based mitochondrial replacement techniques to prevent the transmission of mitochondrial disease. Their approach included a range of methods, including surveys and open public meetings (case 5). A deliberative workshop formed part of their approach and was particularly useful for informing the government's licensing of the technology. Rather than just passing judgement about its acceptability, workshop participants were able to specify the controls that would need to be in place for them to support the new technology. These included ensuring that no other uses of it were allowed under the regulations, a suite of follow up studies and ongoing research to ensure the technology was safe and giving the same protections to mitochondria donors as tissue donors.

3.7.3 Climate policy relevance

In the case of climate policy, the use of negative emissions technologies, and potentially even geoengineering, are widely discussed and appear in climate models. Yet many of these technologies are either speculative or have not been demonstrated at the scale they would be required for many mitigation pathways. There are also inherent trade-offs in their deployment, with regards to land use. The technologies themselves may not be controversial in the same way that advances in medical science can be, but their deployment, or reliance on future deployment, involves many normative decisions about trade-offs and levels of acceptable uncertainty. This is, therefore, an area that could benefit from a more principles based application of a deliberative method.

In this case, the process would be unlikely to consider specific policy proposals or measures but, instead, it would focus on building understanding of the technology and the trade-offs and uncertainties involved. It could aim to reach a consensus on the broad principles guiding the adoption of the technology within real world deployment scenarios.

4 Factors to consider when undertaking deliberative public engagement on climate

Our case study review leads to clear conclusions about how to design effective processes which can contribute meaningfully to policy making.

4.1 Wide question or narrow question?

As discussed in section 3.1, climate change is both an overarching challenge and a series of individual challenges. Deliberative public engagement can contribute to both, but requires different approaches.

It is possible for a process to address a wide question, like “what should we in city X do about climate change?”. This is the approach that has been taken in many local citizens’ juries. Or a narrower question can be addressed, such as “how can we design incentives to encourage uptake of zero carbon heating?”. Although there are few examples of this on climate, it has been used in other policy arenas, such as the Sciencewise dialogues on the governance of mitochondrial transfer.

Some processes cover both broad and narrow questions; for example, Climate Assembly UK set out overarching principles for action on climate and offered recommendations in different policy areas. However, it did not go into detail on policy design.

4.2 Setting out commitments and expectations

Setting out clearly, in advance, what is expected from all parties ensures no one becomes disillusioned at the end of the process.

On the public side, people should have a clear understanding of what they are being asked, by whom, why, and what they can expect to happen as a result of the process. This sets expectations for the actions people can expect to see as a result of their engagement.

Ensuring policy actors set out clearly how they will use the results has two benefits. First, it ensures commitments are aligned with participants’ expectations. In the case of DMPs, ensuring that decision makers are clear about what is expected of them can also help to overcome concerns about the role of deliberation in the policy process.

Research into the attitudes of elected politicians towards DMPs shows that some perceive them to be a threat to their decision making authority. This will decrease the likelihood that they will productively engage with the findings.⁴⁸ Setting out commitments and expectations from the outset can help to overcome this challenge.

The second advantage is that it reduces the chance of policy actors cherry picking results to match their existing policy preferences.³⁰ For example, committing in advance to setting out how they will respond to every recommendation means they have to publicly justify why they are not taking action on more contentious issues.

4.3 Engaging policy actors in deliberation

Whether or not the findings of deliberative processes are used often relies on policy actors seeing them as legitimate and valuable. There is evidence that close familiarity with the process can help to build trust in it.⁴⁹ There are a number of models for integrating policy actors into the process evident from our case studies.

The [Irish Constitutional Convention](#) included sitting MPs as part of the assembly (case 3 **Error! Reference source not found.**). Though originally contentious, this was later seen as contributing to the convention's successes. Other approaches include that used by the [Northern Housing Consortium](#) in their jury on retrofitting social housing, with local policy actors and decision makers sitting on the oversight panels (case 10). In other cases, such as [Climate Assembly UK](#) and the [citizens' juries](#) held by the Public Accounts Committee of New South Wales, policy actors were encouraged to attend sessions and talk to participants (cases 13 and 4).

4.4 Linking to the wider public

Our review identified several examples where the success of the process was assisted by engaging the wider public through the course of the deliberation. For example, a DMP can host public meetings or take public submissions through online platforms. This was the case with the [Ontario Residents' Panel](#) to review the Condominium Act, the [citizens' assembly](#) on electoral reform in British Columbia, and the [Irish Constitutional Convention](#) (cases 17, 1 and 3). In other cases, effective media coverage of the DMP helped to catalyse wider public debate on the issues at hand, as is the case in [Danish consensus conferences](#) and the [Irish Constitutional Convention](#) (cases 25 and 3).

Linking DMPs to the wider public can bring two major benefits. First, the trust that publics are likely to put in the findings of a DMP can be increased if they understand the process and see the participants as genuinely reflective of the views of 'people like them'.⁶ Over time, this can build up wider public familiarity with DMPs and deliberation in general, helping to embed it in decision making culture.³⁵

Second, increasing public awareness of the process and recommendations can build wider public support and increase the likelihood of recommendations being acted upon. This can happen both through ensuring that politicians are aware of wider support for DMP recommendations and by empowering societal pressure groups to work with policy actors.

Ensuring an effective strategy and adequate resources to link deliberative engagement to the wider public requires planning at the beginning of the process.

4.5 Institutional capabilities

Identifying the need for deliberative engagement, conducting or commissioning high quality credible processes and integrating the findings into policy requires considerable knowledge and skill.

Installing a dedicated engagement team within public bodies can help to develop and institutionalise knowledge. Better understanding of deliberative methods by staff can make sure issues requiring public engagement are flagged early and acted upon.

Many of the successful case studies we reviewed were conducted by a body or organisation with formal standing in the policy process and a track record of running or commissioning deliberative processes.^{46,47,50,51} These include the Sciencewise engagement on [mitochondrial transfer](#) and [hybrid chimera technologies](#), the [Danish consensus conferences](#) and the [Oregon Citizens Initiative Review](#) (cases 5, 6, 25 and 24).

Establishing such a body has three advantages. First, over time, it can build up a reputation and allow policy actors and publics to become familiar with its work. This means outcomes are more likely to be seen as a legitimate contribution to the policy process.

