

Social value in planning and regeneration

Key information

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Introduction

The London Plan does not define ‘social value’, but it is referred to in various policies and supporting texts. The Planning and Regeneration Committee will investigate how social value is being used, defined and measured.

Investigation aims and objectives (terms of reference)

This investigation will consist of two formal meetings on 9 October and 26 November. The investigation will seek to:

- Identify to what extent local authorities, the GLA, and Places for London use ‘social value’ in planning and regeneration, and how they define and measure the concept.
- Explore how Londoners who run small businesses through retail markets and railway arches define the ‘social value’ of community assets like retail markets and TfL-owned railway arches, and what they consider to be threats to these assets.
- Explore how Londoners who run small businesses through retail markets and railway arches view ‘social value’ policies, and how they would like to see social, cultural and environmental value of community assets recognised in approaches to planning and regeneration.
- Explore what opportunities there are for the Mayor and Places for London to recognise the ‘social value’ of retail markets and TfL-owned railway arches in planning and regeneration.

Key issues

- The London Plan does not include a definition of ‘social value’, but it is referenced in various policies and supporting texts.
- The Planning and Regeneration Committee are interested in using retail markets and TfL-owned railway arches as case studies to explore the concept of ‘social value’.
- TfL own 850 arch units in London, which are managed by TfL subsidiary [Places for London \(PfL\)](#). The PfL ‘small business policy’ claims that PfL aim to recognise the ‘social value’ small businesses contribute to London.
- In the report "[Understanding London’s Markets](#)", the GLA state that markets generate ‘social value’ for communities and help to build a strong sense of local identity.
- Several community-run campaign groups in London (such as 'SaveRidleyRoad') have formed in response to development which they argue threatens the character and community of long-standing markets, therefore ignoring the social, cultural value of existing market traders.
- Since the Social Value Act (2012), local authorities have introduced several policies and programmes aimed at delivering social value for communities. In 2020, Islington council pioneered an '[Affordable Workspace Programme](#)' and Haringey council launched their '[Community Wealth Building Lease](#)'.

Key questions

1. What is ‘social value’ and how is it defined by small businesses in TfL-owned railway arches and retail market traders in London?
2. What do Londoners perceive to be threats to the ‘social value’ of arches and markets, and to what extent are these threats being mitigated through the policies of local councils and Places for London?
3. To what extent do local authorities use ‘social value’ in planning and regeneration, and how do they define and measure the concept?
4. To what extent do Places for London support arch-based businesses that deliver high ‘social value’ to the local community?
5. What opportunities are there for the Mayor and Places for London to maximise the ‘social value’ of retail markets and/or TfL-owned railway arches going forward?

Call for Evidence

As part of this investigation, the Committee issued a Call for Evidence.

This Call for Evidence has now closed. All responses received will be used to shape the Committee's output for this investigation.

[Read the Written Evidence in response.](#)

[Read the report in full.](#)
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