Statement of Community Engagement

Document 3 - Youth Findings (2002)

January 2004
Statement of Community Engagement


January 2004
This is the third of three documents produced by Fluid on behalf of Argent St George about their consultation surrounding King's Cross Central. The suite of 3 documents comprises the full Statement of Community Engagement, and covers the description of the consultation process, a detailed description of the findings, and our report on the consultation with young people which took place between February and June 2002.

Statement of Community Engagement Document 1 (SCE 1) – The story of Argent St George’s community consultation in King’s Cross

Statement of Community Engagement Document 2 (SCE 2) – Detailed analysis of the consultation on Argent St George’s ‘a framework for regeneration’


Other documents referred to include:

Principles for a human city, July 2001 – Argent St George

Parameters for regeneration, January 2002 – Argent St George

A Framework for regeneration, September 2002 – Argent St George

Framework findings, June 2003 – Argent St George and Fluid
This report is the third – but earliest – of the 3 documents which constitute the Statement of Community Engagement with regard to the planning applications for the development of the old railway lands to the north of London’s King’s Cross and St Pancras stations – the area referred to as King’s Cross Central (KXC).

In February 2002, Fluid were appointed by Argent St George to help with consulting young people in and around the KXC site. This was our report, to Argent St George, on the consultation we carried out with young people, their service providers and key stakeholders, in the first half of 2002. The report formed the basis of the KXC21 website (www.kxc21.co.uk) launched in June 2002. The report is presented in its ‘warts and all’ form, as published at the same time. It does not, therefore, follow the structure of the Statement of Community Engagement Documents 1 and 2 and, as a speedy response to the preceding months’ works, it includes a number of typographical errors and grammatical inconsistencies.

We would like to thank all those who gave their time, energy and brain-power to the process, particularly to the young people and school children who made it such a thought provoking and enjoyable experience for us.

Steve McAdam – Fluid / January 2004
Aim of the project

In February 2002 Fluid was appointed by Argent St George to consult specifically with young people of the King's Cross area on the subject of the King's Cross Central future development.

Fluid is a multi-disciplinary design practice specialising in urban regeneration and masterplanning. We see community engagement as a key aspect of neighbourhood renewal at all scales, not just the starting point, but the catalyst for local regeneration. Fluid have developed a range of tools and techniques for consultation which have allowed us to successfully bridge the gap between local community organisations, consultants and professionals involved in the project.

The process of engaging young people in King's Cross took place between the months of February and July 2002, involving public open days, meetings and interviews with local stakeholders, youth agencies and representatives from the King's Cross Partnership, as well as extensive workshops with local schoolchildren and young people.

This document has been structured around four aspects of this process:

Consultation
- Establishing contact with youth groups and schools
- Educating young people and building awareness about the future of Kings Cross
- Providing a forum for discussing with young people the potential impact of the development on their lives
- Use engaging tools and techniques to collect ideas and aspirations

Findings
- Collating and databasing of information gathered
- Analysing and development of information
- Mapping of information

Ideas & Recommendations
- Propositional ideas generated from the ideas of the people consulted

Dissemination & Feedback
- Continued feedback on the process, and the propositional ideas
- Development of dedicated website

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| Contents |
|-----------------|-------|
| Aim of the project | 2     |
| Executive Summary  | 4     |
| Consultation       | 7     |
| Existing conditions| 8     |
| Outreach           | 10    |
| Tools              | 11    |
| Events             | 14    |
| Scope of outreach  | 16    |
| Findings           | 19    |
| Canvass Cards      | 20    |
| Mind Maps          | 24    |
| Future Mind Maps   | 26    |
| Hot Spot Mapping   | 28    |
| Daily Diaries      | 30    |
| Video Project      | 32    |
| Stakeholder Interviews | 35    |
| Ideas              | 41    |
| Proposals          | 42    |
| Youth Projects     | 43    |
| 20 Rough Ideas     | 43    |
| Non Youth Specific Projects | 49 |
| Wider Area Planning| 50    |
| Dissemination & Feedback | 53 |
| Public Open Days   | 54    |
| Feedback from Open Days | 56 |
| Web site KXC21.co.uk | 58 |
| Next steps…        | 60    |
| Appendix           | 63    |
| Canvass Card graphs| 64    |
| Mind Map graphs    | 66    |
| 6 questions about King’s Cross | 67 |
| Youth Interviews   | 68    |
| Stakeholder Interviews in full | 72 |
| Selected Future Mind Maps | 80 |
Executive Summary

In February 2002 Fluid was appointed by Argent St George to consult specifically with young people of the King’s Cross area on the subject of the King’s Cross Central future development.

Consultation

The process of engaging young people in the King’s Cross took place between the months of February and July 2002. Fluid were commissioned to initiate a dialogue with young people, bringing a fresh approach to the very idea of what consultation means. We came to the project with an understanding about the difficulty and sensitivity of cold canvassing youth in an area beset by problems with gangs and all the markers of inner-city deprivation and exclusion. The team agreed to approach their target group through three main channels:

Schools
Youth agencies and groups
Public open days

Liaison also offers a chance for the team to explain its role and aims, building trust and raising awareness, offering an opportunity for youth to get involved and have their say in the longer term development of their neighbourhoods.

Findings - Key Issues

The key issues that emerged from the consultation process can be broadly grouped as follows:

Crime & Community safety

- Drugs, Gangs, Racism
- Lack of understanding of and responsibility for consequences of behaviour
- Lack of policing
- Kudos attached to bad behaviour
- Breakdown of family structure exacerbates problems

Facilities

- Young people appreciate a ‘rich mix’ of usages - Local, affordable resources are needed
- Lack of good quality open space & play / sports facilities - Children enjoy outdoor adventure activities
- Lack of ICT facilities
- Not enough detached youth work in the area
- Demand for neutrally situated spaces where youth have a sense of ownership
- Need for stimulation & motivation
- Need for facilities targeted at specific groups, e.g. Bangladeshi, girls, families
- Play is an important aspect of childhood - children need opportunities to play and can feel dulled by passive, solo entertainments
- A general lack of resources which intensifies territorialism

Youth opportunities

- There is a demand for a ‘youth forum’ – a recognised ‘voice’
- Many younger children enjoy school and are ambitious: football provides inspiration and ambition
- High levels of exclusion from schools
- Insufficient linkages between youth clubs and career paths
- Boredom is a huge problem
- Lack of state benefits for 16 & 17 year-olds can lead to homelessness in many cases.
- Lack of awareness of sexual health issues
- Low expectations, narrow horizons

Community

- Lack of clear neighbourhood identities, but Identity is an issue, with territorial perceptions increasing with age
- Child safety and support
- Family and friends bonds are important – they need to be supported
The Physical Environment

• quality of physical environment has a direct impact on how they feel: they enjoy the proximity to shops and parks, but hate dirt, rubbish, noise and mess
• Traffic is a concern for young people. They aspire to travel but, locally, physical barriers and accessibility confine smaller children to their immediate neighbourhoods
• Young people enjoy bright colour, unusual forms, large scale and interactivity in the built environment

20 Rough Ideas

To better express, in a condensed form, the desires and needs of youth and the young as they emerged through the various forms of consultation and engagement outlined in earlier sections, we felt that an attempt should be made to capture, spatialise and give form to (our interpretation of) the ideas collected. These became the ‘20 Rough Ideas’ that were presented for comment at the public open days:

Youth Projects  Non Youth Specific Projects  Wider Area Planning
3. 24 hr Youth Drop In (Second Home)  13. Public space network  18. Safe routes across the site
6. Web Space
7. Travel bar
8. Digital Art Database (DAD)
9. Time-share Square
10. 24 hr basketball league

Dissemination and Feedback

Public Open Days
Fluid organised two dedicated open days for all the young people involved. At each of the open days visitors were asked to complete a feedback form for the 20 Rough Ideas, indicating simply beside each one if they ‘like’, ‘disliked’ or ‘don’t know’. On the back were 6 questions about Kings Cross. The six Questions were taken from Argent St George’s draft Framework for Regeneration document, and aimed to generate broader ideas about regeneration priorities. Fluid also took part in the Somerstown Festival at the beginning of July.

KXC21.co.uk
The kxc21.co.uk website was launched after the consultation and open days to ensure a constant presence of the process while Fluid was not ‘on the ground’, to inform a wider audience about the project and to show those that took part that their comments had been used. It aims to continue to educate, consult and canvass feedback from young people.

Aims
• to educate children about the Kings Cross Central developments and how they might affect their lives in the future
• To allow young people that have taken part in the process to see their views and polaroid photo on the internet*
• To allow a continuous process of consultation and feedback using web version of some of the tools.

Next Steps

To move further there are a number of actions that could be taken, depending on overall timescales and master-planning developments. Various potential actions are listed below to provide a framework for constructive discussions:

• Build on the impetus so far achieved through a forward programme of development and feedback
• Carry out appraisals of the engagement exercises and suggestions
• Identify gaps
• Assemble ‘Action Plans’ for critical projects and initiatives in partnership with Argent St George, the Local Authorities, the Skills Council, local RSLs, and local agencies, e.g. the Primary Care Trust and the LDA
• Carry out further work on the ground with key players
• Help the assembly of one or more “Youth Forums” as a central plank for future dialogue
• Meet with the Master Planning team to brainstorm options
• Consider best use of the Architecture Foundation’s September programme of participatory events in the KXC area
In my room, I am listening to my CD player when a Britney Spears song comes on.
The King’s Cross Central development site comprises 72 acres in the south east of the London Borough of Camden, with a small part within the London Borough of Islington. Bounded to the south by the busy hubs of King’s Cross and St Pancras stations, and despite being surrounded by areas of relative prosperity, the site has, nevertheless, been underused for many years due to the uncertainty over the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, planning blight and the physical barriers of the railway lines and the canal, removing the site from its urban context.

With the major changes brought about by the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) and the extension of St Pancras station as an international terminus comes the opportunity to create a new urban quarter and integrate the site back into the local neighbourhoods of Camden & Islington and its broader urban hinterland.

The proposed development of this important inner-city site is to incorporate a mixed use of office, residential and cultural facilities, a programme which extends from the present to 2010 and beyond. Strategically the site must marry the sometimes conflicting demands of European and global pressures with those of local residents, stakeholders and businesses.

The focus of Fluid’s consultation is the young people living in the area at present. By involving young people at the early stages of the development the aim is to create an integrated approach for the development as they grow up, live and work in the area.

Existing conditions

The Argent St George Principles

Our objective [is] to devise and then deliver, over the next 15 or so years, an exciting and successful mixed use development; one that will shape a dense, vibrant and distinctive urban quarter, bring local benefits and make a lasting contribution to London. The 10 principles are:

* A robust urban framework
* A lasting new place
* Promote accessibility
* A vibrant mix of uses
* Harness the value of heritage
* Work for King’s Cross, work for London
* Commit to long-term success
* Engage and inspire
* Secure delivery
* Communicate clearly and openly
## KXC21 Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🟥</td>
<td>Boundary of new Kings Cross Central Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🟢</td>
<td>Schools consulted during KXC21</td>
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<tr>
<td>🟡</td>
<td>Youth clubs consulted during KXC21</td>
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<tr>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>St Pancras International Station Extension</td>
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<td>🟣</td>
<td>Channel Tunnel Rail Link embankment</td>
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<td>🟤</td>
<td>New Thameslink station and lines</td>
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## Existing places

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Place Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Euston station</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somerstown Youth Club, Drummond Crescent</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The British Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>St Pancras station</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kings Cross station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kings Cross Brunswick Youth Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St Mary &amp; St Pancras Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Plot 10 Youth Club</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Somerstown Youth Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>South Camden Community School</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Winton Primary School</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Blessed Sacrament Youth Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground</td>
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Outreach

The redevelopment of the King's Cross area and the introduction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link is a project that has a long and at times arduous history. Regeneration strategies have already gone through many mutations, with periods of stagnation where the whole project has gone into abeyance. This has been a difficult period for the communities who inhabit its environs, who quite rightly have been consulted extensively at each stage. Inevitably there has developed a feeling of ‘consultation fatigue’. Yet the importance of keeping those communities involved in the process has not diminished, and their continuing engagement will be crucial to the long-term success of the redevelopment. Argent St George particularly realise the need to reach the young people of the area, a notoriously difficult-to-reach section of the population, many of whom will be the inhabitants of the future King’s Cross, and will be raising families of their own by the time the project is nearing completion.

Fluid were commissioned to initiate a dialogue with young people, bringing a fresh approach to the very idea of what consultation means. We came to the project with an understanding about the difficulty and sensitivity of cold canvassing youth in an area beset by problems with gangs and all the markers of inner-city deprivation and exclusion. The team agreed to approach their target group through three main channels:

1. Schools
2. Youth agencies and groups
3. Public open days

Schools
Schools offer a ‘captive audience’ and have the advantage of representing a broad cross section of class, ability and ethnic mix.

Youth agencies and groups
Much ‘leg work has already been done in terms of outreach by groups and agencies active in the area. For Fluid this meant an initial period of intensive on-the-ground work setting up meetings with key players and visiting youth clubs, forging links with as many contacts as possible, building a picture of the situation today.

Liaison also offers a chance for the team to explain its role and aims, building trust and raising awareness, offering an opportunity for youth to get involved and have their say in the longer term development of their neighbourhoods.

Public open days
Open days present an opportunity to reach the wider community, to present emerging ideas, to receive feedback and to build a basis for a vision of future life in and around King’s Cross.

Tools and techniques
Fluid have created a range of tools that aim to actively engage people in the process of consultation, to garner information which highlights problem areas and issues, but also to raise awareness and bring out the aspirations of individuals and communities. By definition areas of regeneration have issues that need to be addressed such as education, health, employment, social exclusion and safety / crime. However each community has its own specific issues, and consultation techniques need to be tailor-made to meet these requirements.

The following tools were devised for KXC, which were deployed at various ‘events’, ranging from one-to-one interviews, through visits to youth groups, to school workshops and public open days:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canvass Cards</td>
<td>On-the-ground work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind Maps</td>
<td>Stakeholder Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Mind Maps</td>
<td>Schools Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Spot Map</td>
<td>Youth Club Workshop</td>
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<td>Daily Diary Camera Pack</td>
<td>Public Open Days</td>
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<td>Video project</td>
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<td>Web Site</td>
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1 **Canvass Cards**

*Aim:*
- Provide a snapshot of the local community.
- Collect personal aspirations relating to lifestyle and future goals.
- A photo gallery of respondents.

