When we launched a public competition to help name new streets in King’s Cross, we did so in the hope and expectation that local people and others would contribute something fresh to the development and to the place.

We are thrilled that so many people took part in the competition and could not have imagined that it would attract so much interest, both locally and internationally.

This book describes the phenomenal response to the competition, but also walks you through the significant task involved in sifting, analysing and scrutinising the entries until we finally arrived at a shortlist we feel is representative of both the entries received and of the significant events that have shaped, and continue to shape King’s Cross.

We have already begun to use the shortlisted names. Although we cannot use them all, they provide a rich and eclectic mix worthy of this extraordinary part of London.

Robert Evans
Director
King’s Cross Central Partnership Ltd
The competition attracted interest from all over the world, not just the local community. Over 10,000 entries were received – far more than was ever anticipated – presenting the challenge of how to choose a shortlist of names from such a wealth of suggestions.

With no specific guidance on how to approach the task, a new process had to be developed to evaluate the entries.

While it would have been easy to base the assessment on the names that received the highest number of entries, the approach was to embark on a search for names which were interesting and engaging, and that strongly resonated with King’s Cross.

The process, set out in this book, has aimed to be as reasoned and robust as it could be, and consideration has been given at each stage to assess each entry on individual merit – ensuring names suggested once were given as much weight as those suggested ten or even fifty times.

The output is a process which delves into the history of King’s Cross and assesses what and who have helped shape it into the place it is now and will be in the future.
THE COMPETITION WAS OPEN TO ANYONE. EACH ENTRANT WAS ALLOWED TO ENTER UP TO 10 NAMES AND WAS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A REASON FOR EACH SUGGESTION.

The competition guidelines stated:

- Names that had a connection to King's Cross would be welcomed, but all names would be considered.
- Names should be interesting and engaging.
- Each suggested name would be judged on its own merit.
- Successful suggestions would be chosen because they are interesting and engaging, not because lots of people might have made the same suggestion.
- Shortlisted names would be the subject of consultation with Camden Council, the Royal Mail and the emergency services to check whether they complied with Camden's street naming policy.
While the majority of entries came from the United Kingdom, there was interest from all over the world, including Europe, USA, Russia, Brazil and Australia. Suggestions from the local area represented 5% of the entries.

Out of the 10,035 entries, 39 high-scoring, distinctive themes emerged.

Many of the themes which came through represent a snapshot of the year the competition was launched: it was the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee year; Prince George was born; Doctor Who reached its 50th anniversary and the achievements of the London 2012 Olympics were still very much in people’s minds.
ENTRY FACTS & FIGURES

5,034 ENTRIES
10,035 ENTRANTS
95 COUNTRIES PARTICIPATED

3,190 ENTRANTS FROM UK
489 ENTRANTS FROM CAMDEN
MAP OF PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF THEMES BY COUNTRY
In order to create a structure for the entries to be assessed, six overarching categories were formed. Categories were created by combining related themes and removing themes where there was no association with King’s Cross, or where the theme was already referenced in the local area or within the King’s Cross masterplan. It was important to create categories that represented all of the principal areas of interest connected with King’s Cross, to ensure that the shortlist would be balanced and contain a thorough range of relevant suggestions.
THE CATEGORIES CREATED FOR DETAILED ASSESSMENT WERE:

STATION HISTORY
Including: references to the construction of King’s Cross station and associated architects and engineers

SITE HISTORY
Including: notable historical events and previous site uses

RAIL INDUSTRY CONNECTION
Including: types of train, train designers and engineers, and rail terminology

LOCAL PEOPLE
Including: local celebrities, notable residents, politicians and people with an association with the area

LOCAL AREA
Including: geographical references, iconic local buildings, businesses or organisations

NIGHTLIFE
Including: recent site history, clubbing references, names of clubs and pubs
It was important to create a system which allowed for the entries to be assessed based on individual qualities and merit. Each entry was scored from 1 (high) to 5 (low) against each of the relevant criteria. Entries had to score a 1 or 2 to progress to the next level of assessment. Some entries made it through by scoring high against one assessment, even if they scored low in another.