Second, developing internal knowledge and expertise should increase the quality of the engagement and is more resource efficient, avoiding potential duplication of work or inefficient working practices, if multiple public bodies run ad-hoc processes.

Finally, ceding control over design, reporting and even initiation of the engagement to an arm's length body increases the independence of the process and reduces the possibility of political interference.

5 Suggested actions: embedding deliberative engagement in UK climate policy making

Deliberative engagement has much to offer climate strategy. As we set out in this report, it can help policy actors to navigate the complex issues that arise from the need for economy-wide emissions reduction and it can help to build trust and a social mandate for the changes needed.

Standalone engagement processes, such as Climate Assembly UK, have provided useful insights. However, this review suggests a need to institutionalise this approach and make it part of the standard policy making process.

To date, the UK lags behind other countries and regions, such as Italy, Spain and some north American states and provinces, in institutionalising deliberative engagement. As described in several of our case studies, these have moved beyond standalone processes and taken steps to institutionalise deliberation in the policy process.

Institutionalisation helps to increase familiarity and trust in deliberation amongst policy actors, allows an ongoing conversation between policy actors and publics, and can increase public trust in policy making. This trust relies on the wider public being made aware that the public engagement is happening.

Our suggested actions for the CCC and the government, outlined below, focus on two tasks: embedding deliberation in decision making and increasing public awareness to improve trust in the policy process.

5.1 Actions for the CCC

As independent advisers to the government, the CCC provides advice on the best route for the UK in achieving its climate targets. In addition to technical analysis and economic modelling, it is important for the CCC to develop good evidence on how people might engage and the insights they provide. This is important both on the overarching challenge of reaching net zero emissions and on specific policy issues, such as heat decarbonisation or negative emissions technologies. This evidence can be seen as complementary to technical and economic analysis and is a vital component of policy development. To develop this additional evidence base, we suggest the following:

1. Undertake an audit to identify areas for deliberative engagement

The CCC could review its current workstreams to identify where insights from deliberative public engagement could assist it with analysis and policy development.

These insights may include views on the following: different policy measures, technologies or whole scenarios; the likely limits of behaviour change or responses to incentives to help set the parameters of its models; or equity implications that may arise if different demographics are differently affected by policy changes.

2. Undertake a series of deliberative exercises to assist with scenario development for each Carbon Budget reporting cycle

Following an audit of the current work programme, the committee could identify a series of priority questions to be addressed through deliberative public engagement. They could then develop and commission deliberative research to input into the Carbon Budget reporting cycle.

Once a question has been identified as a priority for deliberative engagement, the CCC should engage with relevant stakeholders in the policy community, including government departments, to fully scope out and design the brief for deliberative engagement, and consider whether any has already been commissioned by other bodies. Examples of potential policy areas are set out below (see Box 2)

3. Increase awareness and expertise around deliberative engagement amongst committee staff

All CCC staff could be provided with information on deliberative public engagement methods, focused on the types of data and insights they can generate.

Greater awareness of its possible uses would help with the identification of areas of work that would benefit from it.

A small number of staff could develop deeper expertise and take responsibility for overseeing tendering and delivery of any deliberative engagements conducted by a third party.

4. Review the government's use of deliberation as part of wider public engagement assessment in future progress reports

The CCC could review the government's use of deliberative methods annually as part of its wider public engagement review included in each progress report.

This could assess how effectively deliberative methods are being used and how the findings are being handled and communicated to decision makers. And it could make recommendations on specific policy areas that would benefit from deliberative methods.

5. Support initiatives by the government and parliament

The CCC should work with government departments, and parliamentary committees and groupings, to initiate and learn from deliberation on climate issues. For example, the CCC played a vital role in Climate Assembly UK, helping to steer the assembly and contributing evidence and analysis.

Collaboration with government and parliamentary initiatives would make sure they benefited from the CCC's expertise, whilst ensuring that the CCC had sight and ownership of the findings.

Box 2. Examples of climate policy questions a deliberative process could address

Climate Assembly UK provided insights into informed public positions on a wide range of policies. Its broad scope did not allow for individual policy areas to be explored in greater detail.

Several policy areas may benefit from dedicated deliberative processes to aid the development of detailed policy. Areas of climate policy that provoke strong public reactions could particularly benefit.

Three examples are:

1. Shifting personal transport behaviour

Shifting towards public transport and active travel requires them to be more widely available, easier to use and cheaper than car travel. As well as measures to bring down the cost of public transport, action may be needed to increase the relative cost of car travel. Yet increasing fuel duty and road pricing are contentious. A deliberative process could explore how economic measures can be used to change the relative cost of different transport options in a publicly acceptable way.

2. Changing diets away from meat

There is currently no consensus on the most appropriate way to reduce meat consumption. A deliberative process could be used to design a series of publicly acceptable interventions to change dietary habits.

3. The roles and responsibilities of local authorities on climate policy

Many local authorities have declared 'climate emergencies' and have run assemblies or juries to help formulate their responses. Recommendations from these processes typically combine areas of policy for which the relevant local authority is responsible with those that higher levels of local government or national government control. But local authorities (at different levels) struggle to communicate which areas of policy they have jurisdiction over. Whether additional powers will be given to local authorities is a live policy question.² The government has committed to setting up a Local Net Zero Forum to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of national and local government in delivering net zero.³ A deliberative process could run alongside this to help design guidance on the role of local authorities. This could benefit local leaders and citizens as they seek to co-design local climate strategies.

5.2 Actions for the government

1. Increase central oversight of public engagement on net zero across government

The need for cross-government collaboration and co-ordination on climate policy is well recognised. The Cabinet Committee on Climate Change, based in the Cabinet Office, has responsibility for this, but many commentators have suggested that a central organisation or unit should oversee the net zero transition.⁵² This is equally true for public engagement, including deliberative processes, on net zero and wider climate policy.

Whichever body ultimately oversees net zero delivery, it could have a mandate to include public engagement. This co-ordination could include a cross-departmental audit to identify issues suitable for the use of deliberative methods.

This oversight would avoid duplication, help insights to be shared, and identify and co-ordinate areas where cross-departmental working is required. It would also develop a central source of expertise on deliberation. Any such organisation could learn from the success and longevity of the Sciencewise programme.