*Method:*
- Printed succinct questionnaires used in many situations and locations.
- To consult on issues relating to perception of the local area and lifestyle.
- Take a Polaroid photo of each respondent and attach it to the Canvass Card.

2 **Mind Maps**

*Aim:*
- Develop a clear picture of how local residents view the site and navigate through it.
- To record personal local landmarks.
- To record regular routes in the local area highlighting barriers and access.
- Consult on the quality of the respondents journey.

*Method:*
- Printed cards suitable for drawing a ‘map’ of the journey on the front with questions on the back.
- The participant is asked to quickly draw their route to the venue, marking names of roads and landmarks.
- On the back of the card are questions relating to the quality of the journey, the best and worst experience of this journey.

3 **Future Mind Maps**

*Aim:*
- Collect proposals for the quality of the environment, journeys and landmarks within KXC.

*Method:*
- Printed cards given to the children once they have an understanding of the KXC development and have completed their contemporary Mind Map.
- A quick drawing exercise in which children are asked to draw their ideal journey to the venue and their ideal destination.
4 **Hot Spot Map**

**Aim:**
- Raise awareness of the scope of the KXC site
- Record where young people go regularly within their local area
- Start to build up a ‘Youth Directory’, a record of all youth facilities as well as informal hang-outs.
- To bring about discussion regarding informal activities

**Method:**
- A large scale aerial map is printed and laminated.
- Coloured stickers will be used by participants to mark areas they frequent.

5 **Daily Diary Camera Pack**

**Aim:**
- To encourage the pupils to think about how they use their local area.
- To record the fields of movement of a cross section of the youth community.
- To record formal and informal activities as they occur.

**Method:**
- Each pupil in each class is given a Daily Dairy and a disposable camera.
- The Diary requires factual answers: date? time? where are you? what are you doing?, as well, what are you thinking?
- Starting at the weekend the pupils take 1 photo every hour for 2 days and fills in a page of the diary at the same time. The output is a photographic record of a child’s eye view.
6 Video project

Aim:
- To interview in detail a small number of local children with strong local interest.
- To give children the chance to interview a key player in the KXC development and discuss important issues.
- To produce a 20 minute film made with 10-18 year olds which will clearly describe their lives and aspirations and expose to the public the problems and help frame solutions.

Method:
- Through outreach work, arrange informal interviews with 6 to 10 young people.
- Record the interview with each of the ‘kids’ at a key location for them (youth club, park, shopping area, library).
- Record One to One interviews by the ‘kids’ with the key players in the development and regeneration of their local area.

7 Web Site

Aim:
- To keep an on-line record of the process in the public domain.
- To design a framework which can be added to as the process develops.

Method:
- Design the website as an approachable resource for young people in terms of graphics and written content.
- Provide an on-line database of consultation material.
- Publicise the website.
8 On-the-ground work

Aim:
- To contact key players, youth agencies, schools, etc.
- Raise awareness of the consultation and the development
- Explain our role
- Build trust
- Promulgate networks

Method:
- building a list of contacts
- Introduce the team
- site visits
- attending meetings
- attending youth clubs
- arranging workshops
- explaining the programme and our aims

9 Stakeholder Interviews

Aim:
- On behalf of Argent St George, to build up a robust picture of the key issues and areas of concern for youth and children in the Kings Cross Central area.

Method:
- Contact a number of the relevant community organisations that surround the KXC site who deal with youth issues.
- Carry out a simple rigid 7 question interview
- Use this material to develop key issues.

10 Schools Workshops

Aim:
- Introduce KXC as a project within the context of CTRL and the Kings Cross area in child’s terms.
- Consult over 120 children using the necessary consultation tools.
- Establish their exiting lifestyle and aspirations for the future.

Method:
- Visit 4 schools around the Kings Cross Central site giving a half day lesson in each.
- Introduce the concept of; regeneration, Eurostar destinations, neighbourhoods, communities and culture as well as local landmarks.
- Use the following tools to collect information and stimulate conversations about KXC
  - Canvass cards
  - Mind Maps
  - Future Mind
  - Hot Spot Map
  - Daily Diary Camera pack
- Make contact with potential participants in the video project

Interview Structure:

1. Give a description of your organisation and its main purposes.
2. What are the main issues for youth in the area?
3. Can you give examples of projects and interventions that you believe tackle the key issues?
4. What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?
5. Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?
6. Would you or your group like to continue to be involved?
7. Contact details
11 Youth Club Workshop

**Aim:**
- Introduce KXC as a project within the context of CTRL and the Kings Cross area.
- Establish an understanding of young people’s existing lifestyles and aspirations for the future.
- Introduce the Video project & make contact with possible participants.
- Consult children from a cross section of the local community in an informal setting.

**Method:**
- Visit 6 youth clubs representing the surrounding community of KXC.
- Informal discussions about Kings Cross Central.
- Canvass Cards.
- Hot Spot Map.

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12 Public Open Days

**Aim:**
- To thank everyone who took part in the earlier stage of consultation and get feedback from them.
- To reach as many of the broad range of ages, cultures and classes of young people in Kings Cross.
- To inspire them to take an interest in the future of their area and the Kings Cross Central site, and to think laterally about what could happen in the future.
- To take note of the imagination of some of the young people spoken to, to build pride and confidence by exhibiting this work.

**Method:**
- **Use the following attractions to engage participants, and canvass them for feedback:**
  - KXC21 – ‘kids make the connection’ - premier of the film made for this project
  - KXC21.co.uk – launch of the website dedicated to the consultation project
  - Guided narrow boat trips – St. Pancras Basin to Islington Tunnel
  - Exhibition - Youth Consultation Results so far
  - DJ and MC workshops - with local music event specialists'Bigga Fish'
  - Past Present and Future – guided historical site tours
Scope of outreach

consultation locations

- school
- youth club
- canvass card address
- video interview
- stakeholder interview
- open day location
- canal
- site boundaries
# Activity Tools Number

## School Workshops

### St. Mary & St. Pancras Primary School
- Canvass Cards: 21
- Mind Maps: 21
- Future Mind Maps: 21
- Hot Spot Map: 21
- Daily Diary Camera Pack: 17

### South Camden Community School
- Canvass Cards: 21
- Mind Maps: 21
- Future Mind Maps: 21
- Hot Spot Map: 16
- Daily Diary Camera Pack: 1

### Winton Primary School
- Canvass Cards: 71
- Mind Maps: 17
- Future Mind Maps: 17
- Hot Spot Map: 17
- Daily Diary Camera Pack: 1

### Blessed Sacrament Primary School
- Canvass Cards: 28
- Mind Maps: 28
- Future Mind Maps: 28
- Hot Spot Map: 21

## Youth Club Workshops

### Copenhagen St Youth Club - 11 to 13 years
- Canvass Cards: 8
- Hot Spot Map: 6
- Outreach: 6

### Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground
- Video: 3
- Outreach: 9

### Hampden Youth Club - 11 - 13 years
- Outreach: 9

### King's Cross Brunswick
- Canvass Cards: 2
- Video: 1
- Outreach: 2

## Public Open Days

### The Cross
- June 2002
  - Canvass Cards: 6
  - Feedback Sheets: 16
  - Video Showing: 8
  - Website Presentation: 9

### Somerstown Festival
- 6 July 2002
  - Canvass Cards: 53
  - Feedback Sheets: 17
  - Video Showing: 8
  - Website Presentation: 35

## Video project

### Interviewer Interviewee Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Juned Khan</th>
<th>Bob West</th>
<th>LB Camden Planning Dept., Kings Cross Team Manager</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saleema Al-Karssifi</td>
<td>Sir Bob Reid</td>
<td>Kings Cross Partnership, Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Healy</td>
<td>Stewart Purvis</td>
<td>King’s Cross Partnership, Deputy Chair &amp; Chief Executive of ITN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Healy</td>
<td>Dickon Robinson</td>
<td>Peabody Trust, Director of Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helal &amp; Cathy O’Leary</td>
<td>Roger Madelin</td>
<td>Argent Group plc, Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Rickwood</td>
<td>Stephen Jordon</td>
<td>London &amp; Continental Stations &amp; Property (LCSPL), Managing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pippa Gueterbock</td>
<td>Lisa Dougherty</td>
<td>Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), Community Relations for Area 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Stakeholder Interviews

| Lucy Bingham | CCCU (Camden Central Community Umbrella) |
| Janey Hagger | High Impact, Arts Programme Area Manager |
| Bob West | LB Camden Planning Dept., Kings Cross Team Manager |
| Teresa Hoskyns | West Euston Partnership (Comissioned Project) |
| Doug Slater | King’s Cross Partnership, North King’s Cross Neighbo’ld Management Officer |
| Pamela Liaquat | Hopscotch, Advice and Advocacy Worker |
| Shelagh O’Connor | New Horizon Youth Centre, Director |
| Jamie Dean | LB Islington Greenspace Team, Projects & Developments Manager |
**Canvass Cards**

*Note: the figures in italics represents the results of word counts of all comments that have been collected during consultation at the schools.*

**What do you call this area?**

| Kings Cross (32) | Camden (11) | Home (10) |

Responses to this question are mostly locational (“Kings Cross” being the top answer), except the third most popular answer, which was “home”, (“home sweet home” in two cases) underlining that however the area may be perceived by outsiders it is a home to many and inspires pride - “My home I want to live here” - a sense of allegiance - “Home of Arsenal football club’ and a sense of ownership - “my” occurred 5 times. Out of all these responses there was only one negative - “a dump”

**Why are you here?**

| Learn (32) | Live (30) | School (22) |

Responses to this question fall into various categories:

- Duty and circumstance - “I am here to study in school”, “Born” appears 6 times
- Aspirations - “Want” appears 5 times, “to go to school & to be a barrister”, “To live & learn & get a good education”
- Hope - “better than the street”
- Enjoyment - “because its fun”, “Because I like it here”, “Because I want to learn”

**If this place was a song what would it be?**

| So Solid Crew (7) | Pop / Drug (5) | Boring (4) |

Choices reflect various criteria:

- Musical preferences and role models (So solid Crew),
- Mood of the place - “Jazz Music”, “A fast song”, “Sad & Happy like Celine Dion”, “Don’t Stop Movin’”, “Wonderful World”
- Territorial - “We are the Arsenal Boys”

Others chose music to express their own feelings “Elton John - crap”, “Flying without wings - Westlife (boring)”, or saw the opportunity for dark humour - “Hit me baby one more time”, “Who let the Dogs out?”
What do you hate about this area?

Drug (30) People (21) Nothing (9)

Sadly, drugs, drug users and dealers emerge as the most hated aspect of life for younger children - “the gangs & the drugs”. In general, people and the “bad” things they say and do have an impact on children. Prostitution, alcoholism, robbery and even murder are a stark fact of life for many in the area - “Prostitutes, pimps, druggies. it could be dangerous”, “I hate people killing each other & stealing”, “There is so much mugging”.

The physical environment and its social implications also have a profound bearing on the child’s perceptions. The simple phrase “Bridges & Alcoholics” paints an all too familiar picture of the King’s Cross area. Rubbish, lack of cleanliness and environmental pollution are clearly of great concern to many children - “too much litter”, particularly when exacerbated by the extensive building works in the area, “I hate the building sites”, “All the dust”. Traffic (4 mentions) is also a worry - “too many cars polluting the air in the area”, “the roads because they are noisy”. Other children despise the poor state of local amenities - the phrase “Some dirty drug park” has a chilling but recognisable resonance to anyone familiar with inner city areas.

Inspite of the hatred for criminals of various types, some children still have a poor perception of the police - “the (old) Bill” appears 3 times.

Finally it should be noted that although the question is framed for a negative response, in 9 cases it was stated that “nothing” was hateful about the area - with one child claiming “I hate nothing”.

What do you like most about this area?

Friendly (23) Shop (14) People / Park / School (11)

The responses reflect a complete spectrum of often opposing views, from “everything” to “nothing” - both mentioned 4 times. Inspite of problems with antisocial and criminal behaviour of all types, the place is still valued for its community - “lots of friendly people”, “I like coming to school with my friends”.

Although “school” is mentioned 11 times, it is usually by dint of its convenience - “Easy to get to school”. The area is generally appreciated for its excellent transport links and local convenience - “The local transport, because it is so easy to get to.”, “It very friendly & everything is near”. The area’s proximity to national amenities is also seen as a plus - “the nice buildings”, “parks, new buildings & libraries”, “lots of nice museums”.

Some local amenities are seen as positive; Shops are popular (14 mentions) and parks are mentioned 11 times - “I like the shops & parks”, “I like the flowers that grow”. This emphasises that not all perceptions of the local parks are bad, and that they can be well used - “I like the football pitches”.

Much of the appeal of the area to children lies in its vivacity and excitement - “Its always busy & there are lots of shops”, “there’s a lot of stuff to do”, “It’s fun”, and the sense of freedom this entails - “that I can do what ever I want to”, “I can play out”. 
What do you dream of?

Football (14)  Star (8)  Pop (6)

The King’s Cross area benefits from its association with a top flight local team, inspiring local children - “Playing football for Arsenal & England”. Current cultural trends and interests in celebrity for the sake of celebrity are reflected in the desire of many to be a “star”, particularly in the fields of music and film - “to be an MC, a rapper or an actress”, “to be a hollywood movie star, then a popstar”.

Some children dream of personal happiness self-fulfilment and what might be termed a ‘normal’ life with very clear ideas about their future lives - “Being a lawyer (married, 2 kids only)”, “being a doctor”, “I dream of being a cab driver”, or simply romance - “a girl Molly”.

Others are more community-minded, looking for a more settled life for all - “everything to be peaceful & great”, “I think this area should be nice & calm”

Some children seek escape, this is may be escape to somewhere in particular - “Me in Disneyland Paris”, but occasionally is just away from King’s Cross “being free of this awful place”.

What would you like to do this year?

Play (10)  SATS (5)  Football (4)

It should be noted that travelling of one sort or another was mentioned in 30 cases.

This may simply be about holidaying - “I would like to go to Florida”, “I’d like to go to theme parks” (“Theme parks”. are mentioned in 6 cases), or a broader interest in other lives - “I want to see new places”, “have new experiences, such as boat riding or going somewhere you’ve never been”.