SEVEN CRITERIA WERE ESTABLISHED TO ASSESS AND FILTER EACH OF THE ENTRIES WITHIN THE CATEGORIES AND TEST THEIR STRENGTH OF CONNECTION TO KING’S CROSS.
CRITERIA AND REASONS

LENGTH OF TIME CONNECTED TO KING’S CROSS
To identify a person’s connection to King’s Cross (for ‘Local People’ only)

EXISTING REFERENCES
To avoid duplication of references in the area

PROXIMITY TO KING’S CROSS
To identify the geographical connection to King’s Cross (for ‘Site History’ and ‘Local Area’ only)

DIRECT CONNECTION TO KING’S CROSS
To understand the connection to the area

HISTORICAL IMPACT
To understand the historical impact on the railway industry linked to King’s Cross (for ‘Rail Industry Connection’ only)

IMPACT ON KING’S CROSS STATION
To understand the impact on relationships to King’s Cross station (for ‘Station History’ only)

LEGACY
To understand the impact of a person’s connection to King’s Cross (for ‘Local People’ only)
The resulting graphics present an overview of the key events, people, places and stories which resonate from, or are closely bound to, King’s Cross, and those that people thought significant and worth celebrating.

At the end of this analysis, a more manageable list of 335 names had been identified for further consideration.

At this stage all names could be argued to have a comparable level of relevance to King’s Cross. To help progress the analysis and whittle down the list, a further set of guiding principles were agreed to test the entries against each other.

The seven assessment criteria were visualised to demonstrate the scoring process.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Attention was paid to interesting and engaging names that helped tell stories about King's Cross
- A balance was sought to represent all the different periods of King's Cross history
- Names with two or more interpretations were looked on favourably, such as Bagley's, which references both the clubbing past and the industrial heritage of the site
- References to local people were looked on favourably when someone had made a genuine, long-lasting, and as yet unrecognised contribution to King's Cross
- Names which had made it through previous assessment but which were still considered to reference events or places some distance away from the site were discarded
The shortlist of 38 names, which resulted from the in-depth assessment of the entries, was presented to LB Camden for consultation. The agreed list of names was then submitted to the emergency services and Royal Mail for feedback. Of the 38 names put forward, 30 were approved by all three organisations.

Names duplicating or sounding similar to existing road names in the area were not considered acceptable.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN, ROYAL MAIL AND THE EMERGENCY SERVICES EACH HAVE THEIR OWN CRITERIA AND GUIDANCE, AGAINST WHICH ANY NEW STREET NAMES HAVE TO BE ASSESSED.
Some of the names were suggested by only one person, while others were suggested by many people. We believe the final list represents a good balance of all the entries received, as well as celebrating the rich history of King’s Cross.

Some of the names may appear obvious; which we considered to be good in many ways, others will be more obscure and hopefully intriguing.

King’s Cross will take another five years to complete. The selection of 30 names will provide flexibility for the future, whilst also presenting a potential opportunity for names to be considered for some of the public squares and spaces within the development, as well as the streets.

As each street is ready to be named, it will still be necessary for the King’s Cross Partnership to apply to LB Camden for approval to use the name, to ensure that similar names have not been used in the borough in the time inbetween.
After Arthur Peppercorn, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the LNER (1946 – 1948) and designer of many of the top link steam locomotives that ran from King’s Cross to the North.

Baroness Burdett-Coutts was a generous Victorian woman who gave away her money to help worthy causes. In the King’s Cross area she built a school to educate boot black boys, and commissioned a monument for St Pancras Old Church, containing the names of people whose bodies were excavated to make way for the railway.

After the Bagley’s nightclub - the centre of 1990s clubbing. The nightclub itself was named after the Bagley, Wild & Co soda bottle factory built on the site. The factory building became the nightclub.