2. Amplify public awareness of existing and future engagement using deliberative and consultative processes

Many of the benefits of deliberative public engagement, for example increased trust in the political process, rely on the wider public knowing that it is taking place.

Where the government commissions its own DMPs, politicians should explicitly state how the policy development process has been informed by public deliberation.

Ministers' policy announcements and statements in parliament should draw on recommendations from public dialogue. Participants from these processes can also report back and help to publicise new initiatives. Following Climate Assembly UK, some of its participants have successfully become spokespeople for climate action. As we describe above, hearing directly from people like them builds trust and support.

There are already schemes and initiatives across government designed to gather informed public views on issues related to decarbonisation. These will multiply as the government increases its public engagement on net zero. The government must ensure that the findings from these processes feed into government communications around climate policy and net zero. For example, the use of a 'you asked, we did' communication format would increase public awareness of the engagement and the impact it has had on government policy.

3. Increase awareness and expertise around deliberative engagement amongst relevant civil servants

As recommended above for CCC staff, civil servants from relevant departments could be informed about deliberative public engagement methods, with a focus on the types of data and insights they can generate. Wider awareness of the best uses of deliberative exercises would help the identification of policy areas that would benefit.

Processes could be established so that ideas for deliberative research from across each department are passed to the social research team to assess. Socialising deliberation in this way could increase civil servants' understanding of the advantages and limitations of findings from deliberative research.

4. Develop cross departmental guidelines for the use of deliberative methods

The government could develop cross-departmental guidelines on when to consider deliberative engagement. These should reflect the ways that deliberation can be used at different stages of a policy making process. For example, to test new policy ideas, either with a representative group of the public, or with a particular sub-group who may be particularly affected.

These guidelines should also consider where it is appropriate to supplement an existing policy development process with deliberative engagement. A good example is the statutory 12 week consultation process. This important channel for public input on emerging policy ideas can be difficult for non-experts to feed into. Responses are primarily received from interest groups with the means and knowledge to respond.

The government could include guidelines for integrating a deliberative element into the consultation process for particular climate policy issues. This could take the form of a DMP to supplement the consultation, or a citizens' panel to feed into the development of consultation documents relating to a policy. This panel could review the evidence and assist in developing user friendly versions of consultation documents and summaries of the evidence and arguments.

5. Provide funding for local government and public bodies to carry out deliberative public engagement

Many local authorities have run deliberative public engagements following their declarations of a 'climate emergency' and are now exploring how to maintain dialogue with their local communities as they develop and roll out climate policies. The government should offer funding that local authorities can bid for to run innovative public engagement on local climate policy. As successful approaches are identified, these can then be rolled out to other local authorities.

Government agencies and other non-departmental public bodies could also have access to additional funding for deliberative public engagement, which they could apply for when the need arose.

6. Establish and resource a standing citizens' panel to feed into progress reporting cycles, in partnership with the CCC

The government could work with the CCC and provide the resources for a new standing citizens' panel to feed into the annual progress reporting process, similar to the model used by the Bank of England. This would have two main tasks.

First, to provide a view on the priorities for the next 12 months, to sit alongside decarbonisation priorities identified by the committee (including adaptation priorities for relevant years).

Second, to advise on priorities for public engagement in the next year, based on upcoming policy developments the panel believes might be contentious or which could benefit from deeper public insight. Having a standing panel would reduce the costs involved in the learning phase of deliberation.

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Appendix 1. Deliberative methods

1. Electoral reform - British Columbia

Where: British Columbia, Canada

When: 2004, 11 months

Policy problem: Reform of the voting system for elections to state legislature.

Commissioning body: The executive of the legislature of British Columbia, overseen by Elections British Columbia, a non-partisan office of the legislature.

Approach taken: A citizens' assembly was held that went through three phases. The first was a learning phase to familiarise participants with the workings of different voting systems. From this, they produced a publicly available preliminary statement on the values they believed should underpin any future voting system. They then went through a public hearing phase consisting of 50 public hearings across the province and an online forum where members of the public could make submissions. These were distilled by researchers and presented back to the assembly. Finally, in the deliberation phase the assembly decided on a recommendation for a new voting system.⁴⁴

Outcomes: The assembly supported a Single Transferable Vote system which was put to the public in a referendum. A majority supported the change, however the percentage in favour fell short of the super majority required to pass a constitutional amendment.⁵³

2. Constitutional convention - Iceland

Where: Iceland

When: 2010 - 2013

Policy problem: The need for new constitution due to public discontent with the political class, following 2008 financial crisis and subsequent recession.

Commissioning body: National Parliament, following a self-organised National Assembly

Approach taken: The original assembly called by parliament to work on a new constitution was declared null and void due to issues with the electoral system. However, most members were subsequently placed into a constitutional council. Their remit was to review the foundations of the Icelandic constitution, including: the organisation of the legislative and executive branches and the limits of their powers; the role and position of the president of the republic; and environmental matters, including the ownership and utilisation of natural resources. As well as deliberating internally, members of the wider public were able to submit suggestions to the council through social media.

Outcomes: the assembly recommended reform of the voting system, a referendum on the abolition of the state church, a term limit for the prime minister and president, state-provided internet access to all citizens, and the declaration of Iceland's natural resources as public property. The substantive changes were put to voters in a national referendum and all six were successfully approved. The bill enacting these changes was, however, stalled in parliament and not progressed, following a change of government after an election in 2013. The convention was widely seen as a failure.⁵⁴

3. Constitutional convention – Ireland

Where: Republic of Ireland

When: Ten weekends between 2012 and 2014

Policy problem: Widespread belief in the need for more efficient control and accountability of public bodies following the 2008 financial crisis and economic downturn.⁴²

Commissioning body: Irish Parliament (Oireachtas)

Approach taken: A citizens' assembly made up of two thirds members of the public and one third politicians. The main assembly was coupled with opportunities for the wider public to feed into the process through two regional meetings and the acceptance of written submissions.

The assembly was initially asked to discuss eight issues regarding the Irish constitution, including reducing the voting age, reviewing the voting system and removing the offence of blasphemy from the constitution. The assembly was also empowered to add additional constitutional issues to the original list of eight. Reform of the Dáil (lower house of the Oireachtas) and issues of economic, social and cultural rights were subsequently added to the list of issues for consideration.