Sometimes it reflects the ‘International’ structures of some families - “I would like to take a trip to my country (Colombia)”, or a more poignant sense of dislocation “Go back to my family in Egypt”, “I would like to meet my Granny & Grandad”, “I would like to visit my family in my country”.

Play forms an important aspect of a child’s life and they tell us this themselves. It is their second most popular choice for what they would like to do this year.

As usual some are concerned with personal enjoyment - “have fun”, “To be happy & have lots of presents”, or personal fulfilment - School success an aspiration - “to be a good pupil in school”, “Get good SATS results”, “get awards for swimming”.

At home, sneaking into the bathroom Spring on my brother, who just woken up & is brushing his teeth.
What would you like to be doing in ten years?

Football (14) Work (11) Play (10)

This is a subtly different question to “what do you dream of?” and tends to elicit more pragmatic results.

The responses to this question reflect how football is seen as an achievable career for many children. One child who says they dream of being a football player claims that in ten years “I would still want to be a footballer”. Other sports also seem to offer real opportunities for some children - “In the Olympics running for England”, “I would like to be fighting in a professional boxing ring”, “A real tennis player like Venus William”. Notions of ‘Stardom’ (star = 4) are less prevalent, but still seem possible as the ‘kid next door’ idea of pop has taken hold - “Be a serious rapper”, while the phrase “Go to college so I can be a popstar” reveals the fact that most young people understand that these days a career as a ‘star’ is possible, and can be nurtured through stage school. One child claims that this year “I would like to be the youngest popstar”, and in ten years “I would like to be the oldest popstar”.

Many simply aspire to be working - “A teacher”, “A beauty therapist”, or again leading a traditional family life - “I would like a nice life with my future family”. Others yearn to escape, either on a temporary basis - “Explore America”, more permanently - “Living in Australia”, or to overcome their sense of displacement “I would like to go back to my country”, “I would like to live in Colombia”. Some just want to do the things they see adults doing - “drive a fast car”, “get stoned & driving cars”, “go on dates & get married”. A significant number are looking for fulfilment in life - “doing things that are worth it.,” “Having more fun”, “grow up to be a good policeman”, “Making new discoveries”, while one child already has long term plans - “be retired”.

Where would you most like to be, who with and what would you be doing?

Family (31) Friend (24) Play (10)

Being with family and friends predominates - “My family, for ever & ever & go to parties”, but in a very high 48 instances the location was away from King’s Cross (while only 5 said “here”, and 3 “home”) - “In Italy with my boyfriend exploring, “Bangladesh, because my family live there”, “In Greece with my friends & family”

Apart from playing (usually football - “I would be with my friends playing football”) other activities also include: being with people, “living” (5), “exploring”, “dancing”, “working”, & “acting” (3)

Key issues:

- area seen as home and a source of identity and pride: children find the community friendly and enjoy the vitality of the area
- many younger children enjoy school and are ambitious: football provides inspiration and ambition
- drugs and criminal behaviour are key concerns although there is a distrust of police and authority
- quality of physical environment has a direct impact on how they feel: they enjoy the proximity to shops and parks, but hate the dirt and mess
- Many children would love to travel
- the majority aspire to being with family and friends, but many wish to be away from King's Cross
How would you describe where you are?

Noisy (5)  Dirty / Clean (4)  Fun / Good / Nice / Busy / Quiet (3)

Many responses to this question were purely locational - “near the canal”, “North London”, “Pentonville Street”.

Some interpreted the question as “By what means would you describe where you are?”, and used physical identifiers - “It has a black gate around it.”, “I am next to Sainsbury’s”. Some were very literal - “I will give my address or draw a map”, “by looking at the street names”. Others were more descriptive with noise and cleanliness being the key issues.

Generally responses are full of contradictions and reflect different individual perceptions of, for example, activity:

“dull” & “fun”, “busy” & “quiet”, all receive 3 comments.
“Good”, “nice” also receive 3, while “boring” is mentioned twice.

or personal safety:

“its very safe & there’s not a lot of traffic”, “not very safe” may reflect very localised perceptions.

How did you get here?

Walk (54)  Car (12)  Bus (4)

How long did it take?

5 mins (26)  15 mins (14)  Ten mins (9)

The majority of school journeys are on foot, (54) and many take no more than 5 minutes (26). Two children travel for about an hour, and a further two for an hour-and-a-half.

Where did you come from?

The majority gave local addresses, although some come from as far afield as the north London suburbs of Enfield and Barnet. One child comes from Essex.

Occasionally a child is more literal about their response, despite the context of the question to local journeys - “Nigeria”, “America”, “my parents come from Bangladesh & I come from England”, or, perhaps jokingly, “from my mum’s tummy”.

What is your worst experience of this journey?

Walk (15)  Traffic / Drug (11)  Rain (9)

The worst experiences as a group tend towards inconvenience - having to walk or the rain - “When I have to walk”, “Having to walk around the block because of the workmen on a rainy day, on my first day at this school I walked straight into a puddle”
Traffic is a significant problem - “I hate passing the zebra crossing”, “the roads”, as is personal safety - “walking through a big gang and having to wait with them”, “meeting tramps and drug dealers and a drunk man”, “seeing drug dealers, drugs on the ground and frightening people”. Some children have been the victims of crime - “I got robbed on the way back home”.

Environmental factors play an important role in the experience of the journey:

- Poor maintenance and landscaping - “Seeing this dirty old park”, “I’m always passing the rubbish bin & it stinks”, “Falling over roads”
- Unsafe routes - “Walking in the alley but I see children so its ok sometimes.”
- Building works - “When I pass the building site the dust gets in my eyes”

Dogs are a perennial hazard - “dogs chasing after me”, “When I stepped in a dog mess”

A few were distressed by being late, particularly when it is beyond their control - “When I was late because of the traffic and it had snowed”. Some simply reflect Individual incidents - “I broke my arm on the way to school”. In the light of all this, the child who claimed - “My experience is just plain” should perhaps be thankful.

What is your best experience of this journey?

**Sweet (13) Shop (12) Friend / Walk (11)**

Some children express delight in simple pleasures - “listening to my favourite song and eating chocolate”, “I get to see lots of shops & my friends on the bus & I get to smell trees & flowers”. It may be significant factor that most of these exercises were carried out in spring of 2002 after a period of cold and gloomy weather, but many (6 cases) remembered sunny days - “When it was sunny”, “It was sunny and we were going on a trip”

Some enjoy being sociable - “meeting friends & seeing nice people” or being accompanied by parents - “I walk with my mum & sometimes my dad”, “When my dad takes me to school”

Personal incidents, particularly birthdays (4), prove memorable “I got new glasses & some people don’t recognise me at school”, occasional rides to school - “When I can sit in the car closed-up when its raining outside”, “On my way to school I saw my dad” Finally, it should not be forgotten that children sometimes find unexpected pleasures where adults may see only problems. One child reported their ‘best experience as “We were walking home from school & we got chased by a crazy drunk man”

**Key issues:**

- a whole range of perceptions
- most pupils are local, but some commute to the school
- apart from personal inconvenience and occasional crime, traffic is the main concern
- children are aware of the poor quality of environment particularly noise and cleanliness
- children appreciate simple pleasures; sunny weather, seeing friends, or being accompanied by family
Future Mind Maps

The information gained from Future Mind Maps can be the most bizarre and yet the most telling insight into the way the children of Kings Cross dream of their future. The following is a subjective analysis of their drawings, recounted anecdotally and finally presented as key issues facing the development.

We found the youth of Kings Cross to be extremely forthcoming with futuristic architectural drawings. The broad base of incredulous forms collected shows a clear willingness to experiment with alternative architectural design and building usage. Their unrecognizable sky-lines may appear childlike, however they do embody the enthusiasm for change and new ideas. The mind map dreamscapes ranged in scale from the overt megalomaniac suggesting to cover the whole site in a four storey domed business block with a single tower rising high from its dense mass, to a multi-coloured cube shaped dwelling sitting on its point which rocks back and forth when entered!

There were a considerable number of references to the more humble vision of a cleaner environment. A new building to many of the children was simply a "nice clean building" and a better Kings Cross was simply an area with thoughtfully positioned waste bins and penalties for those not using them. Penalties varied from the provision of local police stations to the guilty being "nuked" by robo-police presenting the depth of feeling surrounding the dirt and litter in the area.

"In Kings Cross they should clean the place every day and it should be regenerated"

The issue of cleanliness stretched from the literal to the more profound problem of a safer community. Graffiti, criminal activity and disorder in general were all on the children's minds. For those who escaped the law, automatic cleaners and moving dustbins would help keep the area clean. The urban condition was particularly apocalyptic for a few that they have drawn images of farm land revolving around the canal and water features.

The removal of cars was flagged up a number of times. It was raised not only on environmental grounds but also on efficiency grounds. Cars were seen as too slow and roads too congested having a detrimental effect on futuristic urban lifestyle. However the explosion of alternative vehicular public transport was overwhelming, ranging from wheelchairs for the elderly with jet-packs, to flooded streets where jet-skis were necessary.
In response to the question ‘how would you like to travel to school in the future?’ some of the children answered instead with a commentary on the structure of the education system itself. Their drawings indicated that education from home was a popular desire, as was working from home. This was achievable either with a computer in every home or via a learning helmet from which knowledge could be downloaded straight to the brain in one second. These children further proposed that schools should be multi-disciplinary and community based, suggesting the addition of entertainment and sport and shopping facilities to the standard educational functions.

Mixed use buildings were not suggestions reserved for schools alone, many of the children wanted to see the future development peppered with a rich variety of facilities normally allocated on a regional scale being redirected in the community on a neighbourhood basis.

‘After school I’d like to go on TV and be on a programme called Dream-on. I’d like to MC in lots of places nearby where I live. I would like to be in Misteeq like Elisha and I want to know how to get in touch with famous people. I’d like to go to drama and theatre school after normal school.’

The children wanted a mixture of activities almost broadening the term mixed use. They drew houses near airports, death rides adjacent to bungee jumping and other extreme sports, business was integrated with nursing, girl bands and performance schools where part of everyday education and of course most of them expected football.

Key issues:

- Young people enjoy bright colour, unusual forms, large scale and interactivity in the built environment.
- Clean and litter-free streets are important to young people.
- Car free zones are valued on environmental and safety terms.
- Travel and transport are seen as enjoyable given a diversity of types.
- Children enjoy re-thinking education, suggesting homeworking, IT based, broadening term ‘school’ and education.
- Outdoor adventure activities are very popular amongst young people.
- A rich mix of programmes in residential, commercial, business and educational facilities is an exciting prospect for many children.
The Hot Spot map was used in The four school workshops and at the Copenhagen Street Youth Club. Each group was given a different set of coloured dots and asked to mark the places they go other than their home - parks, libraries, school clubs, sporting venues, fishing spots or ‘hang out spaces’.

The younger children consulted, i.e. from year 5 at the Blessed Sacrament and year 6 children at Winton Primary School, produced very similar results. They have very structured after school activities that are based in or around their school, only occasionally venturing further afield to venues such as the British Library and Kings Cross station, probably because of the close proximity of busy main roads.

However the children from year 5 at St Mary & St.Pancras appear to be much more adventurous in their after school activities. The hot spots for this group are more evenly spread within the boundaries of Somerstown, that are Euston Road, Euston station & St. Pancras station.

The two year age gap and move to secondary school reveals a marked difference in their after school adventures or occupations. The older children in the Somerstown area from year 7 at the South Camden Community School have destinations evenly spread within and beyond their local neighbourhood; however they are still deeply territorial and rarely veer east across the KXC site as it is seen as a barrier to their movement.

The difference between the younger and older Somerstown children is not as great as the difference between the younger and older Islington children. Here the very tight hotspot groupings of the younger children contrasts with the dispersed hotspots of the older children at Copenhagen St Youth Club. This is possibly due to the the Winton School area being bounded on two sides by two major, congested roads: Pentonville Road and Caledonian Road. The Copenhagen Street kids are equally confident as Somerstown kids in moving within their neighbourhood, but the former’s territory is wider as the boundaries to their patch are less defined than those of the Somerstown area.

The Copenhagen St Youth Club workshop was much smaller and more informal than that of the schools and this may explain the wider reach and diversity of hot spots. They discussed informally anti-social activity as hot spots, such as places to joy-ride and burn scooters and football grounds as good places for vandalism. Their illegal use of stolen mopeds certainly increased their mobility and therefore widened their territory. One boy described fishing with his father on the canal, while his friends told us that a popular place for the older group (16-18’s) is a local petrol station where they sit on the wall and occasionally attack passing cars.

The Hot Spot map is a clear indication of the scale of young peoples territories, and how this broadens with age and increased mobility. It was also clear that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to travel further afield than their neighbourhood on a regular basis. What holds true for all the groups is that the Kings Cross Central development site is a physical barrier at present and is a limiting factor in the direction of young peoples movement.

**Key issues:**

- Local Neighbourhoods are mostly defined by physical barriers: the railways, main roads, canal and wasteland.
- Young people in Kings Cross do not often venture from their area.
- Young peoples territorial perception increases as they get older
- KXC site acts as a barrier to movement of young people a present.
- Due to the small perceived scale of their local neighbourhoods children may not see KXC directly as their ‘manor’, even with successful integration of the KXC development.
Daily Diaries

Word count – top answers of a word count for all the responses to each question

Where are you?  Home (113)  Bedroom (58)  Kitchen (34)
What are you doing?  Play (127)  Watching (120)  Eating (55)
What are you thinking?  Nothing (69)  Bored/Boring (34)  Good (31)

The daily diary is an exercise that allows us to take a glimpse of everyday life in an area through a series of first-hand accounts. The diary pack provides a disposable camera, a pen, and a bespoke diary that is formatted to ask three specific questions - over a two day period the diarists are asked to take a photograph every hour and to respond to the questions ‘Where are you?’, ‘What are you doing?’ and ‘What are you thinking?’. From this information a matrix is built up that plots, over the nominal two day period, what each individual was doing and thinking every hour.

