

HairCycle

Uncovering the complex relationships and values emerging from prototyping circular ecosystems for systemic and transformative change – through hair.

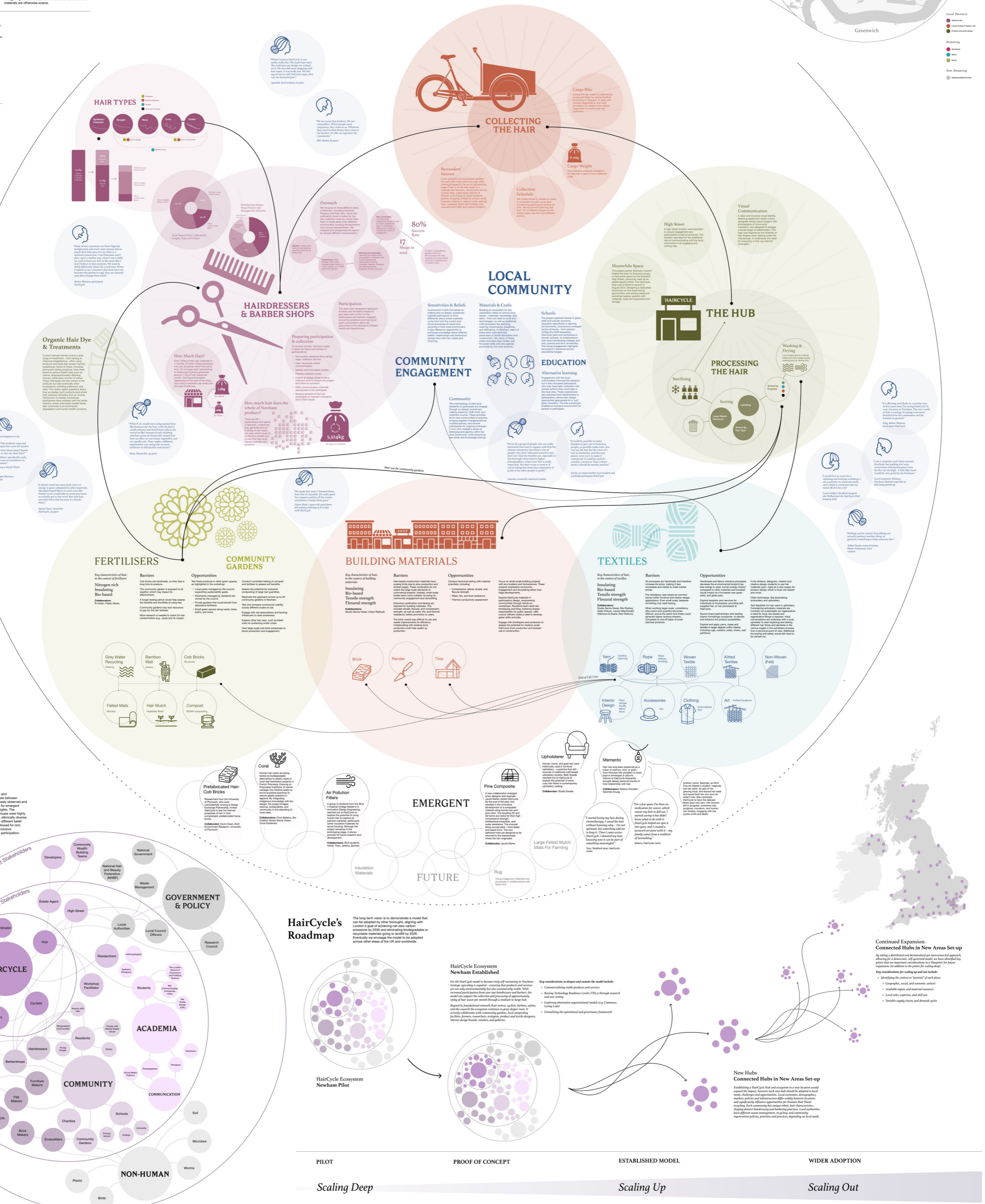
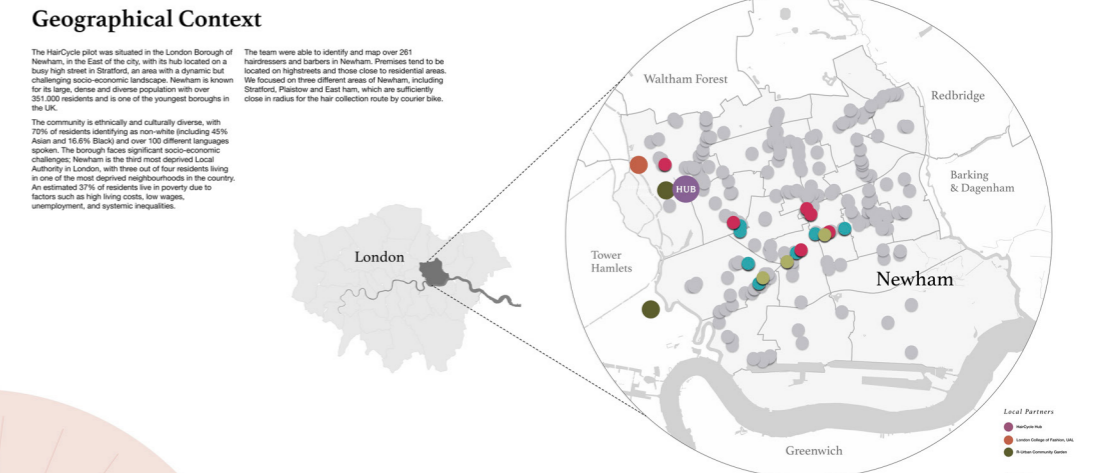
Why hair?
Every year around 8 million KG of Human Hair ends up in UK and 16 tons, it's economically and environmentally costly to dispose of due to its volume to weight ratio and chemical composition. Hair is a natural resource, it has many uses. In Newham, an exploration to discover the use of hair for building materials, textiles, and furniture. Researchers piloted a systemic, circular and regenerative approach, engaging local people from the London Borough of Newham to make development and design using a resource that everyone can relate to – Human Hair.