Outcomes: The assembly made recommendations on all ten items, stepping outside its official mandate on at least one by suggesting a reduction in the voting age to 16 (the original item had asked about a reduction in voting age from 18 to 17). The three main outcomes of the assembly to date have been two referenda leading to a change in the law and the hosting of a further citizens' assembly to discuss climate change and other issues. Same sex marriage and blasphemy have both been legalised following referenda in 2015 and 2018 respectively.

Ahead of the 2018 referendum on blasphemy, public exposure to statements derived from the work of the assembly was shown to increase empathy for the opposing views on the issue.⁵⁵ This demonstrates the potential of deliberative processes to assist in defusing conflict in public debate around contentious issues.

Though the inclusion of policy makers in the assembly drew criticism at the outset, fears of politicians overriding the discussions turned out to be unfounded, and their involvement was credited with contributing to the success of the process.⁴¹ The random selection of participants also drew some criticism, especially as this did not guarantee sufficient representation from groups affected by the questions being debated, which was a particular concern around the issue of same sex marriage.⁴²

4. Energy generation – New South Wales, Australia

Where: New South Wales, Australia

When: 2012

Policy problem: The advantages and disadvantages of different energy generation policies in the state.

Commissioning body: The Public Accounts Committee, a permanent statutory committee of the lower house of the legislature. Commissioned as part of an inquiry into energy issues initially requested by the Minister for Resources and Energy.

Approach taken: Two concurrent citizens' juries in different parts of the state, one rural and one urban. These bodies were asked to consider financial and public perception aspects of alternative forms of energy generation. The juries' recommendations included aspects of renewables investment, and energy decentralisation and governance.⁵⁶

Outcomes: The impact of the process was most clearly seen in the final report of the Public Accounts Committee. Many of the recommendations from the juries featured in the final committee report to parliament. One recommendation: to look to the Commonwealth Clean Energy Finance Corporation as a source of funding for electricity network expansion, was committed to by the New South Wales government.

Research into the process revealed several factors underpinning this success. For instance, it concluded that visits made by committee members to observe the juries in progress was a reason for the committee's high regard for the recommendations.⁴⁹

The MPs who sat on the committee commented on the advantages of the juries over other approaches to hearing from the public. These included the legitimacy they bestowed on decisions made by the committee due to their representative makeup, high quality insights and argumentation on the policy issue, and the ability to test public opinion of a policy.

5. Mitochondrial transfer – Sciencewise – UK

Where: UK

When: 2012

Policy problem: To explore the social and ethical issues relating to IVF-based mitochondrial replacement techniques used to prevent transmission of mitochondrial disease. This emerging technology was reaching the point of being implementable, but no policy framework yet existed to govern its use.

Commissioning body: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA, a regulator), at the request of the then Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Approach taken: Sciencewise used a mixed methods approach, combining consultative and deliberative engagement. Part of the aim of this process was to understand the differences between the views of an informed and uninformed public. The regulator was also interested in arguments for and against the use of the techniques.

The engagement entailed: around 1,000 face to face interviews at 175 locations; three deliberative workshops with 30 people meeting twice in each location; two open public meetings; an online consultation; and a patient focus group of people impacted by mitochondrial disease. The survey and workshop participants were selected to give a representative sample, the latter two methods had a self-selected audience.⁵⁰

The engagement costed £220,000

Outcomes: There was broad support for the use of the treatment in cases of serious mitochondrial disease, subject to three safeguards. First, that the permitting process should only allow these techniques to be used for the purposes of combatting mitochondrial disease. Second, that ongoing research should be conducted as the techniques are rolled out, to assess safety and build understanding. Finally, that donors of healthy mitochondria should be given the same rights as a tissue donor.

The findings of the process closely informed HFEA's advice to government in 2013. The process for granting permits was legislated in February 2015, following a House of Commons debate and standard consultation process. At each step, the findings of the public engagement featured prominently and are largely reflected in the final legislation.

6. Hybrid chimera – Sciencewise – UK

Where: UK

When: 11 months in 2007

Policy problem: The acceptability of combining animal and human genetic material to create hybrid embryos and other tissue for the purpose of medical research.

Commissioning body: HFEA, at the request of the Department of Health.

Approach taken: Four separate approaches were used: one open public meeting; an online opinion poll; written consultations; and a series of discussion sessions. For the discussion sessions, 12 smaller meetings were held across the country which then acted as feeder sessions for a one day workshop with 44 people.

Outcomes: Overall, the engagement revealed support for the use of hybrid tissues, if there was a clear research rationale and the tissues were not available elsewhere. It concluded that the research rationale must be directly relevant to the study of human disease. This element of proportionality was a key finding. Participants believed the use of these tissues must be both necessary and desirable from a human health perspective. The deliberative workshops were crucial for examining people's concerns about certain aspects of the technology and for developing a series of guidelines to overcome them.

HFEA's advice to government reflected these findings, suggesting that research on hybrid tissues should be allowed, but with certain caveats based on the views identified through the deliberative workshops. A bill reflecting this advice was passed into law in 2008.

The process costed £140,000

7. Energy efficiency – Citizens Advice Scotland – Scotland, UK

Where: Scotland, UK

When: 2016 - 2017

Policy problem: How to encourage homeowners to invest in improving the energy efficiency of their homes.

Commissioning body: Consumer Future Unit of Citizens Advice Scotland

Approach taken: The engagement was deliberately structured to test the benefits of deliberative methods, compared with a standard focus group work. A focus group was carried out alongside a structured dialogue and a citizens' jury.

Outcomes: A prompt council tax rebate was the preferred incentive of participants for installing energy efficiency measures. This builds on an existing mechanism within an earlier piece of Scottish climate change legislation. The research also identified that most people will resist regulation of their 'private domain', making it likely that mandating energy efficiency upgrades would be a highly controversial policy.⁵⁷

The results of this research have been fed into subsequent government consultations, though they have not yet been put into effect. The primary outcome of this exercise was to inform Citizens Advice Scotland's position on this issue for future government engagement.