Taken individually, the material reflects the broad cross-section of personalities that one would expect, from the enthusiastic - ‘at home in sitting room, playing teapots with sisters, this is fun’, the confident ‘dads study room, playing the casio keyboard, I am great at it’ to the pessimistic – ‘I’m going to have a bad day’, from the unimaginative - ‘doing nothing, I’m getting really bored’, to the resourceful – ‘At home, Still making my necklace, concentrating on my necklace!’, ‘I should become a photographer’.

We can enjoy the complexities and simple pleasures of family life, ‘Can’t wait to go to the club to celebrate my grandad’s birthday’, ‘mum you make the nicest food in the world’.

Sometimes their thoughts are simple and practical – ‘I’m ironing, Am I going to burn myself?’, and at others full of yearning - ‘At home, bedroom, on my balcony, Looking outside my balcony to see if the moon & stars have come out, but they haven’t, I’m thinking I wish London could look this beautiful and lively all the time.’ or expressive of personal hopes - ‘going to sleep, I hope I have good dreams’, ‘looking at Bangladesh map, I want to go to Bangladesh right now’, or pensive and reflective - ‘I’m thinking how it would feel to be blind, like Ben ( A character in the book)’

Taken as a mass the material also reveals broader patterns of life & shared interests but also the extent to which children feel the need to be distracted and entertained – ‘Nothing (69 instances) and ‘Bored / Boring’ (34 instances) are the most frequently occurring words in the ‘What are you thinking?’ section, although this doesn’t reflect a generally more positive approach to life that bubbles up through so many answers: the words ‘good’ and ‘nice’ both appear 31 times (‘bad’ only twice), ‘happy’ 20, times, ‘love’ 15 (‘hate’ only 7).
The majority of time is spent in and around the home (113 instances), predominantly in the bedroom (58) where many children, play, watch tv, read etc., or in the kitchen (34) either eating (the third most prevalent activity with 55 instances), or helping with cooking and washing up.

Most time is spent playing (127 instances) – whether outside, playing football, or, to a large extent, on a computer/playstation (15 / 15 instances). Even play is enjoyed to varying degrees – from ‘playing, just happy’ and ‘at the park, playing with my scooter, I don’t want to go home’, through to ‘playing with my friends, I want to go home’.

Much time is spent watching tv (85 instances), although sometimes this can be a shared experience, or actively engaging – ‘we’re all watching tv – this is excellent’, ‘this is the best episode of Digimon I’ve ever seen’ or simply to pass the time ‘watching tv, I’m bored’, ‘watching tv, Now I am thinking of playing instead of watching’.

Reading is also a popular pastime (29 instances), with learning and school both liked and loathed – ‘I love school’, ‘I wish homework was not invented’, ‘waiting to go into drama class, I can’t wait’.

The diaries also show an awareness and enjoyment of their physical environment - ‘in balcony looking at the view, what a beautiful sight’, ‘Watching the butterfly fly all over the place, Very happy to free butterfly. Missing the butterfly, Happy that it has a new life’, and ‘park, walking, this is beautiful’.

Finally, it should be noted that the importance of the exercise lies in the portrait it paints of a particular time and place, the enjoyment that can be had from the familiarity, uniqueness and sense of character that emerges, and the way that it engages the participants in a group activity where their own contribution is equally valued.

**Key issues:**

- **Play is an important aspect of childhood - children need opportunities to play and can feel dulled by passive, solo entertainments.**
There are three aspects to the video project: outreach, the process of making of the film, and showing the film.

1 Outreach

The young people who featured in the film were selected from local schools and youth clubs during the workshops and also in informal outreach. Young people who came across as bright, opinionated and reliable were selected. Initially 10 were chosen, but a few of the harder to reach young people tended also to be unreliable, and were sadly not involved in the filming.

Interviews with key stakeholders in the regeneration of King's Cross were to be conducted by young people from the area. The interviewees were contacted by Fluid and over half of the 16 that were written to respond positively.

2 Making

Each interview with the young person was conducted at locations of importance to the young person involved. From this starting point they took us on a walk through their everyday hang-outs; from parks and underground garages, to the canal and the British Library. Some of the main areas that were covered in conversations were

- Where young people hang out and why
- Youth crime and vandalism (particularly Mopeds)- who does it and why
- Racism
- Hopes for the future

The informal conversations that took place during the filming provided a valuable insight into the lives, habits and values of young people. They revealed a great deal about issues that affected all of them directly or indirectly, such as drugs and vandalism. Other issues were more particular to individuals we spoke to were racial conflicts, value of teacher support and peer pressure.

Mopeds

All had a view or story to tell about scooter theft. Some had a very strong moral standpoint about this issue, and had little understanding of the deeper social malaise of which this action is symptomatic. One boy knew of 13 year old peers who steal mopeds, store them in an underground garage where they get drunk and the girls runs around topless. He had an understanding that they were bored, with low aspirations and under a great deal of peer group pressure.

Race

The issue of race came up with the people that we spoke to, though mainly with concern about the non-integration of Bengali and white communities, rather than of direct conflict. However, there were certain social groups, such as female Bengalis, who are notable in their absence from youth clubs and other youth hang-outs, whereas gangs of Bengali boys are much more prevalent.
Ambition

They were all asked how they saw themselves in the future and what career they hoped to get into. Those who took part all had high professional aspirations. But sadly those who were less willing to commit themselves to the project that we spoke to had very low aspirations. They tended to focus on sex, drugs and crime and were often excluded from school, relying on youth clubs to amuse them during the day.

During the outreach a large number of youth workers were spoken to on visits to youth clubs. They explained the social background to many of the young people committing crime and involved in the anti social behaviour so common to the social deprivation of the area. Often the young people are caught on a cycle of bad behaviour that is supported by their peers, and often by their family, who also has a history of violence, crime and abuse.

Youth Interviews with key figures:

Before the interviews, the young people were briefed about the role of their interviewee in the larger picture of Kings Cross, and questions were suggested for the young people to ask. These mainly centred around what that person was doing within their power and professional remit for the benefit of young people, and to address the integration of KXC with the deprived communities surrounding it.

Some interviewers addressed wider issues such as social depravation while others focused more on their immediate interest, such as computers and full size football pitch provision. Highlights of the interviews included Patrick’s interview with Stewart Purvis of Kings Cross Partnership, during which the two had an unprompted conversation about relieving homelessness in Kings Cross, and the advantages and disadvantages of the Mayor’s congestion charging policy amongst others. As a result of Patrick’s impressive social conscience and intelligence displayed during the interview, he was invited to visit Stewart in the studios of ITN and there met his hero Trevor Mc Donald.

The conversations about youth services often veered into the wacky as interviewer took imaginative mantle of a child when talking about ideas for KXC in the future. Dickon Robinson of the Peabody Trust said that KXC should be the Venice of London. Bob West from LB Camden Planning Dept. had a lengthy conversation along a watery theme with Juné about taking IT classrooms on canal narrowboats to school, and a hope for KXC to be ‘A department store of life’. Sir Bob Reid suggested boring a tunnel from the British Library to the British Museum and lining it with a shopping arcade.

As the project developed it became clear video is an attractive medium to young people, a very familiar and direct form of communication which is relatively simple for them to become involved in.

3 Showing

The film was shown at two open days: on 1st June 2002 at a public open day in the Kings Cross Goods yard and at the Somerstown Festival in Chalton Street on 6 July. At both events the showing of the film acted as an attractor, with much of the enjoyment coming from the viewers recognising friends and fellow school pupils.

Young spectators enjoyed identifying local people and places they knew, and squealed particularly loudly when some of them recognised a boy they on the film who was furtively looking through a large wallet outside Kings Cross Station. Those who were in the film seemed slightly embarrassed at standing out from the crowd, as they got a bit of teasing from their peers. Generally it was enjoyed by all.

Key issues

- Key issues and concerns emerged such as homelessness or youth clubs that had closed down.
- All of the young people brought up the subject of young offenders and youth crime, some in a judgmental manner and others with an acceptance of the condition. They all explained youth crime as a symptom of boredom.
- All spoke about youth clubs as being of great importance, but of there being a severe shortage. Many freely admitted that when they are closed they often go out and commit crime.
- Proposals for a youth forum, an new improved youth club body, that could oversee and support youth related policy were discussed during many of the interviews.
- Families and communities also need support to begin to break the negative cycle of low aspirations and crime that plagues deprived areas.
Stakeholder Interviews

One-to-one Interviews interviews were carried out with various key people - stakeholders, service providers and members of the King’s Cross Partnership -

Lucy Bingham  
CCCU (Camden Central Community Umbrella)

Janey Hagger  
Arts Programme Area Manager - High Impact

Bob West  
Kings Cross Team Manager, LB Camden

Teresa Hoskyns  
West Euston Partnership (Commissioned Project)

Doug Slater  
North King’s Cross Neighb’d Management Officer, King’s Cross Partnership

Pamela Liaquat  
Advice and Advocacy Worker - Hopscotch

Shelagh O’Connor  
Director - New Horizon Youth Centre

Jamie Dean  
Projects & Developments Manager - Islington Greenspace Team

The interviews were arranged to provide and complement the ‘on-the-ground’ research and direct youth engagement techniques of the other exercises. The views expressed during the interviews represent considerable and often painfully won knowledge of the area and its major youth issues. Though the interviewees came from different areas and represented different constituencies of concern, ethnicities and agendas a remarkable degree of coherence emerged across the opinions expressed.

Issues for youth

All agreed that facilities for young people (from 8 - 16) were thin on the ground in the KXC (King’s Cross Central) area though some attributed this, in part, to poor ‘signposting’. There was a general perception that ‘youth’ are stigmatised as a problem for ‘society’ and that solutions are imposed. This was felt to be an ill-informed position and an inappropriate response. All of those interviewed felt that ‘youth’ should be given an active role in defining and creating their own, non-institutionalised environments through the mechanism of, for instance, a Youth Forum. There was an acknowledgement amongst some of the interviewees that the complex social issues that surround and contextualise ‘youth problems’ are not sufficiently understood: for instance, the breakdown of the nuclear family and social networks, the tensions experienced by families in deprived areas, peer pressure and generational attitudes that mitigate against education and good ‘civic behaviour’, parental absence. A response which recognises these difficulties, and which relates to families as well as to youth and the young, was felt to offer a proper structure for tackling the difficulties.

Drugs (open dealing in daylight streets), teenage pregnancy, girls being left out, especially where sports provisions are concerned, exclusions from schools, boredom, low expectations and perceptions of poor community safety were mentioned by all as recurring issues stemming from the lack of a vital and engaging menu of youth activities and places in the area. Additionally, the lack of youth club to career path linkages, and a lack of facilities for Bangladeshi children were also mentioned.

Some mentioned the fact that youth are disempowered, have limited mobility (often due to parental anxieties), a lack of spending power, but unlimited vitality. Perhaps we should not be surprised if the frustrations this causes expresses itself aggressively. One aspect of this, tied to calculations of ‘value’, is a deep level of territoriality and gang culture. The deep-seated need for self expression in the context of situations that all but ignore youth often leads to flouting the law. Dubbing, tagging and graffiti are another outlet, though this is now far from the province of youth alone. Where racial abuse was mentioned, it was principally in the context of gang activity. The depopulation of city streets and the anxiety associated with the public realm in the mind of adults and youths drive a demand for highly localised provision of youth facilities. Better connections, safe routes, and easier / secure transport could help counter this, and the economic difficulty of over duplication.
Examples of Remedy

A host of highly acclaimed projects were mentioned with certain groups or projects identified by more than one interviewee. Themes that emerge through these projects are:

- A place for youth on their own terms
- Non-institutional facilities and services
- Real forms of direct youth engagement
- A mix of active and reflective pursuits that can combine
- Alluring learning environments; DJing, ICT, multimedia work, music, expressive art, local radio
- Different provisions for different age groups
- Non-gender specific activities
- Youth involvement in defining and delivering everything from artifacts to services
- Trips out of the area and away day's (generally)

Of the many projects and groups that were mentioned, the following were most often identified as providing model services:

- Plot 10 - Somerstown
- Crumbles Castle
- New Horizons
- High Impact
- King's Cross Brunswick
- South Camden Community School
- Copenhagen Play & Youth Partnership
- Hopscotch
- Somerstown Youth Centre
- CCCU
- Islington Play Association
- Thornhill Neighbourhood Project

What would you most like to see in KXC

All agreed that there should be a cutting edge multi-sports, ICT rich venue, possibly open to families as well as youth, embedded in a ‘neutral’ area and that it should have high visibility and accessibility. There was a view that the provisions offered should be flexible, able to evolve to meet changing demand, and tied to outreach programmes. Though less forcibly expressed, another prevailing opinion was that there should be a network of small scale youth ‘cotches’ - houses, in effect, refurbished, run and maintained by and for youth with subtle and sympathetic adult support. A better system of signposting facilities and events is needed, perhaps through a dedicated, interactive web site. It was suggested that this could be in whole or in part managed by a ‘Youth Forum’ or ‘Youth Parliament’, formally acknowledged by the Metropolitan Police, the London Borough’s of Camden and Islington, local businesses and schools and agencies. One of the by-products of a Forum could be the potential of better intelligence-led policing against anti-social behaviour.

Some expressed the view that seed funding for youth projects could come form a hybrid agency that would meld the strategic potentials of a community development trust, business investment district and ‘town centre’ management. In essence, a portion of the service charge paid by new and existing businesses in the area could act as the kernel around which public sector funding and section 106 agreements could accrue. The funds generated could be targeted at new youth provisions on the ‘edges’ as well as within the KXC zone, promoting social equity. The great potentials offered need, obviously, to be weighed buy a thorough scoping and feasibility study, but it certainly seems worthy of consideration. One way forward would be to run a small scale pilot project in the area, perhaps with existing businesses that have expressed an informal interest, e.g. Wolf Olins, the P&O development and / or the Ten Estates, for which the Peabody Trust are developing innovative ideas for education and social provision.

It was widely believed that the development of KXC would, and should provide opportunities for skilling, training and employment, and there were general desires to see effective action taken to propel this idea forward. The Youth Forum, if it were established, could provide another vital role here, complementing the input of local schools and the Skills Council.
One of the most difficult problems faced in large scale regeneration projects is the ‘waiting game’ unintentionally imposed on existing initiatives. Some of those interviewed were concerned that many youth initiatives are insecurely funded, and hoped that Argent St George could use their influence and clout to establish a better level of stability for various youth projects. However it is managed, and particularly considering the fact that the King’s Cross Partnership, who manage the local SRB, are in the last few months of their programme, a ‘meanwhile strategy’ for the delivery of youth services needs to be articulated in partnership with Camden and Islington to help with the overall delivery of the regeneration project in social terms.

