

Community Engagement for Rural Planning

Rural Planning Seminar

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What is Commonplace?

- The UK's leading digital resident insights and community engagement platform
- 12 million visitors to our engagement sites
- 16,000 planning and regeneration projects including over 100 local plans
- **Our mission:** to power government work through building trust with communities



We face **big challenges** around trust in government



2 in 3

people in the UK don't trust
their local government

Zencity, 2025



22% drop

in British people's trust in the
government to act in their
best interest

NatCen, 2024



76%

feel unsatisfied about the
availability of affordable housing
in their area

Zencity, 2025



Community engagement is **broken**



It's hard to reach
beyond the STPs



It requires
significant effort &
resources



Overwhelmingly
negative and
obstructive



It's difficult to build
community trust

Trust and engagement are **directly correlated**

- Young people (18-34) are almost **twice as likely** to trust their local government and show positive sentiment
- **86% of residents** think it is important to be involved in the planning process
- **3-fold increase in support** for plans when paired with effective community engagement



Continuous digital engagement is key

Reach

Promote and build awareness of your engagements and get more people to participate



Collaborate

Work with the community to enact the changes that the community has recommended



Understand

Explore and analyse real-time community insights with our AI-powered dashboards



Engage

Collect suggestions and ideas from your community on a range of different topics



75%

of all traffic comes from a mobile

78%

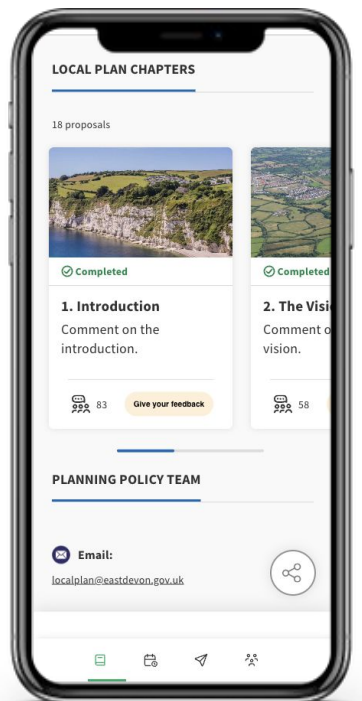
of those who start a Commonplace survey submit a response



