



Gillett Square



A public space
for everyone



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Creative Producer



GS²

Hackney Co-operative Developments CIC

Community economic development agency

- Business support for social enterprises
- Affordable workspaces
- Gillett Square – community-led public space





Gillett Square

Smaller, regular activities: e.g. Games Days



Gillett Square

Community events



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Gillett Live Music Saturdays - Celebration of Francophone African Culture

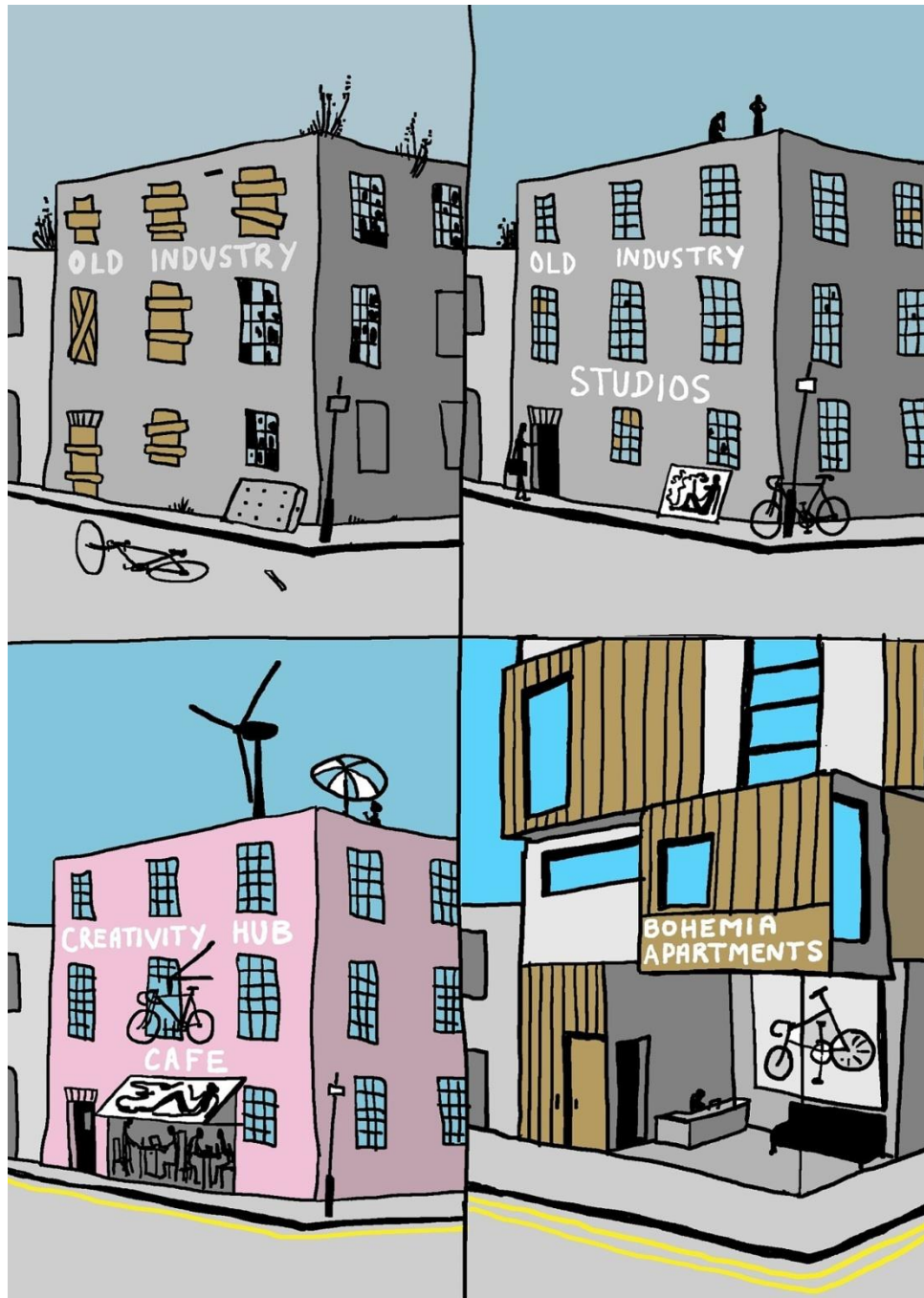


Gillett Square

Daily Culture



Dalston



Gillett Square

- Build social cohesion
 - Reduce isolation
 - Improve well-being
- through community events & activities