The ‘bete noir’ of all those interviewed was that KXC should not be seen as a gated enclave for the well-to-do, turning its back on surrounding neighbourhoods. There is no doubt that the redevelopment of King’s Cross will fundamentally change the conscious image and mind map of the city, and introduce linkages and new neighbourhood configurations that were impossible before. If the development can truly integrate with surrounding areas, shifting our ideas of current boundaries and centres, this greatest apprehension of all would be mitigated.

**Feedback on Argent St George**

The feedback from those interviewed was generally positive. The hope was expressed that Argent St George would continue to factor their growing local knowledge of the area into design frameworks.

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**Key issues**

**Crime & Community safety**
- Drugs
- Gangs
- Lack of understanding of and responsibility for consequences of behaviour
- Lack of policing
- Kudos attached to bad behaviour
- Racism
- Breakdown of family structure

**Facilities**
- Lack of good quality open space & play / sports facilities
- Lack of ICT facilities
- Local resources needed
- Not enough detached youth work in the area
- Neutral, or youth-owned spaces
- Affordability
- Need for stimulation & motivation
- Need for facilities targeted at specific groups, e.g. Bangladeshi, girls, families

**Youth opportunities**
- High levels of exclusion from schools
- Insufficient linkages between youth clubs and career paths
- Boredom is a huge problem
- Lack of state benefits for 16 & 17 year-olds can lead to homelessness in many cases.
- Lack of awareness of sexual health issues.
- Low expectations, narrow horizons

**Community**
- Lack of clear neighbourhood
- A general lack of resources which intensifies territorialism
- Child safety and support.
A summary of Key Issues

Canvass Cards

• area seen as home and a source of identity and pride: children find the community friendly and enjoy the vitality of the area
• many younger children enjoy school and are ambitious: football provides inspiration and ambition
• drugs and criminal behaviour are key concerns although there is a distrust of police and authority
• quality of physical environment has a direct impact on how they feel: they enjoy the proximity to shops and parks, but hate the dirt and mess
• Many children would love to travel
• the majority aspire to being with family and friends, but many wish to be away from King’s Cross:

Mind maps

• a whole range of perceptions
• most pupils are local, but some commute to the school
• apart from personal inconvenience and occasional crime, traffic is the main concern
• children are aware of the poor quality of environment particularly noise and cleanliness
• children appreciate simple pleasures; sunny weather, seeing friends, or being accompanied by family

Future Mind Maps

• Young people enjoy bright colour, unusual forms, large scale and interactivity in the built environment
• Clean and litter-free streets are important to young people
• Car free zones are valued on environmental and safety terms
• Travel and transport are seen as enjoyable given a diversity of types.
• Children enjoy re-thinking education, suggesting homeworking, IT based, broadening term ‘school’ and education’.
• Outdoor adventure activities are very popular amongst young people.
• A rich mix of programmes in residential, commercial, business and educational facilities is an exciting prospect for many children.

Hotspots

• Local Neighbourhoods are mostly defined by physical barriers: the railways, main roads, canal and wasteland.
• Young people in Kings Cross do not often venture from their area.
• Young peoples territorial perception increases as they get older
• KXC site acts as a barrier to movement of young people a present.
• Due to the small perceived scale of their local neighbourhoods children may not see KXC directly as their ‘manor’, even with successful integration of the KXC development.

Daily diaries

• Play is an important aspect of childhood - children need opportunities to play and can feel dulled by passive, solo entertainments

Video project

• Key issues and concerns emerged such as homelessness or youth clubs that had closed down.
• All of the young people brought up the subject of young offenders and youth crime, some in a judgmental manner and others with an acceptance of the condition. They all explained youth crime as a symptom of boredom.
• All spoke about youth clubs as being of great importance, but of there being a severe shortage. Many freely admitted that when they are closed they often go out and commit crime.
• Proposals for a youth forum, an new improved youth club body, that could oversee and support youth related policy were discussed during many of the interviews.
• Families and communities also need support to begin to break the negative cycle of low aspirations and crime that plagues deprived areas.

Stakeholder interviews

Crime & Community safety

• Drugs
• Gangs
• Lack of understanding of and responsibility for consequences of behaviour
• Lack of policing
• Kudos attached to bad behaviour
• Racism
• Breakdown of family structure
Facilities

- Lack of good quality open space & play / sports facilities
- Lack of ICT facilities
- Local resources needed
- Not enough detached youth work in the area
- Neutral, or youth-owned spaces
- Need for stimulation & motivation
- Need for facilities targeted at specific groups, e.g. Bangladeshi, girls, families

Youth opportunities

- High levels of exclusion from schools
- Insufficient linkages between youth clubs and career paths
- Boredom is a huge problem
- Lack of state benefits for 16 & 17 year-olds can lead to homelessness in many cases.
- Lack of awareness of sexual health issues.
- Low expectations, narrow horizons

Community

- Lack of clear neighbourhood
- A general lack of resources which intensifies territorialism
- Child safety and support.
Upstairs in my house. I'm ironing. Am I going to burn myself?
At home, watching my sister during the Big Ben show in a new big building.
Proposals

20 Rough Ideas

To better express, in a condensed form, the desires and needs of youth and the young as they emerged through the various forms of consultation and engagement outlined in earlier sections, we felt that an attempt should be made to capture, spatialise and give form to (our interpretation of) the ideas collected. It should be noted that some of these projects are already happening, and that it is suggested that they could be promulgated further. Other projects have been suggested by youth workers and other interviewees, as well being an expression of the desires of young people.

Though the ideas have to be understood as a provisional snap shot of what are likely to become evolving desires in the context of an urban location undergoing massive change, the ideas go the the heart of the issues identified.

For the sake of brevity the ‘20 Rough Ideas’ are presented as bullet points with accompanying images or simple maps, as they were presented during the public open days (with one or two amendments for the sake of clarity). Our intention is to help give shape and a degree of structure to what would otherwise remain a series of fragmented, though deeply felt issues. Each of the ideas begins to crystallise actions that could be taken to meet the expressed and encountered needs head on. Potential forms of operation, and benefits that would accrue are also discussed.

The 20 rough ideas are as follows:

Youth Projects

1. Big Youth Agency
2. Youth Parliament
3. 24 hr Youth Drop In (Second Home)
4. Open House
5. Youth Extreme Play
6. Web Space
7. Travel bar
8. Digital Art Database (DAD)
9. Time-share Square
10. 24 hr basketball league

Non Youth Specific Projects

11. Hybrid financial support
12. Drop-in Town Hall
13. Public space network
14. Potential links & desire lines
15. Fuzzy edges to barriers

Wider Area Planning

16. Canal safe routes
17. Active street frontages
18. Safe routes across the site
19. Shifting Neighbourhood centres
20. Cultural Strategy for KXC
Youth Projects

1. Big Youth Agency

Rough idea

- Audit of facilities, training, apprenticeships, carried out and contributed to by all, including youth workers, teachers, parents, and most importantly, young people. Web-based live database would contain up to date information about what is available in the area and highlight what is missing in terms of: youth clubs, facilities, sports, training, leisure, culture as well as training and apprenticeships.

Benefits

- Sustainability of individual projects could be ensured through access to funding and business advice services.
- Extend young people’s territory and local awareness.
- Could draw on, and act as generator for, joined-up, multi-agency support.

What is it?

- Youth facilities database in monthly booklet form and kxc21.co.uk website.
- Pile of ‘big map’ leaflets in every youth facility

What if… a local park that lacks benches and goal posts was highlighted on the map as needing help. Bemerton boys on a joinery apprenticeship that was advertised on the web help to replace them.

2. Youth Parliament

Rough idea

- Peer group code of conduct as a starting point (ref. New Horizons)
- Place for young people and youth stakeholders to discuss local issues.
- Younger sister to Camden & Islington Local Strategic Partnership and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.
- Supported by youth workers and consultants to ensure viability of projects.
- Satellite Youth Forums in each neighbourhood.

Benefits

- Overcomes lack of communication between youth in different areas around KXC.
- Young people and stakeholders have a direct impact on youth related decisions.

What is it?

- A nominated group of around 50-100 young people. youth workers, parents, teachers who represent people from their area, age, sex, religion, etc.
- Each meeting focuses on a different issue e.g. sex, drugs, crime, sport, jobs, education, families, etc.
- YP should be fun, active and engaging. Possibility of curriculum recognition for pupils.

What if… mentoring work done by young people is rewarded by free entry to youth facilities. Youth Parliament successfully lobby for school curriculum recognition of real projects for a citizenship course. A ‘time and big ideas bank’ is set up.
3. 24 hr Youth Drop In (Second Home)

Rough idea

- Youth club activities are a front for the advice centre.
- Provides advice on drugs, sexual health, employment, mentoring etc.
- Older kids mentor younger kids and outreach workers would bring in excluded kids.
- Two types of 24 hr Youth Drop-In:
  1. Local centres in each district.
  2. Visible Drop-In for out-of-towners near the stations.

Benefits

- A place to go for kids in danger of offending or homelessness.
- Increased awareness of problems caused by teenage pregnancy, crime, drug abuse etc, through mentoring and advice.
- Youth club with good facilities.
- Shop front type presence.

What is it?

- Small and big rooms for chats.
- A secure place to sleep.

What if...

Local available spaces, set up as youth ho(s)tel. Income from say, school exchange programme by offering pied-a-terre accommodation.

4. Open House

Rough idea

- A place for young people to hang out and ‘cotch’
- Renovation by young people of empty flats or shops as ‘sweat equity’
- Open House is neighbours with ‘24 hr Youth Drop-In’ for good-natured overseeing.
- Possible Primary Care Trust connections.

Benefits

- Getting young people off the streets.
- Introducing young people to refurbishment skills.
- Giving them a sense of ownership and therefore a greater respect for facilities they use.

What is it?

- Empty Flats or Houses from Local Authority housing department.
- One in each district.

What if...

Empty flat in need of regeneration is donated to Open House Project on a year- long ‘peppercorn’ lease. Council donates materials for refurbishment. Young people redecorate and are then allowed to use it free of charge for a year (renewable lease). Could work in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord in the longer term.
5. Youth Extreme Play

Rough idea

- Youth-prioritising Extreme Sports Centre
- Exterior is 24 hour floodlit wall for climbing, abseiling and other vertigo-inducing sports
- Gym with new machines providing dynamo energy generation.
- Large spaces for dance, bungee trampolining, karate, and motorbike training
- Membership to a database of sports activities in the area around such as pitches, courts, gyms, climbing centres, football clubs, bike shops etc.
- New Opportunities Fund 2, English Heritage and the Local Authority could fund the project with Single Regeneration Budget support. The private sector could also offer support as part of ‘Generation KX’ (see 11).

Benefits

- Provides for young people's need to do high risk activities.
- Energy generated from Dynamo Gym reduces running costs
- Keeping youth off the streets and giving a framework for passionate involvement

What is it?

- Large-presence building with big spaces for high energy sports
- Dynamo Gym machine technology is visible from exterior
- Digital database and access to network of sporting activities.

What if….the Dynamo Gym provides power for grey water fountains and local electric cars.

6. Web Space

Rough idea

- Network of large and small scale public spaces that can be booked on-line for events such as bbq’s, film showings, bingo-under-the-stars, wedding receptions etc.
- Hire out special spaces for as nominal fee to ensure commitment.

Benefits

- Enlivening of under populated public spaces
- Increased sense of ownership and use of the public spaces
- Overcomes lack of affordable venues
- Generates business for supporting industries locally such as catering/equipment hire/etc.

What is it?

- Website with catalogue of spaces
- Could be part of Big Youth Agency website
- Various groups of people in public places, holding events.

What if….out door cinema is booked for a short film night showing work made by local youth clubs.
7. Travel bar

Rough idea
- Prominent, centrally located milk bar come travel agent.
- Youth-orientated bar providing views over the site and information about local and international travel.
- Organises trips for youth clubs, schools and families.
- Can charge phone or laptop while-u-wait.
- Might be sponsored/supported by Eurostar/other rail companies/ Lonely Planet / Time Out.

Benefits
- Raising youth pride & aspirations.
- Social space for travellers.
- Gives more young people the chance of travelling further.

What is it?
- A bar centrally located at a suitable landmark location.

What if... young people from a Kings Cross youth Club get sponsorship to go to Paris on the Eurostar on an exchange and get to see what life is like in French Inner City Youth Clubs. The film they make is shown in public.(see 6)

8. Digital Art Database (DAD)

Rough idea
- Digital information about people who use Kings Cross is gathered in a database, showing the changes that are happening over time.
- Continually gathers information that is accessible to all on the internet.
- Video Diary project on a huge scale; a cinema of feedback for passers by.
- Information tracks the name, age, destination, reason for journey, expectations or memory of journey for those who take part.

Benefits
- Antedote to anonymity in Kings Cross.
- Generates database of live information about all who use Kings Cross from residents to travellers.
- Offers tool for future planning.

What is it?
- Strategically placed diary points which ask a few simple questions
- Webcam view of the people who input info. - Big Brother comes to Kings Cross.
- Website for viewing all the data.
- Big screen or digital structure changing and showing personalities of Kings Cross.

What if... dot matrix sculpture snakes around the Kings cross central showing what 198 peoples’ April memory of travelling to Glasgow were.
9. Time-share Square

Rough idea

- Two or more organisations can ‘time share’ a space designated for a specific use.
- Round the clock use of the public spaces.

Benefits

- Addresses the lack of quality public space in KX area

What is it?

- A dedicated space easily accessed by 2 or more organisations for use such as boules.

What if…5-a-side football pitch used by school during the day, youth clubs in the evening and health club at the weekend.

10. 24 hr basketball league

Rough idea

- Local business organisations play in leagues with local youth
- Young people come into contact with professions that they wouldn’t normally, raising aspirations and reducing alienation.

Benefits

- Communication across the yawning economic and knowledge gap between the wealthy and poor in Kings Cross
- Gives young people a positive distraction at night rather than roaming the streets

What is it?