Name of a famous diesel locomotive that would have been used on the railways around King’s Cross.

St Pancras House Improvement Society was established by Father Basil Jellicoe and Irene Barclay. Father Jellicoe led a famous campaign in the 1930s to rehouse slum dwellers in the Somers Town and King’s Cross areas, and a lot of high quality public housing was built as a result.

The area of King’s Cross was once covered by the great forest of Middlesex and is said to have been a pre-Roman woodland shrine to Elen, an ancient British goddess, the female version of The Green Man (a sculpture, drawing, or other representation of a face surrounded by or made from leaves).
Housed in various places around Somers Town and King's Cross from 1895 to 1914, the Espérance Club was for young sewing girls from the area. Espérance is French for ‘hope’ and the Club was set up as a pioneering social project by two radical women, Mary Neal and Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, both suffragettes and champions of working class women.

Mr Giordani has run a delicatessen business in King's Cross for over fifty years.

A Harrier Jump Jet took off for New York from a King's Cross disused coal depot on the 4th of May 1969, as part of a transatlantic race. Now King's Cross has a transchannel railway.

After the famous Keskedee Arts Centre, which opened in 1971 on Gifford Street, Britain's first arts centre dedicated to the black community. It set a precedent for community growth and empowerment across the country, and naming a street after it celebrates one of King's Cross more modern achievements.
Arthur Machen was a well-known writer who lived on Gray’s Inn Road and who wrote a lot about the local area in his novels. One of the famous quotes attributed to him is: “All the wonders lie within a stone’s throw of King’s Cross Station”.

Alexander Mackendrick was the director of the classic Ealing comedy “The Ladykillers”, which was set in King’s Cross.

Mary Seacole, a Jamaican-born woman of Scottish and Creole descent, worked as a voluntary medic during the Crimean War by setting up the ‘British Hotel’. There used to be a blue plaque at 157 George Street, London W1, which was subsequently removed in 1998 following the demolition of this building.

After Mary Shelley, born in King’s Cross, author of Frankenstein.

Mary Wollstonecraft was a nineteenth century writer, philosopher and advocate for women’s rights. She wrote “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman”. She is buried in the graveyard of St Pancras Old Church, close to the new streets of King’s Cross.

This was the alternative name for Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein.

After the Panharmonium Company who, in 1826, bought the cinder grounds and built the Royal Clarence Theatre.

There was once a busy potato market on the site.
Reggiori’s Swiss Italian restaurant used to be situated in King’s Cross in the late 1800s and early 1900s. It served high quality food and wine in opulent surroundings. This tradition of great food and wine in great surroundings in King’s Cross is being upheld with the new restaurants planned as part of the area’s regeneration.

John Toomey worked tirelessly in Somers Town and King’s Cross as a councilor and after retirement still campaigned for local people.

Samuel Plimsoll, the man who made water transportation of goods safe, efficient and commercial, is especially relevant to the distribution of goods from KX. He also developed the coal yard infrastructure for the Great Northern Railway and the Plimsoll Viaduct.

Mrs. Louisa Wilberforce is the main character in ‘The Ladykillers’, set in King’s Cross. A British, black comedy from 1955 by Ealing Studios which won a Bafta Award for the original screenplay.

This is a common word for the somali community in Camden, London.
Wollstonecraft Street is the first name to be chosen from the competition for use within the site.
At 67 acres, King’s Cross is the most significant development in central London. An extraordinary piece of city is taking shape, with a brand new postcode, N1C. With six tube lines, two mainline stations, Eurostar and direct links to London’s main airports, it’s the best connected part of London.

The location, connections, canalside setting, rich industrial heritage, eclectic cultural scene and thriving community are all coming together to make it a diverse and exciting place, set around successful streets and outstanding public spaces.

ABOUT KING’S CROSS

Put together in partnership with LB Camden.