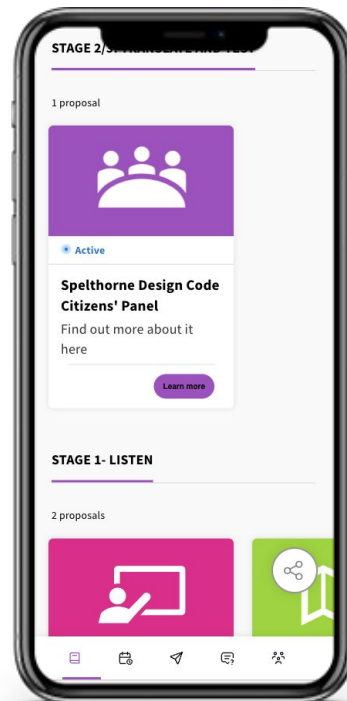
Local Government Reorganisation



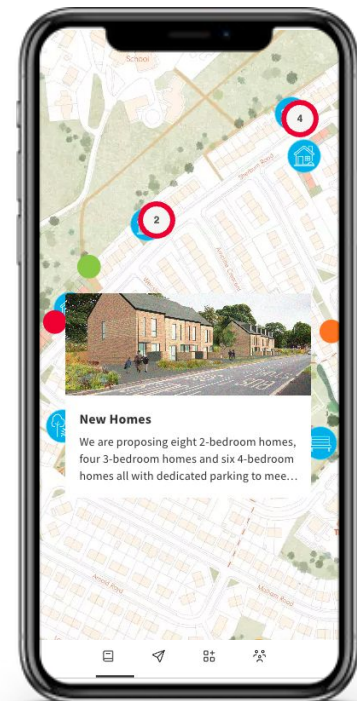
Local Plans



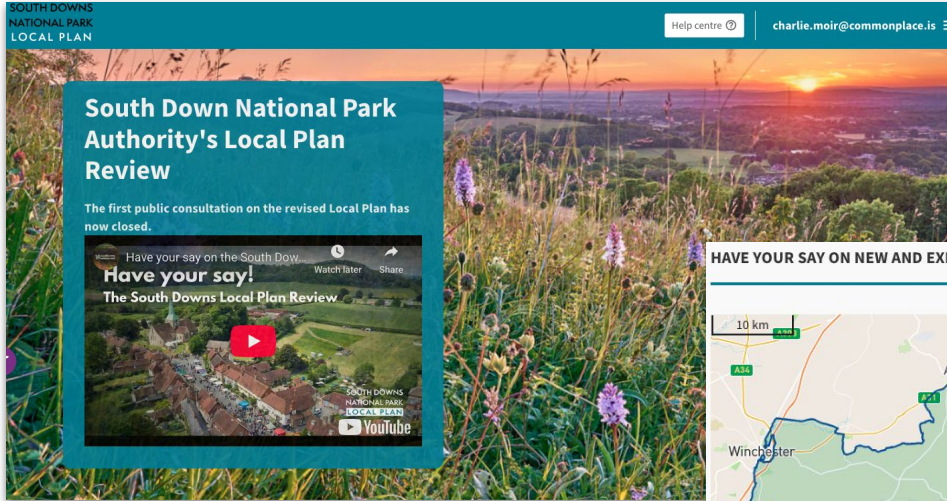
Design Codes / SPDs



Housing Developments



Case Study: South Downs Local Plan



Key features:

- Nav map for site allocations
- Wider surveys on local areas
- PDF Clipper

Key stats:

- Visitors - 22,500
- Responses - 5,000
- Subscribers - 1,800

HAVE YOUR SAY ON NEW AND EXISTING SITE ALLOCATIONS BY SELECTING THE COUNTY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN



Case Study: Trends AI Proptech Innovation



Save Time + Money

66% increase in processing and validation efficiency

Improve Accuracy

Remove human bias and increase data accuracy (>95%)

Deepen Insights

Collect more rich free-text data and pull out key themes

The screenshot displays the 'Free text answers' section of the Trends AI Proptech interface. It includes a sidebar with navigation icons, a top navigation bar with filters for 'All proposals' and 'Whole project', and a date range of '08/02/2024 - 08/02/2024'. The main content area shows a table of comments with columns for Date, Question, Answer, Topic, Topic AI senti..., Free text senti..., Status, and Contribution id. The table is filtered to show 100 comments out of 8858. The first three rows are visible, each with a checkbox, a date and time, a question, an answer, a topic (Greenfield land, Housing need, Development site), a sentiment (benefit, benefit, neutral), a status (anonymous), and a contribution ID.

☐	Date	Question	Answer	Topic	Topic AI senti...	Free text senti...	Status	Contribution id
☐	29 January 2024 15:27	Why?	Dear Jessica, Than...	Greenfield land	benefit		anonymous	65b7c3f3b0316b57...
☐	29 January 2024 15:27	Why?	Dear Jessica, Than...	Housing need	benefit		anonymous	65b7c3f3b0316b57...
☐	29 January 2024 15:27	Why?	Dear Jessica, Than...	Development site	neutral		anonymous	65b7c3f3b0316b57...



Towards truly representative AI-powered engagement



Organic

- ✓ Social Listening
- ✓ Media Monitoring
- ✓ Post Publishing
- ✓ AI analysis
- ✓ 1-click reporting



Pulse

- ✓ ONS benchmarked
- ✓ Targeted ads
- ✓ Auto translation
- ✓ Statistically sound
- ✓ Fast turnaround

Our entire
community

People who take
traditional surveys

STPs





Thank you!

Any questions - feel free to email:
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