- Floodlit basketball court near key route of movement: perhaps using school land.

What if…Local Advertising agency gets beaten in finals of the KXC league by the Bemerton under 15’s squad.
11. Hybrid financial support

Rough idea

- Setting up of a hybrid Business Investment District/Town Centre Management organisation as means of building community/business relations and sponsoring community programmes.
- A means of managing public space and surrounding districts, with some money raised through a local management levy.
- Feel-good measure which will help prevent build up of antagonistic us vs them perceptions

Benefits

- Engaging business to invest in the quality of the public realm around them.
- Increased funds available for youth/regeneration projects.
- Would link many potential agencies, exploit creative thinking & streamline financial and investment structures for local people and companies on the 'edge'

What is it?

- A local management organisation helping to develop economic and environmental regeneration.

What if...

- Large soft drinks company sponsors an under18’s disco project that supports management, flyer design and DJ training as part of the scheme.

12. Drop-in Town Hall

Rough idea

- Home of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- Home of Kings Cross Partnership replacement programme
- Home to various residents and tenants associations and new public sector organisations such as Healthy Living Centre boards.
- Base for the Youth Parliament
- New non-institutional, approachable civic centre

Benefits

- An easy-access public forum for future civic activity and support.
- Could lobby for particular changes as an aspect of ‘participatory democracy’

What is it?

- Visible presence for LSP, local people, local agencies. A public lobby.
- A centre for family support in non-institutional surroundings

What if...

- Town Hall is where the local community become actively involved in a more ‘transparent’ regeneration programme.
13. Public space network

- Additional public space provision within the KXC site to link and complement the existing public realm.
- Provide park and landscaping in the urban fabric allowing an even mix of public space.
- Knitting together the surrounding area and the new KXC with the use of creative landscape.

14. Potential links & desire lines

- Important nodes and neighbourhood centres need to be well connected.
- Movement of traffic and pedestrians between neighbouring nodes ensures that places do not become isolated.
- Links made directly across the site as well as into the site, creating destinations in existing communities to help regenerate these areas.

15. Fuzzy edges to barriers

- Use active street frontages or well used public / civic spaces as a binder / attractor between west + east of Goods Way.
- The breaking down of barriers in Bemerton Estate and Bingfield Park will help reconnect the area with Islington.
- Bridges, tunnels or other physical links should ideally be made to the north and west to integrate the communities where possible.

Barriers to movement through the KXC site are the new railway embankments and the main York Way need to be made more permeable.
16. Canal safe routes

- Encourage greatly increased use of the canal as a pedestrian and cycle route, by increasing access points to the canal
- By providing recreation facilities, moorings, and sports facilities so that the water becomes lively public space.
- Extend towpath access points through opening cafes with terraces etc
- Provide dramatic lighting to enhance environment
- Consider towpath as (subliminal) out-door industrial archaeology museum

Canal should be generally more accessible and better use made of the canal and spaces around it to make it safer and more populated.

17. Active street frontages

- Shops, bars and restaurants ensure footfall along a street to attract and bind the social classes together
- Potential to open up and use sections of the Eastern flank of King’s Cross Station helping to generate lively street
- Potential to enhance linkages to P & O development

Making streets such as York Way more lively would blur the edge of the KXC site and attract people across the road and beyond into other areas.

18. Safe routes across the site

- Network of safe pedestrian routes across the site. These will take in 13-17
- Could knit together various public facilities, civic buildings & youth facilities
- Could link to new tram route
- Could link to ‘shopping experience’

Safe routes would connect surrounding communities with each other and the new development.
19. Shifting Neighbourhood centres

- Broad enmeshing of new and old urban terrain
- Blurring of KXC and surrounding neighbourhood boundaries where possible
- Possibly encourage location of new ‘social centres’ on edges of existing neighbourhoods to develop linkages & deter territoriality

20. Cultural Strategy for KXC

- The development of an overall cultural strategy, making the links between the projects, theatre, public art, etc.
- The structure in place for the independent growth of local and ‘imported’ European culture
- Links in place to pull all the projects together:
  - Youth social strategy
  - Youth activity strategy

Existing neighbourhood centres extend towards KXC as new routes of movement to the centre of the development generate more activity.

An overall gathering together of the projects unifies the new and exciting communities under a theme that all can enjoy.
at the park
playing with
my friends.
I want to go home.
Fluid organised two dedicated open days for all the young people involved, and took part in the Somerstown Festival. The venues for the two dedicated events were carefully chosen to be in the centre of the consultation area, so that it was neutral territory for all of the surrounding areas. They were held on the Kings Cross Central Site, in order for the process of familiarisation with the idea of events on the site could start early.

31st May

The first was held on 31st May at Camley Street Natural Park, to which three of the four schools took part in a structured series of activities. These included canal boat cruises, showing of the kxc21 film, presentation of the website and the 20 rough ideas, and pond dipping.

The film was very much enjoyed by the kids, and the canal boat trips were certainly the most popular activity of the day, however there were some useful discussion about the ‘20 rough ideas’, and the basis form which they were generated. The students were on the whole positive about the ideas, and very much understood the need to integrate the areas surrounding KXC with the new development and each other.

1st June

This event was held at The Cross night-club on the Goods Yard site and included lively activities that were intended to emulate a similar sense of event that is intended on the site in the future. The film and the website were shown, and there were canal boat trips offered again. In addition to these there were DJ and MC workshops by ‘Bigga Fish’, who are locally famous amongst young people.

The greatest success of the day was the very useful feedback that was received on the ‘20 Rough Ideas’. This came mainly from adults, including a number of youth workers from which some useful discussion ensued, achieving its initial aim.
The 6th July saw Chalton Street in Somerstown awash with colour, music, smells and hundreds of people. The Somerstown festival is an annual festival of culture, and Fluid and Argent took part in the event to present the work and canvass some more feedback. The marquee held computers showing the kxc21.co.uk, an exhibition of the 20 Rough Ideas, the film 'kxc21' and canvass cards.

The day was a great success, and much useful feedback was received form a broad cross section of the community, from youth workers and parents, to children and clowns. The film was a popular attraction, and most of the kids who watched it recognised somebody in the film. All of the feedback from the day fed into the analysis of the data.
Feedback from Open Days

Feedback sheets + 6 questions

At each of the open days visitors were asked to complete a feedback form for the 20 Rough Ideas, indicating simply beside each one if they ‘like’, ‘disliked’ or ‘don’t know’. On the back were 6 questions about Kings Cross. The six Questions are taken form Argent St George’s Framework for regeneration document soon to be published, and aim to generate broader ideas about regeneration priorities.

Feedback

The feedback forms asked for quick responses to Rough Ideas, rather than a detailed reply. High on the list of positive responses were canal safe routes and ‘24 hr youth drop’ in, highlighting the general understanding that there is a need to improve the canal and transverse routes across the site. Clearly youth engagement and support is understood to be a priority, due to the high scoring of youth specific ideas in general.

Ideas that did not score very highly were perhaps due to the lack of understanding as to what the idea would actually mean. These were ‘Fuzzy edges to barriers’, or ‘24 hour basketball league’ the latter which the local priest said he didn’t like as he prefers football, but also that it might be too noisy.

Feedback sheets data
6 Questions

1. What do you like most about King’s Cross today?
2. What do you dislike most about King’s Cross today?
3. Which 3 words or phrase sums up the kind of place you would like King’s Cross to be?
4. Where are your favourite streets, squares and other public spaces within Central London? Why are these your favourites?
5. What are the most important things you believe need to happen to change King’s Cross for the better?
6. Changing King’s Cross will take a long time. What do you think should happen first?

Answers to the questions about most liked and disliked elements of Kings Cross were on the whole unsurprising. Community and cultural vibrancy scored highly; drugs and its spin-offs of crime, violence and prostitution were the most disliked parts, along with traffic and its spin-offs of congestion and pollution.

These related strongly to the priorities for parts of Kings Cross that needed to change. Most interesting was the enthusiasm for the community to be engaged and empowered in the process of change and regeneration. Provision of youth facilities and improved public space is clearly a reaction to the sense of claustrophobia generated by heavy traffic on many of the local streets and the sometimes intimidating presence of bored young people on the streets.

Generally responses to these questions add weight to the 20 Rough Ideas in an indirect way, whilst conversely, the Ideas begin to plant ideas about priority issues in the minds of the respondents.

Six Questions Data
(see page 67 for the rest of the graphs)
Web site KXC21.co.uk

kxc21.co.uk was launched after the consultation and open days to ensure a constant presence of the process while Fluid was not 'on the ground'. It aims to continue to educate, consult and canvass feedback from young people. The tone and graphic style of the site has been created with a younger audience in mind, to ensure that process of developing KXC still remains accessible to all. Descriptions of urban design and consultation techniques are simplified to child terminology, in the same way the school and youth club workshops had to be approached.

Aims
- to educate children about the Kings Cross Central developments and how they might affect their lives in the future
- To allow young people that have taken part in the process to see their views and polaroid photo on the internet*
- To allow a continuous process of consultation and feedback using web version of some of the tools.

* However, names of young people could not be used on the site for child protection purposes

The website has been promoted at each of the events that have taken place to ensure that as many young people and youth workers as possible know about it. Conversely, the 'News and Links' part of the site provides information about further events and developments of the kxc21 project.

Consultation results online

The Tools part of the site gives an explanation about each of the tools and how that are used. It then gives the user the chance to look at what other young people have said, or look for their own work*. Canvass Cards, Mind Maps and Daily diaries material can be searched through to find out all of the answers to a question (e.g. if this place was a song what would it be?...), or all the questions that one child answered.

The video section explains the purpose of the film that was made with young people in Kings Cross, and allows the user to watch small 5 second clip of each young person talking about their issues, and a clip of them interviewing the key figure. It allows the viewer to get a taste of the film that was made with them, 'KXC21 - kids make the connection'. Users are also able to download a full-length quicktime version of the film from the site.

A digitised version of the hot spot map can also be viewed online
Online Feedback

Some of the tools that were used in the consultation project are easily transferable to an online format, such as Canvass Cards and Mind Maps where the user can simply fill in the form and upload their own image or mind map. The hotspot map requires the user to describe the hotspot, and this will be transferred remotely to the online map.

The 'Have Your Say' section allows general comments about the KXC development, the KXC21 project, the World Cup or any other matter important to young people to be posted on the site, providing its not too offensive.

Development of the website

The intention of the website is to emulate online as far as possible the tools and events used in the project. The next stage of the development of kxc21.co.uk is to post the ‘20 Rough ideas’, the ‘key issues’ and other outputs on the site in order to maximise the exposure they receive and any feedback about them.
Next steps...

The exercise, though interim in nature, has identified a number of key issues and sympathetic responses built around a robust understanding of youth issues as directly encountered and as reported by people who have long term associations with the area.

For discussion

To move further there are a number of actions that could be taken, depending on overall timescales and master-planning developments. For the sake of brevity various actions are listed below to provide a framework for constructive discussions:

- Build on the impetus so far achieved through a forward programme of development and feedback
- Carry out appraisals of the engagement exercises and suggestions
- Identify gaps
- Assemble ‘Action Plans’ for critical projects and initiatives in partnership with Argent St George, the Local Authorities, the Skills Council, local RSL’s, local agencies including the Primary Care Trust and, (possibly) the LDA
- Carry out further work on the ground with key players
- Assembly of a “Youth Forum” as a central plank for future dialogue
- Meet with the Master Planning team to brainstorm options
- Consider best use of the Architecture Foundation’s September programme of participatory events in the KXC area (see note below)

Architecture Foundation

The forthcoming Architecture Foundation participatory events in Camden and Islington around the KXC site could offer the opportunity of engaging new groups and of provoking or inspiring further interaction between various ‘constituencies of concern’ and Argent St George. The September timetable for these events could gel with the intended date for the publication of the Framework document. The Architecture Foundation project will be reported on at the Urban Summit in October this year.

At the moment five or six architectural practices have been selected from across Europe to stage particular participatory events. As it currently stands, each practice will be expected to interpret ideas of journey, collections and connections, and each will be given a particular base to operate from. The live event will last for two days for each team, staggered across the month of September. The teams are likely to make an impact as they all have experience of high-octane public events.
Queen Mother's funeral being taken into the ambulance. I can't see or hear anything.
What do you dream of?

What would you like to do this year?

What would you like to be doing in ten years?

Where would you most like to be, who with and what would you be doing?

- travel *
- play
- theme park *
- SATS
- football
- school, act, florida, new, presents, study
- motorbike, pass my test, paintball
- no school, lottery, invent, happy, pop, star, better, fun, arsenal, dog, free

- football
- work
- play
- job
- driving
- star, college
- new, arsenal, friend, sing
- nice, pop, fun, rapper, teach, university, pass, go back, america, cab, architect
- act, study, dog, dance, rich, beauty therapist, australia, coach, explore, help
- police, businessman, paris, computer, olympic, greece, boxing, tennis, colombia
- flat, stockbroker, rugby, lawyer, shop, marry, barrister, money

- family
- friend
- play
- football
- mum
- dad, spain, here, job, living
- shop, boyfriend, america, brother, paris, france
- act, dance, home, explore, work
- star, theme park, sing, vet, party, florida, bangladesh
- rap, sister, school

* not from word count: all responses of similar theme were counted in these instances
6 questions about King's Cross

What do you like most about King's Cross today?

- People, community
- Cultural, vibrant, diverse
- Transport links
- British Library / Central location / Canal / History
- Shops / Hope
- CTRL / Nothing / St Pancras building / Scala

What do you dislike most about King's Cross today?

- Drugs
- Crime and Violence
- Traffic, congestion
- Community Disempowerment / Litter and dirt
- Prostitution / Loss of old buildings
- Overcrowding
- Racism

What are the most important things to change King's Cross for the better?

- Community empowerment
- Youth facilities
- Clean up / Drugs
- Affordable Housing
- Public space
- Health improvements
- Improve Safety / Prostitutes / commercial development
- Sports / Free parking / Entertainment development / Cycle routes / Education

Changing King's Cross will take a long time. What do you think should happen first?

- Community engagement in the process
- Improve Public Space
- Youth projects / Clean up
- Affordable homes
- Drugs / Improve Safety
- Increase Policing
- Transport / continue consultation / bring in business / Tourism

Where are your favourite streets, squares and other public spaces within Central London?