Comparison of the deliberative and standard focus group approaches showed that similar conclusions were reached by both on the substantive policy question. The deliberative approach was better for identifying reasoning and the justifications for policy positions.

The deliberative approach was around four times the cost of the standard focus group approach.⁵⁸

8. Climate change – Bristol City Council – Bristol, UK

Where: Bristol, UK

When: 2021

Policy problem: How the city of Bristol could recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on changes in climate, housing, transport, and health and social care policy.

Commissioning body: Bristol City Council

Approach taken: A citizens' assembly with 60 members. Prior to the assembly, the council conducted a series of focus groups and a city-wide survey. These activities were used to identify themes for the assembly to address.

Outcomes: The assembly produced a series of principles on which the council's response to the pandemic should be based. They also produced a list of 17 specific recommendations.

The assembly was established to provide evidence for the Council's Corporate Strategy and for Bristol's 'One City Plan'. Both were due for review within a year of the assembly's completion. The council committed to reviewing all recommendations and providing a response on the steps being taken in response, with updates on progress every six months. It is too early to tell how much influence these recommendations have had on the council's decision making.

Those taking part in the assembly believed they had the opportunity to develop and express their views. There was general support for the wider use of citizens' assemblies and a belief these could lead to improvements in public policy making.⁵⁹

9. Mitochondrial transfer – University of Sydney – Australia

Where: Sydney, Australia

When: 2017

Policy problem: To question whether informed citizens endorse the use of mitochondrial donation to prevent the transmission of disease.

Commissioning body: Academic research, University of Sydney

Approach taken: A citizens' jury was conducted over one and half days with 14 representative participants. Four presentations were given, two covering the status of research about the technology and its use as a treatment for disease. The further two presentations covered substantive and opposing views on the technology. Jurors were then given time to deliberate before coming to a verdict on the question 'Should Australia allow children to be born following mitochondrial donation?'

Outcomes: There was majority support for allowing mitochondrial donation (11 out of 14 jurors). The jurors also supported a licensing regime and the restriction of the procedure to instances of clear medical need, rather than parental desire. Though not unanimous, the majority view was that a child born using mitochondrial replacement should have a right to know their donor. Of the 11 supportive jurors, seven would only support it if certain conditions were met, in particular a tough licensing regime that restricted access to cases of women at high risk of transmitting serious disease.⁶⁰

This was conducted as part of an academic research project and was not directly linked to a decision making process. However, in May 2022 a law was passed that legalised mitochondrial replacement therapy in Australia.

10. Social housing retrofit – Northern Housing Consortium – England, UK

Where: Northern England

When: July to September 2021

Policy problem: To identify actions that can be taken by social housing tenants and providers to tackle climate change.

Commissioning body: The Northern Housing Consortium, an umbrella organisation whose members consist of local authorities, arm's length management organisations and associations that provide social housing.

Approach taken: The consortium partnered with housing associations to commission a citizens' jury consisting of 30 social housing tenants from the North of England. The jury met over ten weeks in the second half of 2021 to discuss how social housing tenants and providers can tackle climate change, with a focus on home retrofits. The process was overseen by an oversight panel including decision makers, such as representatives of housing associations and local and national civil servants. The jury reported in November 2021 making a series of recommendations about how tenants, social landlords and other organisations can work together to smooth the process of social housing energy retrofits.

Outcomes: Following the Jury, the Northern Housing Consortium has focused on promoting the findings within the social housing sector. The work of the Jury has been

promoted through a webinar series and has been featured at a wide range of events and conferences on housing and climate issues.

11. Assisted dying – Government of Jersey – Jersey

Where: Island of Jersey

When: Spring 2021

Policy problem: Whether or not to allow assisted dying on the Island of Jersey.

Commissioning body: Government of Jersey

Approach taken: A jury of 23 island residents (selected to offer a representative range of views on assisted dying) was selected by sortition to meet over ten sessions, totalling 24 hours. The first eight sessions were dedicated to learning about and reaching a decision on support for assisted dying in principle. The final two sessions focused on the conditionality that should be attached, following an indication of support in principle from the jury.

The jury resulted from a series of public initiatives including an e-petition, a public survey, a GP and doctors' survey and a public meeting. These all indicated support for assisted dying, motivating the minister responsible to commission the citizens' jury to gather in-depth views on the issue.

The process costed £66,000.

Outcome: Seventy eight per cent of the jury agreed that assisted dying should be permitted for terminally ill patients, or those experiencing unbearable suffering, who are over 18. They said it should be subject to a pre-approval process and a reflection and consideration period and should be done with the assistance of doctors or nurses.

Following the jury's report, the Jersey Council of Ministers developed its own report and proposition to ask the States Assembly if it agreed with the jury's recommendations. In November 2021, the States Assembly voted to agree the principle of legalising assisted dying. A law formalising this decision and clarifying safeguards is expected to be voted on in 2023.

12. Climate change – Scottish Government – Scotland, UK

Where: Scotland, UK

When: November 2020 to March 2021

Policy problem: How to tackle the climate emergency in an effective and fair way.

Commissioning body: Scottish Government

Approach taken: The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 included a provision requiring the establishment of a climate assembly. An assembly of 100 citizens was selected by sortition and met over seven weekends.

Following an initial general learning phase, the group was split in three to discuss and develop recommendations on one of three focus areas: diet, land use and lifestyle; homes and communities; and travel and work.

One significant innovation used in the Scottish Assembly was the integration of the Scottish Youth Parliament, to ensure the voices of under 16 year olds were heard by members of the Climate Assembly. This was done through a series of outputs presented to the assembly, as well as joint workshops.

Outcome: The final report includes 81 recommendations that received overwhelming consensus support from the assembly. The final report of the assembly was laid before the Scottish parliament in June 2021. Subsequent research found the assemblies findings were well covered in the news media and contributed to debate on climate policy in Scotland. However the same research found limited direct impact on government policy and suggested more time may be needed to fully assess the impact of the Assembly.⁶¹

13. Climate change – UK Parliament – UK

Where: UK

When: January to May 2020

Policy problem: The need to understand the level of public support for a range of policy options for reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Commissioning body: Six House of Commons select committees, led by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee.