Methodology
The project adopted a systemic design approach, rooted in the prototyping, systems thinking and regenerative design thinking. Throughout the project, including workshops, prototyping, and engagement efforts, co-design and participatory design were applied. The methodology promotes an inclusive and democratic approach to systemic understanding, learning and developing skills. The methodology within the study was developed to allow the research opportunities to be shaped and critical feedback, responding to the input of participants. Critical Planning, and Ethnographic approaches were integrated into the project framework, allowing the team to gain deeper insights and a richer understanding of the communities and systems engaged. The results of the study were informed by field research, literature reviews, interviews with local council officers, creatives, researchers, and design studios, creatives, researchers, and many more.

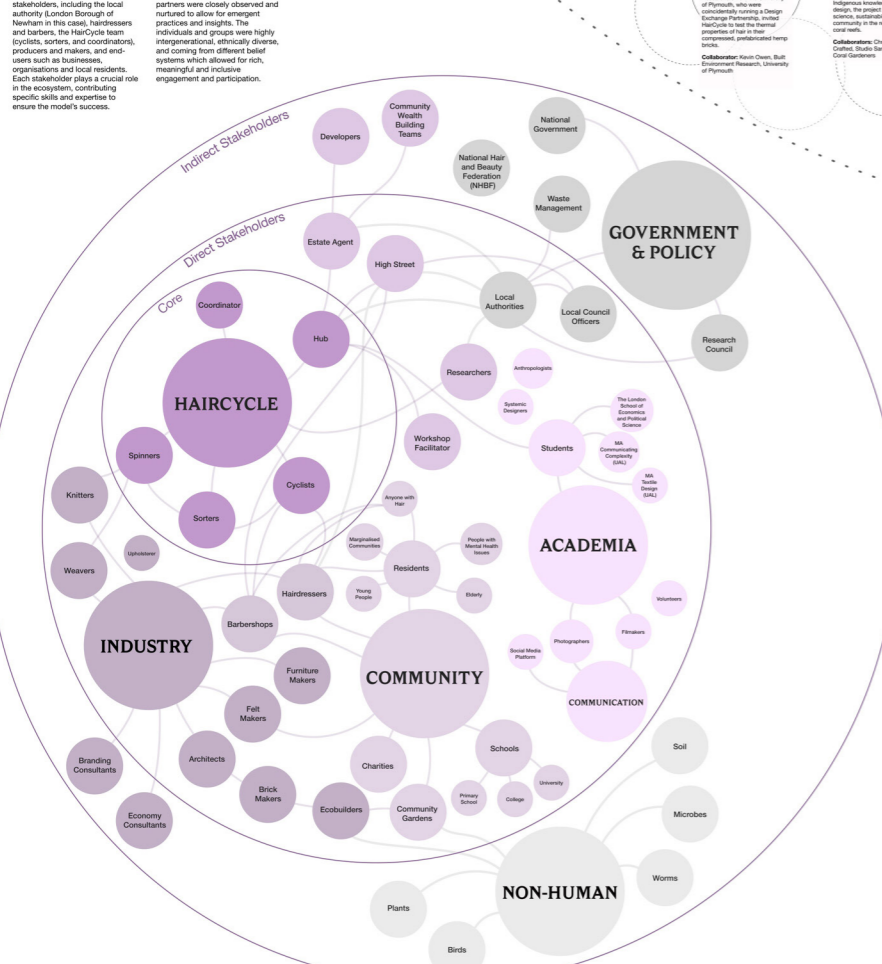
The direct impacts of the project included:
149Kg diverted from landfill
14 regenerative activities delivered
251 people engaged
17 businesses and partners participated
22+ publications and business
10 job opportunities provided locally
Established and scaled a recycling hub in Newham High Street

- Aims**
- AIM 1** To scope and assess the social/economic/ecological value of human hair as material resource within a local context
 - AIM 2** To develop and pilot new recycling and regeneration models aligned to local community stakeholders
 - AIM 3** To broaden engagement and evaluate scalability