Proactive engagement: partnership

How:

- Organisation partnerships
- Open access
- Gillett Square Action Group
- Community Organiser
- Surveying – feedback
- Volunteering

Proactive engagement: partnership

Successes:

- Gillett Live Music Saturdays

Zoe : “...[usually drunk] woman with can of guinness, she loved it! Last one we did she came up to us and said “just wanted to say, thank you for your hospitality” – was a great joint effort, it was appreciated and reciprocated by people around the square. People assumed we were being paid, the fact that we were volunteering was a surprise. For me it made sense of everything – with everything in the world going crazy, gentrification around here. Made time stop, I felt really at home, good cause & amazing musicians, working as team - people round here really need it.”

Proactive engagement: partnership

Successes:

- Skateboarding – council officers – facilitation



Making it usable: Programming

Proactive engagement: partnership

To achieve –

- Representation
- Inclusivity
- Empowerment
- Share resources
- Mutual benefits

Programming for children





Global Games Days

- “At school they think my son can’t focus – but here I’ve seen his concentration levels double over the summer...the way he gets to learn in this context you can see the results instantly.” *Amy, mother of 4*
- “Mayo taught adults but thought he didn’t have the skills to teach children. He came and volunteered at the Games Days and now tutors many homeschool children in his community – even using games to engage them.” *Vicky, UBG*

Programming for children

- Pop-up Playground – Snug & Outdoor
- Global Games Days – Universal Board Games
- Hula hooping
- Dalston Children's festival – Dalston Children's Network,
- “Family zone” carnival
- Included and welcome in events aimed at wider community

Programming for children: Impacts

- Child poverty & obesity challenged
- Different way to learn & grow
- Parents benefit – can sit with a coffee, make connections with other local parents
- Deliberate invitation – this space is for you
- Programming for children brings wider benefits – everyone feels better.
- “The drinkers behave themselves better when the children are here.” Trader

Making it usable: Practicals

- Permanent Entertainment Licence
- HCD support – funding manager post & admin support, office etc since 2006, local community connections, consistency & track record
- Design of space – blank
 - Advantage: can be turned into anything.
 - Disadvantage: no furniture, less attractive when not programmed
- Equipment: PA, projectors, play equipment incl table tennis, large “Star tent,” electrical power, gazebos, tables chairs etc;
- Relationships with London Borough of Hackney – maintenance, some funding, political support, trust

Making it usable: Programming

Not just physically accessible but psychologically – proactive content important
Some activity programmed, some given space - a balance

Self programmed:

- Older caribbean men -Dominoes
- Nigerians – Table Tennis
- Skateboarding – some teens, some 20s/30s
- Majorettes – hula hoop practice

Ongoing negotiation of space between different groups

- Young people: need something specifically for them, not confident to just use it - NCS volunteering scheme, schools programme
- Older people : want suitable seating

Some things bring everyone together: board games; music

Final thoughts: what works

➤ Dedicated resource – Ongoing, focussed support

➤ Ask people what they want

Keep asking them, all the way through

Don't just oil the squeaky wheels – find ways
for the quiet voices to be heard

➤ Make sure people have ownership & involvement

Links & contacts

www.gillettsquare.org.uk Listings and information about the square's activities

<http://www.gillettsquare.org.uk/about/evaluation> Our 2016 Review Report is available to read here

<http://www.hced.co.uk/home> HCD's home site

<http://www.universalboardgames.co.uk/> Providers of the Global Games Days

<http://www.snugandoutdoor.co.uk/> The Pop-up Playground equipment

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjA4VzKjBrPTqPBOHhBtaWw> Gillett Square Youtube channel. A quick Youtube search will also throw up NTS radio and skating videos

<http://www.storiesfromgillettsquare.co.uk/> Fascinating audio documentation of local people's views and stories

<https://dalstonconnections.wordpress.com/> Research project on local people's views of change in the area

<http://marawatheamazing.com/majorettes/> Our resident Hula Hoop troop

<http://www.nts.live/> Our resident internet radio station

<http://rolandramanan.com/> Poignant street photography project including a focus on the lives of some of the square's vulnerable regulars

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