Approach taken: The assembly involved 108 participants, selected by sortition, who met over six weekends. Climate policy was divided into six themes, 'how we travel', 'in the home', 'what we eat', 'how we use land', 'where our electricity comes from' and 'removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere'.

Within each theme, following a learning phase, a series of mainly pre-prepared policy options were discussed and voted on. Policy options for the latter two themes were discussed and voted on in plenary. For the former four themes, the assembly was divided into four groups with each group discussing and voting on policy measures for one theme. The results of the voting were compiled in a report on the assembly's recommendations for government.

The assembly budget was £560,000.

Outcome: The final report contained over 50 recommendations for government, backed by the select committees who commissioned the assembly. The government lead on preparations for the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow committed to using the recommendations to shape policy in the run up to the summit. The CCC referenced the assembly's findings in its sixth carbon budget advice. The report has also informed inquiries from the select committee's which commissioned the assembly. Beyond these commitments to use the findings to guide future work, there have been no government policy changes directly linked to the assembly's findings.

14. Climate change – President of France – France

Where: France

When: October 2019 to April 2020

Policy problem: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 whilst considering social justice issues. Also driven by need to address societal unrest triggered by perceptions of unjust environmental policy.

Commissioning body: Office of the President of France

Approach taken: At the outset of the process, President Macron committed to acting on all the measures suggested, either through a national referendum, parliamentary vote or direct regulation. The convention involved 150 citizens selected by sortition, who met for seven sessions. They discussed five themes: transport, food, consumption, work and manufacturing, and housing. The convention was intended to develop policy ideas with the assistance of expert advice, rather than vote on pre-prepared policies.

Participants were given significant scope to guide the process and held positions on the governance committee. Through this they were able to add an additional session to the originally planned six. In between sessions, participants were encouraged to speak to their local communities and to the media about the work of the convention.

The assembly budget was EUR 5.4 million

Outcome: The final report identified 149 measures, including law on ecocide and a moratorium on the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

Most of the measures were included in a climate bill put to the French parliament, resulting in a new climate law after a debate of over 110 hours. The climate bill that was passed into law includes a provision to make 'ecocide' an offence which carries a potential prison sentence. The bill also banned short flights where there is a rail alternative that would take less than two and a half hours. Despite these inclusions, some measures suggested by the convention were not included in the bill by the president, and others were weakened through the inclusion of conditionalities or ambiguous timelines. The impact assessment accompanying the bill suggested it was

insufficient to achieve the targeted 40% reduction in emissions by 2030. The bill attracted significant criticism from convention members and environmental groups for watering down many measures approved by the convention.

The convention was very successful at driving a societal debate on climate change in France. Seventy per cent of people report having heard of it and 60% see it as a legitimate form of decision making on behalf of the population. Sixty four per cent believe its work is useful in fighting climate change.

15. Social care funding - UK parliament - UK

Where: England

When: Spring 2018

Policy problem: How to fund adult social care?

Commissioning body: The Health and Social Care Select Committee and the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee of the UK House of Commons.

Approach taken: A jury of 47 citizens from across England was selected by sortition to meet over two weekends for 28 hours of learning, deliberation and decision making.

Outcome: The jury recommended a system, free at the point of delivery, paid for primarily through a new broad based compulsory social insurance scheme or a hypothecated income tax hike. The jury recommended that no one with assets below £50,000 should be expected to provide private finance to top this up.

The findings fed into a unanimous joint report of the two committees, bringing together politicians from across the political spectrum.

The support for a compulsory social insurance scheme was reflected in the subsequent government decision to increase National Insurance contributions to help cover the rising cost of social care.

16. Biobanking - academic research - British Columbia, Canada

Where: British Columbia, Canada

When: April to May 2007

Policy problem: The need to develop a governance framework to inform the creation of biobanks (collections of human biological tissue used for research).

Commissioning body: Research group

Approach taken: A group of 23 demographically representative participants deliberated over two weekends. A First Nation representative was specifically invited to

ensure First Nation communities were represented, even if not selected through the standard recruitment process. The first weekend focused on learning and discussing general thoughts and concerns around biobanks. The second weekend was structured to elicit specific recommendations.

Outcome: The group supported the existence of biobanks in principle but wanted to see a standardisation of procedures to enhance research efficiency and privacy, and a governing body that was independent of researchers and funders. There were unresolved contested issues where no agreement could be reached.

The process was set up by a team of researchers with no direct access to the policy process. It is not clear that it has had a significant impact on government policy.

17. Condominium management – Ministry of Government and Consumer Services – Ontario Canada

Where: Ontario, Canada

When: 2012

Policy problem: The need to renew legislation covering condominiums.

Commissioning body: Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services

Approach taken: The ministry used a mixture of methods to gain views on the renewal of the act. These were: information sessions and town hall meetings, stakeholder round tables, public submissions and a residents' panel. The residents' panel was made up of 36 members selected from an initial 10,000 invite letters to condominium residents to be broadly demographically representative. They met three times to deliberate over provisions in the new act. Their findings, along with public submissions, were then reviewed by an expert panel and worked up into proposals. The residents' panel then reconvened to review the proposals.

Outcome: The residents were content that their views had been listened to and agreed to the proposals prepared by the expert panel which went on to form the basis of the act. These proposals included the imposition of new fees on residents which decisions makers had originally been wary of, but which the residents panel agreed on over the course of the deliberation.

18. Flooding – Office of the Mayor of Gdansk – Gdansk, Poland

Where: Gdansk, Poland

When: 2016

Policy problem: How to prepare for future flooding events following an inadequate response to extreme rainfall in 2016.

Commissioning body: The mayor's office of the city of Gdansk

Approach: An assembly of 56 members was convened by sortition. The deliberation was relatively short, covering just two consecutive weekends. The process was overseen by a team of three independent co-ordinators in co-operation with the municipality. Unusually, the mayor of Gdansk agreed to be bound by the findings of the assembly, ahead of it being held, if recommendations received at least 80% support.

Outcome: The assembly developed 19 recommendations and eventually voted to approve 16 of these. Those that received above 80% support were enacted. Following another major flooding event in 2017, it was widely perceived that the response of the city was much faster and more effective.

The city has developed a standardised protocol for convening citizens' assemblies, helping to streamline subsequent processes. Following the success of this process, Gdansk has hosted two subsequent assemblies: one on air pollution and another on improving civic engagement.