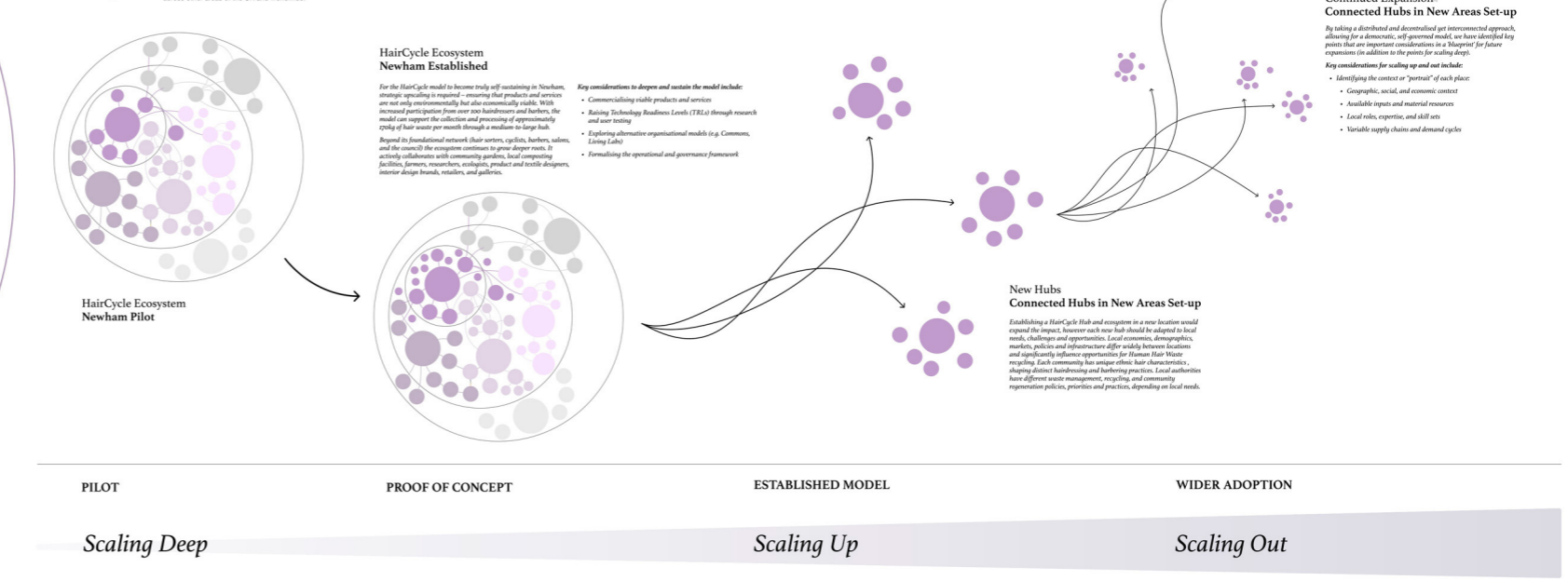
- Key Principles**
- REGENERATIVE** Regenerative models allow for reciprocity, adaptation, emergence, resilience, and giving back.
 - LOCAL** Local models explore and emphasize the need to assess local challenges and leverage local assets and resources within a specific local context. The focus is on the local environment and the communities which they allow for distributive, democratic ecosystems to emerge which are place based.
 - BIO-BASED** Bio-based models emphasize the need to use natural materials and processes in the local environment and leverage local assets and resources within a specific local context. The focus is on the local environment and the communities which they allow for distributive, democratic ecosystems to emerge which are place based.
 - CIRCULAR** Circular models explore ways to keep materials and products in use, and extend their life cycle. The focus is on the local environment and the communities which they allow for distributive, democratic ecosystems to emerge which are place based.



Stakeholders



HairCycle's Roadmap



Value Findings

Ecological Value	Social Value	Economic Value
Supporting biodiversity in the local area, both directly and indirectly	Learning about circular, regenerative and local approaches using accessible and intergenerational activities	Stimulating innovation by developing a novel ecosystem that brings different actors together
Reducing waste directly through hair recovery, and indirectly through improving understandings of waste and recycling	Advancing knowledge around sustainable behaviour change within SME's	Providing a CSR strategy for large developers, the council and large businesses with staff wellbeing programmes
Supporting good air quality by low-emissions approaches to transport and material processing	Ensuring participation in change-making opportunities is accessible to marginalised communities	Development of the Highstreet by utilising empty stores in areas where there is currently little economic activity
Preventing unintended ecological consequences through circular and regenerative design thinking	Providing a service for people with an emotional attachment to hair (love, grief, beliefs etc)	Providing a more cost-effective waste collection service to hairdressers and barbers
Making ecological learning accessible through a systemic hyper-local approach to community engagement	Improving the locality through use of empty premises boosts feelings of community pride and connection.	Bringing new opportunities for material innovation and green skills development to a range of stakeholders

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