- Camden Town
- Southbank
- Covent Garden / Regents Park / Clerkenwell / Chalton Street
- Charlotte street / Hoxton/Shoreditch / Spitalfields
- Hampstead Heath / Kings Road / Richmond / Graham Street / Edwaras Square / Thornhill Square / Northdown Street / Corams Fields / Princess Diana playground / Primrose Hill / Trafalgar Square / City Farm / Laisliter Square / The Millenium Bridge / Edgware Road / Calthorpe Garden Project / Hyde Park / Picadilly Circus

What do you like most about King's Cross today?

- Community empowerment
- Youth facilities
- Clean up / Drugs
- Affordable Housing
- Public space
- Health improvements
- Improve Safety / Prostitutes / commercial development
- Sports / Free parking / Entertainment development / Cycle routes / Education

What do you dislike most about King's Cross today?

- Community Disempowerment / Litter and dirt
- Prostitution / Loss of old buildings
- Overcrowding
- Racism

What are the most important things to change King's Cross for the better?

- Community engagement in the process
- Improve Public Space
- Youth projects / Clean up
- Affordable homes
- Drugs / Improve Safety
- Increase Policing
- Transport / continue consultation / bring in business / Tourism

Which 3 words or phrase sums up the kind of place you would like King's Cross to be?

- Safe
- Clean
- Vibrant
- Green
- Quiet / Colour / Friendly / Cosmopolitan / Modern / Youth-friendly / Historic / community
- New brand for KX / human / loving / cultural / creative
# Youth Interviews

## Interviews by Juned Khan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>with</th>
<th>point of contact</th>
<th>interview location</th>
<th>key issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juned Khan</td>
<td>South Camden Community School</td>
<td>Regents Estate Library</td>
<td>The Library is a good media facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regents Estate</td>
<td>Victims of harassment by local teenagers</td>
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<td>Cumberland Park</td>
<td>Local youth club harassment by white kids</td>
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<td>Buckleberry Park</td>
<td>Story about moped theft from pizza delivery men</td>
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<td>Regents Park</td>
<td>Aspire to have a career in IT &amp; live locally</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Camley Street Wildlife Park</td>
<td>Expect KXC to be mixed use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob West</td>
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## Interviews by Saleima Al-Karssifi

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<th>key issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saleima Al-Karssifi</td>
<td>South Camden Community School</td>
<td>Camden Lock</td>
<td>Shopping is important pastime for teenage girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Burrows</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plot 10, Somerstown Oakshott Court, Polygon Road</td>
<td>Aspiration to be a lawyer</td>
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<td>Muslim friends tend to lead a sheltered life</td>
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<td>Good support informally from a teacher</td>
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<td>Storage of stolen mopeds in lock-ups</td>
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<td>Concern over antisocial behaviour of friends</td>
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<td>Charrington Street</td>
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## Key Issues

**Interviews by Juned Khan**

- The Library is a good media facility
- Victims of harassment by local teenagers
- Local youth club harassment by white kids
- Story about moped theft from pizza delivery men
- Aspire to have a career in IT & live locally
- Expect KXC to be mixed use

**Interviews by Saleima Al-Karssifi**

- Shopping is important pastime for teenage girls
- Aspiration to be a lawyer
- Muslim friends tend to lead a sheltered life
- Good support informally from a teacher
- Storage of stolen mopeds in lock-ups
- Concern over antisocial behaviour of friends

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*Role of Kings Cross Partnership*

- ‘Tracks for Employment’ is getting local youth employed in KXC
- ‘Learning Through Landscape’ discussed
- Youth Forum proposal agreed is a good idea
- Would like dance facilities in KXC
- Confidence building for young people is key for regeneration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>with</th>
<th>point of contact</th>
<th>interview location</th>
<th>key issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Healy</td>
<td>South Camden Community School</td>
<td>British Library</td>
<td>Anti social behaviour of school mates</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aware of racial differences but not as a negative factor</td>
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<td>Explanation of kids steal mopeds &amp; taunt the police</td>
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<td>Concern about cost of war on Afghanistan relative to money spent on</td>
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<td>regeneration</td>
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<td>Interested in judo &amp; basketball training</td>
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<td>key issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewart Purvis</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plot 10, Somerstown Youth Club</td>
<td>Kings Cross Partnership work with homeless</td>
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<td>KXP support for youth facilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Connecting old &amp; new communities</td>
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<td>Area needs Regeneration not just trains</td>
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<td>Youth Forum to give youth a chance to have a voice</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KXC should be multi functional like Caledonian Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dickon Robinson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regents Canal at Caledonian Road</td>
<td>Peabody have a homeless housing strategy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Housing Associations have many roles in regeneration, not just housing</td>
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<td>provision. Anti-social tenants relationship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support for youth workers is essential</td>
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<td>Peabody provide football training for girls team</td>
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<td>KXC needs a visionary Big Idea to make it unique</td>
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**Interview by Helal Mohammed**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helal Mohammed</td>
<td>Kings Cross Brunswick Youth Club</td>
<td>Tonbridge Youth Club</td>
<td>Concern that Tonbridge youth club has been shut down</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kings Cross Brunswick club is age restricted</td>
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<td>Local youth have a negative relationship with police</td>
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<td>DJ workshops unite mixed race groups</td>
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<td>Youth keep a very small local neighbourhood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Local youth willing to help run a new youth club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interviews</td>
<td>job title</td>
<td>interview location</td>
<td>key issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Madelin</td>
<td>Argent Group plc, Chief Executive</td>
<td>CTRL visitors centre</td>
<td>Support for consultation as a design tool</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youth employment training in KXC will help the surrounding area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KXC will become another district of London e.g., Clerkenwell</td>
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<td>Youth Parliament is means of giving youth a voice</td>
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<td>Re-use of the gas holder triplet</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The difficulties of making tower work</td>
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<td>KXC not suitable for very tall bldgs except in the NE corner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>York Way is a barrier to KXC for local people</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Children need challenging &amp; daring play facilities</td>
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Cathy O'Leary

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<th>with</th>
<th>point of contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crumbles Castle Youth Club</td>
<td>Bingfield Park</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Crumbles Castle Youth Club</td>
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walkling along Goods Way

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70
**Interview by Terry Rickwood**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>with</th>
<th>Terry Rickwood &amp; friends</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interviews</td>
<td>Stephen Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>point of contact</td>
<td>Copenhagen St Youth Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>job title</td>
<td>London &amp; Continental Stations &amp; Property (LCSP), Managing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview location</td>
<td>Crumbles Castle Youth Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview location</td>
<td>Crumbles Castle Youth Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>key issue</td>
<td>Young people have a strong awareness of gang culture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crumbles Youth club is highly valued</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local graffiti project with kids was a success</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Local kids steal scooters for fun</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eurostar will bring massive changes to the area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community development as well as railway infrastructure is important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Speed of the trains will be exciting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Local children interested in going to EuroDisney</td>
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**Interview by Fluid**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>interviews</th>
<th>Lisa Doughty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>job title</td>
<td>Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), Community Relations for Area 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>interview location</td>
<td>CTRL visitors centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>key issues</td>
<td>CTRL Visitor centre as a local resource</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Visibility of Eurostar trains from the street</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New St Pancras Eurostar Terminal will feel like an airport</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public square will connect Kings Cross &amp; St Pancras stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local community must be involved &amp; informed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noise from the station will be controlled by the architecture</td>
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</table>
Interview with Lucy Bingham - CCCU (Camden Central Community Umbrella)

12/3/02

CCCU are an independent community umbrella organisation inaugurated to ensure that the local community will get the benefits they deserve from Camden Central SRB, now approaching its third year of operation. The organisation hopes soon to become a charity. Based in the Working Men’s College in Crowndale Road, CCCU have drawn together and now represent the interests of a number of voluntary sector groups and organisations. In the full term their role will extend to administering or delivering particular SRB projects, managing on-going consultation exercises and running a number of community empowerment and capacity building projects. A fair proportion of CCCU’s work involves children and youth. Their Youth Project will be split into three areas. Each area is to have 4 youth workers

CCCU, Room 54, Working Men's College, 44 Crowndale Road, NW1. 020 7387 2037 ext 261.

Key issues for youth in the area

- Community safety
- Lack of open space
- Lack of ICT facilities
- Dilapidated sports pitches / lack of youth facilities generally
- Drug dealing (still) strongly associated with the two rail stations
- (Islington, no) Camden ‘Magnet’ projects good, but people want smaller more local resources

Examples of projects that tackle the key issues

- Jubilee Outdoor Pursuits Centre (now in Pirates Castle) - contact: Fran Heron/CCCU
- Camley Road Park
- South Camden Community School and new City Learning Centre
- Plot 10 in Somers Town (under S’s provision)
- (Camden Youth Centre) It used to be called HAMPDEN Youth Centre and is now called the Somers Town Community Centre (work with Bengali children)
- Theatre Work in schools (for instance –Almeida)
- CCCU work: pilot youth project on desires, project on estate-based gangs leading to youth web forum (www.camden kids.com), youth video project - contact: Olivia O’Neil
- Also, many ideas generated by Railway Lands Group. See Sue Crockford’s Associated film for Channel 4

Suggestions for potential youth projects in the Kings Cross redevelopment area

- Network of engaging, multi-programmed public spaces linked to safe routes
- Landscaped / built provision for sport and ICT
- Groundwork Canal Project (emanating from consultation on UDP)
- Employment prospects / raising aspirations / creation of database

Any negative perceptions of the development process

- There is hope in Argent St George but local people feel daunted by scale of project
- Fear of new ‘gated communities’ further ‘hemming in’ locals and pressurising their land
- CTRL are perceived by some to be marching ahead regardless. Some associate this work incorrectly with Argent St George
- Dirt, noise, pollution and traffic generated by the development is feared

Continued involvement - Yes. Would actively like to work together / partner some projects
Interview with Janey Hagger - Arts Programme Area Manager - High Impact

28/3/02

High Impact are an independent arts and sports-based resource group, set up through Father Jim Kennedy's Copenhagen Street Community Centre roughly three years ago. The group is best known for its work with children and youths - in some cases youths excluded from school - living in areas of high deprivation across the Kings Cross SRB area. Apart from engaging youth, the various projects seek to provide training, skills and a basis for confidence-building for participants. Many projects are carried out in partnership with Islington's Youth Offending Team, the Islington Play Association and with 'Project 16', a youth initiative run at the White Lion Centre. As the work carried out with youth groups is so intensive, High Impact tend to work in small, tightly focused events with around half a dozen participants. Sports and craft events, music, dance or art are explored in these events by members of the High Impact Group. One project had local youths involved in designing and making furniture and fencing for Bernard Park. Another led to the production of large scale canvass as, based on ideas of urban lifestyles. High Impact are currently seeking funding to develop on-going projects.

High Impact Project, 157 Copenhagen Street, London N1 0SR.

What are the main issues for youth in the area?

• No dedicated resource centre exists for youth in the area (14-25)
• Not enough detached youth work in the area
• High levels of exclusion from schools
• Insufficient linkages between youth clubs and career paths

Can you give examples of projects and interventions that tackle the area's key issues?

• Crumbles Castle and Bingfield Park - contact: Cathy O'Leary
• Bernard Park Adventure Playground - contact: Darius
• Peel Centre - contact: Rob Hamilton
• High Impact Projects - cont Act: Janie Hagger

What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?

• Alternative training for kids out of school
• Dedicated youth workshop / youth club / job mentoring resource - could be run from unused shop. A good example is the Kings Corner Centre in Old Street
• Extreme sports facilities
• Trips for kids
• Good Parenting initiatives
• Generally, community involvement in design and implementation of schemes

Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?

• Generally the reverse. However there are local perceptions of too much talk and too little change
• In connection with the above, need some ‘early wins’

Continued involvement - yes
Interview with Bob West - Kings Cross Team Manager, LB Camden

5/4/02

Corporate planning management at Camden now operates under a new cabinet system aimed at promoting greater exchanges across the various service providers and breaking down the ‘Silo Culture’ that is the natural tendency of local authorities. Within Environment Dept. Bob West leads a team that is beginning to understand and to deliver the development of a 20-30 year strategy/context for Kings Cross Central. The team’s main role is to plan for and respond to the proposals generated by Argent St George, but also pull together the corporate threads on how the Argent St George scheme can best be integrated within and develop further benefits for the surrounding areas both spatially and in terms of service delivery.

Key issues for youth in the area

• Most adults believe that ‘something has to be done for local youth’. This is connected with Bangladeshi parents worry about the growth of fundamentalism and drug taking
• Drugs is a big concern generally, despite ‘Zero Tolerance’
• Kids want somewhere to ‘hang out’, build up a sweat and learn new, particularly ICT and vocational skills. Many of them want to train by working for local businesses part time. They need an incentive to engage in participatory activities
• There is a need for shared, neutral places & facilities to counteract highly territorial instincts; young people should share in their creation
• The perception rather than the reality of a deficit in public open spaces and facilities, but nevertheless, there remains the need for good design, intensive management and maintenance packages

Examples of projects that tackle the key issues

• Brunswick Neighbourhood Centre
• South Camden Community School and new City Learning Centre
• Innumerable small projects that need to be cross referenced and indexed
• Creative thinking by a number of groups, for instance the Kings Cross Community Development Trust, Hopsotch - an ethnic minority women’s group - Camden Greening Forum, Kings Cross SRB Partnership
• Schools outreach programmes run by CTRL (addressing a skills shortage gap)
• active work by Father Jim Kennedy in Islington
• Camden beginning to think about more support for vulnerable families and young people from 5-18

Suggestions for potential youth projects in the Kings Cross redevelopment area

• Need to devise well thought out, safe linkages between residential areas and high quality design public venues whether internal or external, to try and encourage people to move over longer distances than 3 minutes walk
• Creation of public venues that have the ability to continually ‘re-invent’ themselves and which offer the opportunity for local youth to do more than just go drinking after 7pm and particularly to offer creative
• To build on existing social infrastructure and programmes acknowledging local groups and their specific needs and habits. To build up a data base in the first instance to understand what is already going on and how to channel all this effort and energy
• Consider, now, how to ‘retain’ key workers in the area - especially considering upward rent pressures, i.e. focus training on essential worker skills - hotel, rail, teaching, nursing, policing, etc - as they are already residents development and tram route will bring in central London-type activities and character, which young people can help in defining what’s relevant and available to them, but also be the conduit or “translators of change” to their families, especially the minority groups
• Employment prospects and training
• Setting up hybrid BID/Town Centre Management/CDT organisation as means of building community / business relations and sponsoring community programmes that engage youth

Any negative perceptions of the development process

• A perception that the Argent St George development is ‘for others, not us’
• Fear of high density development, upset during construction and being ‘priced out’

Continued involvement - Yes. Would actively like to work together and collate ideas
Interview with Teresa Hoskyns- West Euston Partnership (Commissioned Project)

16/4/02

Project Description

Teresa Hoskyns was employed by Yvonne Dean Architects, who had been approached by the West Euston City Partnership to carry out an evaluation of the use of public space within the Regent’s Park Estate. A key concern that emerged through this was the degree of youth violence in the estate, particularly the regular street fights and general level of provocation between two, strongly territorial gangs (Cumbo Gang and the Drummond Street Posse). Teresa was asked to do some ‘hands on work’ through two youth clubs (one ‘Bengali’ the other ‘White’) which face each other across Stanhope Street, the ‘front line’ between the two gangs. The commission ultimately resulted in gang members working together to produce collaged images of urban scenes, produced in Photoshop - the training being provided by Teresa. These collages were assembled on a video - “Our World” - and projected onto a ten storey block of flats, located in Cumberland Market, a Cumbo Gang ‘stronghold’, one evening in January, 2002. The effect, both through empowering the youth to ‘have their say’ and represent themselves at a high profile event, and due to its staging, requiring a halt in hostilities, has been the delivery and promise of peaceful co-existence. Other consequences of the project and the public event include a visit to the Mayor of Camden, and the fact that one of kids involved in the project has been invited to apply for a place at the Chelsea College of Art.