19. City transport investment – Metrolinx – Ontario, Canada

Where: Ontario, Canada

When: February to March 2013

Policy problem: The need to raise new funds to invest in future transportation infrastructure.

Commissioning body: Metrolinx, an agency of the provincial government which co-ordinates and integrates all modes of transport in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area

Approach taken: Metrolinx created a Resident Reference Panel on Regional Transportation Investment as part of a wider programme of public engagement used to inform future revenue raising measures. Other methods include the distribution of 'conversations kits', and the convening of 16 roundtable meetings.

The Resident Reference Panel was made up of randomly selected and representative members and tasked with deliberating over a list of 27 revenue measures, with a view to agreeing on a combination that would achieve a pre-defined level of revenue. Members of the panel met four times and were encouraged to converse with friends and neighbours about the measures in between sessions.

Outcome: The panel recommended a combination of revenue raising measures, the majority of which were then approved by the Metrolinx management board.

20. Mixed topics – Irish Parliament – Ireland

Where: Republic of Ireland

When: 2016 to 2018

Policy problem: Five policy issues were debated, these were: a ban on abortion, climate change, the challenges of an aging population, the fixed term of parliaments and how referenda are held.

Commissioning body: Irish parliament

Approach: Following the success of the Constitutional Convention, a commitment to hosting a citizens' assembly was embedded in the 2016 Programme for Government. The assembly sat over 12 weekends from 2016 to 2018. It consisted of 99 citizens selected by sortition.

Prior to the deliberation, there was a call for public submissions to allow those not participating in the assembly to contribute their views. Following deliberation, anonymised voting was used to gauge agreement on a series of policy proposals in each of the five areas. The process was overseen by an expert advisory group convened on each of the five areas.

Outcome: The two most significant outcomes related to climate change and the abortion ban. Recommendations in these areas were reviewed by specially convened parliamentary committees. A referendum was then held on abortion, resulting in the ban being repealed. The climate change recommendations informed the creation of the cross-government Climate Action Plan.⁶²

21. Mixed topics – academic research – Brisbane, Australia

Where: Brisbane, Australia

When: 2019

Policy problem: The group assessed four different policy questions, these were:

- Should an emissions trading scheme be introduced?
- Should the full time working week be reduced to 30 hours or less?
- Should the cost of vehicle registration be based on how many kilometres vehicles travel?
- Should companies be taxed if they replace people with robots?

Commissioning body: academic research, University of Queensland

Approach: A mini-public of 48 individuals was selected by sortition from the Brisbane area. A series of webinars were then held to inform participants about the questions

they were being asked to deliberate. The group was split between online and in-person groups which deliberated and then voted on the policy measures. Individual policy preferences were recorded before and after the deliberation. Discussions were recorded and analysed to identify the common arguments used in favour or against each measure.

Outcome: This mini-public was detached from any policy process, and was convened specifically to test the contributions that public deliberation can make to policy design. The researchers reached two main conclusions. First, that deliberation can have a significant effect on individual and group preferences. Second, that public deliberation can produce a form of 'policy knowledge' that other methods of public engagement do not generate. Analysing the arguments used during deliberation allowed researchers to identify the justifications given for individual policy positions. This type of data can be used both to improve policy design and to design effect policy communications.⁶⁰

Appendix 2. Processes

22. Tuscany regional participation policy – Italy

Where: Italy

When: A law passed in 2007 and renewed in 2013, following a trial period.

Structure: In 2007 a law was passed that opened avenues for the public to feed into policy making. The law itself was drafted through a two year process including a series of citizens' assemblies, engaging nearly 1,000 people.⁵³ The law allows for and ensures that budget is available for two forms of engagement: a 'public debate' and an 'open deliberative process'. These are overseen by a regional independent authority of three members appointed for a period of five years. This authority must ensure that engagement processes are of a certain quality.

Public debates are mandatory for public and private infrastructure projects costing over €50 million. Public debates are a series of meetings open to all affected by the development, including members of the public and local stakeholders. Experts are on hand to provide input. The process takes no longer than six months and has no binding effect, although planners must spell out their motivations if they make a decision that differs from the conclusions of the debate.

The second mechanism is the 'open deliberative process'. These processes can be entirely proposed, designed and developed by groups of local citizens or a local institution. Proposals will be evaluated by the independent authority. There are some guidelines for how they must be structured, but much is left to the discretion of the proposers. The results are disseminated to local authorities and have consultative effect.

Successes: The law was renewed after a trial period and has been further institutionalised with the creation of a Regional Minister of Participation. Since its inception, it has financed and promoted over 170 local and regional participation projects, with topics ranging from urban renewal and landscape planning to participatory budgeting and economic policies.⁶³

23. Emilia-Romagna regional participation policy – Italy

Where: Emilia-Romagna, Italy

When: Since 2010

Structure: A law (Law 3/2010) allows citizens and local organisations to propose deliberative processes on laws of regional or local relevance via 'organised discussion paths'. As well as citizen groups, schools, businesses and local authorities can recommend participation projects. Recommendations are reviewed by a central administrative body, and those approved are provided with financial, methodological

and logistical support to organise discussions. The law sets out a series of guidelines around the design of the processes, including requirements for representativeness and the impartiality of expert input.

The regional public administration is not legally required to consider the outputs of the engagement processes. However, it has committed to giving a reasoned explanation in instances where decisions are taken which are contrary to the wishes expressed by the participants of the deliberative processes.

Successes: Over 100 discussion paths can be organised in a single year, focused on issues of institutional reform, socioeconomic development and welfare.

24. Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR) – Oregon, USA

Where: Oregon, USA

When: Ongoing since 2008

Structure: The process involves a citizens' jury which meets to consider a ballot measure and agree on a statement outlining their recommendations on the measure and the strongest arguments for and against it.

A new jury is convened for each ballot measure, sits for three to five days and is made up of 24 members. Ballot measures considered by CIR include mandatory minimum criminal sentences for some repeat offences and the regulated distribution of medical marijuana. The Citizens' Statement produced at the end of the process is sent to every registered voter in their official Voters' Guide. The process is established in state legislation, and each review is overseen by the Citizens' Initiative Review Commission.

Successes: Academic studies have looked at the impact of the CIR on voter views and behaviours. The first official CIR in 2010, following a pilot in 2008, focused on sentencing for repeat offenders. The Citizens' Statement was shown to significantly influence voter intentions, with those reading the statement swinging against the measure and a control group voting for it.⁵¹ Voters who have read the Citizens' Statement and understood the CIR process also report higher levels of belief in their own capacity for effective political action and the belief that officials and decision makers listen to the public.³⁴

25. Consensus conferences – Denmark

Where: Denmark

When: Ongoing from 1987

Structure: A Danish consensus conference is a citizens' jury comprising 10 to 16 members of the public who convene to discuss a socially sensitive issue in science and

technology. After four days of learning and deliberation, the group produces a report which is circulated to MPs, scientists, special interest groups and the public. The launch of the report often takes place at a press conference to increase public awareness.

Conferences are run by the Danish Board of Technology (DBT), a government agency with a mandate to review and provide evidence on emerging questions of science and technology policy.

Consensus conferences are used when it is deemed there is a significant ethical element to the technology being assessed. Though the government is not mandated to respond to the reports from the conferences, by law they must be presented to several parliamentary committees.

Issues addressed through consensus conferences include biotechnology, information technology and transport. A particularly high profile issue addressed was the 1999 conference on the use of genetically modified (GM) crops.

Successes: Consensus conferences have a high level of cross party support, initially this was expressed in the decision to place the originally temporary DBT on a permanent statutory footing in 1995.⁴⁷ There is high awareness of the conferences and their outcomes among politicians and the public. Across the political spectrum, most MPs actively make themselves aware of the latest conference findings.⁴⁶ Reports of conferences are widely cited in parliamentary debates and in actions taken by the executive and parliamentary bodies.⁴⁶

The 1999 conference on GM crops was instigated following heated public debate on the topic. The final report did not see a clear role for GM in the Danish context given the state of the agriculture sector. The report outlined governance issues that should be considered, including the separation of research on the effects of GM from companies that stood to profit from their introduction, and the need for clear labelling.⁴⁷ These findings were largely accepted by the government, although it did not signal a significant departure from its policy position.

What was potentially of more consequence was the conference held on the use of genetic screening in hiring staff and insurance decisions. This resulted in a new law significantly limiting the use of such technologies.⁶⁴

26. NICE citizens' council – UK

Where: UK

When: 2002 to 2020 (standing council); 2020 onwards (individual deliberations)

Structure The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is a non-departmental public body of the Department for Health, tasked with developing

guidance and recommendations on the effectiveness of treatments and medical procedures for the UK's National Health Service.

Until 2020, NICE had a standing council of 30 members of the public selected to represent the demographics of the UK adult population. The council met annually to deliberate over complex and controversial policy issues. After each council a report was produced that NICE used to inform its approach to key issues.

In 2020, NICE announced the suspension of the standing panel in favour of commissioning individual deliberative exercises, as and when relevant issues arose.

Successes Since its inception, the standing council has influenced NICE's work in a number of ways. In 2013, NICE established a new methodological advisory group to explore how the costs and benefits of informal care are assessed when developing guidance on social care quality standards. This followed directly from recommendations made by the council. In 2014, the council created a set of societal values it thought should underpin NICE's decision making. NICE updated its social value judgment guidance documents in response to this.

It is too early to evaluate the new approach adopted by NICE.

27. The Ostbelgien-Model – Belgium

Where: Ostbelgien, Belgium

When: 2019, ongoing

Structure: On a cross-party basis, the legislature of Ostbelgien (a German-speaking federal region of Belgium) voted to establish a citizen's council and citizens' assembly. Both bodies are selected to be representative of the wider population, with eligibility for selection based on residency, not nationality.

The council is made up of 24 people who are in post for 18 months. It is responsible for selecting topics and designing and overseeing citizens' assemblies. Assemblies are typically made up of around 50 citizens and work over three weekends over three or four months. Their recommendations are passed onto the legislature which is required to debate them. Recommendations from assemblies are not binding.

Successes: This model was established to give the local community more of a say in the affairs of the legislature. To date there are no studies reviewing the effectiveness of the Ostbelgien model.

Appendix 3. Non-deliberative methods

28. Citizens' panels – Bank of England – UK

Where: UK

When: Since 2018

Policy problem: Ensuring monetary policy takes account of people's lived experiences of the economy. Specifically, to identify people's views on jobs, pay, the cost of living, the housing market, borrowing and saving money, and the impact of Covid-19.

Commissioning body: Bank of England

Approach taken: Citizens' panels are three hour, one off meetings held at different locations across the country. They are very similar to focus groups, with information presented by the bank, followed by opportunities for the public to feedback their views. Participants are selected to be representative of the UK population.

Twenty three panels were held between 2018 and 2020, attended by 492 members of the public.⁶⁵

The panels are one branch of the bank's outreach and engagement, which also includes community forums that target harder to reach demographics, seminars, a Youth Forum and online surveys,⁴⁵

Outcomes: The panels are non-deliberative and simply provide a snapshot of people's concerns and experiences. They have identified areas of particular concern, including uncertainty, Brexit, Covid-19, living standards, inequality and climate change. The overall findings are summarised and disseminated across the bank.

Participants in the sessions find the events interesting and relevant and come away with a better understanding of the bank's responsibilities and increased trust in its work.

29. Citizens' panels – NHS – UK

Where: UK

When: Since 2020

Policy problem: Decreasing satisfaction with NHS care delivery.

Commissioning Body: NHS Trusts

Approach: Each panel is co-ordinated by the local NHS Trust, and their exact structure and approach varies across the country. They share the characteristics of being self-selecting, multi-method engagement panels.

Local citizens are invited to sign up and, once enrolled, they are invited to participate in surveys, questionnaires and group discussions. Signing up to a panel does not commit

participants to any level of engagement, and they are free to choose which opportunities they respond to. Efforts are made to ensure a range of demographics sign up, though no formal recruitment or sampling of participants is carried out. Engagement covers a wide range of health-related issues and is intended to improve service delivery within the relevant trust.

Outcomes: As these citizens' panels are recently established, it is too early to understand their impact.