Teresa Hoskyns - Address available from Fluid

Key issues for youth in the area

- Boredom is a huge problem
- There is nowhere affordable to do exciting things
- Need a place to ‘hang out’, watch video, do ICT stuff.
- Need a place where adults are not conspicuously in control
- Lack of imagination - the kids are in a rut / means of engaging them are often dull

Examples of projects that tackle the key issues

- Our project worked very well in tough circumstances
- Generally, where the youth are actively involved in defining their future

Suggestions for potential youth projects in the Kings Cross redevelopment area

- A means for ‘kids’ / ‘youth’ to create their own spaces - this is more than just ‘ownership’ but being creatively involved from the outset
- A youth Pub, although, there are obviously issues here. Where do they go when Mum and Dad are in the Pub?
- Real engagement in the Adult world
- Camley Park and the Canal offer real opportunities
- A place that works for them in their own terms

Any negative perceptions of the development process

- Don’t know the project so can’t say

Continued involvement - yes
Interview with Doug Slater - North King's Cross Neighbourhood Management Officer, King's Cross Partnership

17/4/02

Doug Slater, Tony Neal and Sheri Odoffin have been responsible for developing phase one of a Neighbourhood Management (NM) initiative in North King's Cross. This work was commissioned by James McGinlay of The Kings Cross Partnership (KXP). The KXP is a body that manages £37.5m of SRB5 spend in the area. The NM work will focus on the residential enclave bounded by the canal (South of Copenhagen Street), York Way, the Silverlink Rail Tracks and Caledonian Road, an area to be christened ‘North King’s Cross’ (NKX). The team wish to pursue “joined up” and proactive service delivery in the area. Alongside this, local strategic opportunities such as those presented by the Argent St George development have been considered. The NKX residents feel that they have had a raw deal over the past decades. Plans are underway to change this; to find measures to draw the various threads together which would permit an application for Neighbourhood Renewal funding. A wider team drawing on officers from Islington, voluntary sector bodies and residents will, with KXP, form the driving force and steering committee. Youth involvement will be coordinated by Gill Calvert and Antonio Benedek, who wish to form a Youth Forum linked to the CPYP and to foster strong links with facilities such as Crumbles Castle, a vitally important strand of youth provision in the area. One idea is to contribute to the Bingfield Park planning process by working with Jamie Dean, from the Islington GreenSpace team. The youth work is one strand of a wider initiative, which has included the development of a Neighbourhood Steering group (in which Father Jim Kennedy of the Copenhagen Youth Partnership Forum is actively involved). This process aims to build strong links between Islington’s LSP, local residents, service providers and the Metropolitan Police (Met contact: Inspector Andy Mitchell)

Kings Cross Partnership, Wicklow Mill, 31a Wicklow Street, King’s Cross, London WC1X 9JX

What are the main issues for youth in the area?

- Youth intimidation- the notorious ‘gang of 40’ - causes huge disruption for all
- Unruly youth have no appreciation of the consequences of their actions
- Until recently there were only 6 police officers for the whole borough / no control. For some kids, the criminalisation of their activities & being pursued by the police gives, and does not detract from status
- Service Providers and ‘youth’ feel there is a strong need for a ‘hot =’, state-of-the-art youth building; a softly supervised place for youth and kids to ‘hang out’ in the North KX area

Can you give examples of projects and interventions that tackle the area’s key issues?

- Copenhagen Youth Partnership Forum - Contact Father Jim Kennedy
- Thornhill Neighbourhood Project - Surestart + Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- High Impact Projects - contact: Janie Hagger
- North King’s Cross ‘Youth Energy Strategy” Play mixed with workshops. Carrots offered such as football and basketball (Report available from Doug Slater)
- ‘Click’ project in Waltham Forest discussed - Contact: Dearle & Henderson / Marilyn Taylor

What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?

- ‘Hot’ building run by youth
- A place to showcase individual talent to peer group members & service providers
- Space for controlled but non-institutional ‘Bad’ behaviour / extreme sports / DJing
- Anything that engages youth with complimentary pathways to formal training
- Web site offering window to youth programmes & wider service delivery agencies

Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?

- General impressions and feedback seems good
- People ‘don’t know’ about the proposals, they don’t know or understand the site
- For this study, Service Providers felt that they, not Fluid, should be involved. This is now changing.

Continued involvement - yes, particularly if tied to development of joined up service delivery strategy
Interview with Pamela Liaquat - Advice and Advocacy Worker - Hopscotch

3/5/02

Hopscotch Asian Women's Centre was set up four years ago to support its local Asian community, particularly Camden-based Bangladeshi women and children, to enable it to participate in society with the knowledge, skills and confidence to access society’s opportunities, benefits and decision-making processes. The centre promotes self-sufficiency within the Bangladeshi community through access to education, training and employment. It also aims to represent the needs of the Bangladeshi community, to equip them for a participative role in society, and to spread awareness of the services and facilities available to them. Hopscotch is a registered charity.

Hopscotch, 42 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1TA.

Pamela pointed out that her area of expertise was not ‘young people’. Her broader views were welcomed all the same.

What are the main issues for youth in the area?

- Very few activities are available for Bangladeshi children in the area
- Partly due to the above, boys get into drugs
- When youth facilities are made available, they usually focus on masculine pursuits. Young girls are not catered for. This is particularly true for Bangladeshi women
- The lack of facilities leads to early sexual liaisons, and often to teenage pregnancy
- Arranged weddings and the fear of them can weigh heavily with Bangladeshi youth
- Not enough community work is targeted at families. This might have better consequences than only targeting the youth themselves
- There is some racism, tough it is hard to define whether the motivation for spiteful acts has purely to do with race

Can you give examples of projects and interventions that tackle the area’s key issues?

- There are a number of youth projects in the area. The ones Pamela knew best were:
  - Bedford House Community Centre, Emerald Street
  - Bengali Worker's Action, 1 Rebert St. (one of the Centres Teresa Hoskyns worked from - See her interview for information)
  - Hopscotch

What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?

- A proper activities place with professional, caring management. One place where there would be access to a swimming pool, sports facilities, ICT equipment and social spaces not just for the young, but for whole families
- Closer liaison with whole Bangladeshi families to understand and overcome the ‘youth problem’
- The Hopscotch model, though founded for women, works with men and children too. The focus on the family, and family-based education should be taken up by other enterprises
- Library services for Bangladeshi books, publications and music

Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?

- Nothing bad has been heard, nor anything particularly good

Continued involvement - Yes please. Pamela mentioned the fact that she was due to have a second meeting with Argent St George in the near future
Interview with Shelagh O'Connor - Director - New Horizon Youth Centre

3/5/02

The New Horizon Youth Centre was founded in 1968 by Lord Longford to combat drug abuse in youth communities. It was based in Covent Garden until 1994, when it moved to its current location in Somerstown, Euston. Jon Snow, the News-caster, has been Chair of the centre for over thirty years. The Centre, which has roughly 900 visitors per month, specialises in the delivery of services to young people at risk. Though the majority of its clients come from Camden, a fair proportion come from across London, and even from elsewhere in the UK. A proportion of the young people that the Centre supports arrive at the nearby stations, bereft of any means of survival. Shelagh describes New Horizon’s role as being a means of ‘plugging ‘disengaged’ youth R back into society’. Without support of the kind offered by New Horizon, deprived youth inevitably end up on the street, and get sucked into drugs, anti-social behaviour and harder criminal activities. The centre is supported by many volunteer workers.

New Horizon Youth Centre, 68 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JR.

What are the main issues for youth in the area?

- Lack of benefits for 16 & 17 year-olds, putting further stresses and strains on deprived families. This can lead to homelessness in many cases.
- Lack of awareness of sexual health issues.
- Chaotic drug and alcohol abuse, including blatant dealing in and around the area.
- Homelessness and associated street crime.
- Lack of motivation for teenagers. Their low levels of responsibility.
- Lack of diversionary activities and facilities made worse by poor ‘sign-posting’.
- Boredom leading to ‘delinquent behaviour’.

Can you give examples of projects and interventions that tackle the area’s key issues?

- New Horizons ‘obviously’. Also their work with satellite agencies such as:
  - ‘One Stop Shop’ - an employment service located in Hampstead Road
  - ‘Raw Materials’ - a centre based in York Road which provides coaching, training and recording facilities for the production of music by youths
  - ‘Hopscotch’ - (see interview with Pamela Liaquat)
  - ‘Families in Focus’ Programme at Ampthill Square (Ampthill Sq. Estate run by Karen Coffee
  - ‘Somerstown Youth Centre’
  - ‘Adaction Impact’ - Youth drug intervention programme
  - ‘CLASH’ (Central London Non Agency on Street Health) - A support programme for prostitutes. Kings Cross is regarded as the ‘bottom of the line’ in this area
  - ‘CCCU’ - Camden Central Community Umbrella - (see interview with Lucy Bingham)
  - St Mary’s and St Aloïsius Churches

What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?

- 1:1 caring support for disengaged youth. Build back their enthusiasm through creative activity.
- Open access to sports centres and gyms.
- A place where young people can hang out without the presence of drugs and alcohol; A Cybercafe.
- Well designed, robust and dry places which include inspirational things - art & sculpture.
- Youth involvement in the design of their own environments
- A peer group education project

Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?

- No

Continued involvement - yes
Interview with Jamie Dean - Projects & Developments Manager - Islington Greenspace Team

1/5/02

Islington Borough’s Greenspace Team, of which Jamie is the Projects and Developments Manager, is part of the Environment and Conservation Department. This Projects and development unit was established eighteen months ago to coordinate the regeneration and development of public open space in the borough. is a key member of the Greenspaces Team, and sees his mission as one which responds to bottom-up needs with wide ranging yet deliverable projects and initiatives in partnership with other agencies. He believes that the creation of artificial ‘civic spaces’ according to abstract criteria needs to be replaced by an approach which generates contemporary spaces, meeting new and emerging needs and requirements. The Greenspace Team also has a remit to guide and influence wider development initiatives in terms of social infrastructures, sustainability, leisure and sports development.

Jamie A Dean, Projects & Developments Manager, Environment & Conservation, Greenspace Division, 36 North Road, London N7 9TU.

What are the main issues for youth in the area?

• A marked a breakdown of the family structure characterises many of the neighbourhoods that surround the KXC site. This has many repercussions for young people in the area, often resulting in various forms of anti-social behaviour, a lack of regard for the police & general social disengagement. Jamie is increasingly involved in youth initiatives as youth are displaced into Public open spaces from the On estate open space. This is true in varying degrees for ‘Kings Cross North’, Maiden Lane & Somerstown.
• The low income profile of these neighbourhoods and the fact that there is no mixed tenure, inevitably leading to lower expectations and narrower horizons.
• The ‘criminalisation’ of ‘youth’ in general - the fact they are forced to the margins and do not have a place they can call their own. In a sense they are high visibility scape-goats for wider failures.
• Lack of clear neighbourhood structures leaving only gangland culture as a means of belonging and prestige. But here, too, their cultures have been invaded and appropriated - for instance; § tagging, which has now become a plaything of the well-to-do.
• A general lack of resources which intensifies skirmishes over contested territories and denied rights.
• Child safety and support.

Can you give examples of projects and interventions that tackle the area’s key issues?

• Copenhagen Youth Partnership Forum and Play and Youth Forum - Contact Father Jim Kennedy
• Thornhill Neighbourhood Project - Surestart + Neighbourhood Learning Centre - Contact Bob Ross.
• High Impact Projects - contact: Janie Hagger (see interview with Janie Hagger)
• Crumbles Castle where selfless & clever people are involved. Excellent rapport with young people.
• Islington Play Association - Contact: Antonio Benedek and Jill Calvert.
• Generally need good sports development and management input to regain enthusiasm and energy.
• Need to tackle the causes - not the effects.

What kind of opportunities would you hope to see within the Kings Cross redevelopment project for kids and youth?

• Big training and employment opportunities.
• Better services & facilities with integrated delivery for leisure & public open space - ideally for all ages.
• A non-institutional, non-patronising health outreach programme.
• Perhaps a local radio station - somewhere or something that puts disadvantaged youth on the map.

Are there any negative perceptions of the development so far, and if so what are they?

• So far so good. "Impressed with Fluid’s approach". Anxious to collaborate on scheme’s development.

Continued involvement - very much so!
Selected Future Mind Maps

1. Farm In King's Cross
2. The Future
3. The Future
4. The Future
5. The Future
6. The Future
7. The Future
8. The Future
In my bedroom
just woke up
I smell eggs.