

Young people's voices on *Woodberry Down*



*a zine by My Place young
researchers and Social Life*



In September 2023, Social Life worked with a group of **eight young residents** who have been employed as social researchers by My Place to create a zine about their experiences of living on Woodberry Down and their views on the regeneration.

The Woodberry Down Estate has gone through a lot of change in the past 15 years. The regeneration, which started in 2009, will demolish and rebuilt around 2000 homes with over 5000 homes by the time it finishes.

New residents have been moving in since the regeneration began, and both new and long-standing residents have been affected by the changes on the estate in different ways. In a workshop, we had a discussion around what these changes have meant to the young residents and made collages to capture these thoughts.

This forms a part of a larger research project that Social Life is carrying out around the social impact of the Woodberry Down regeneration. This research was commissioned by Notting Hill Genesis, one of the regeneration partners on the estate.

Thank you to My Place and all the young researchers who contributed their time and creative energy to this project:

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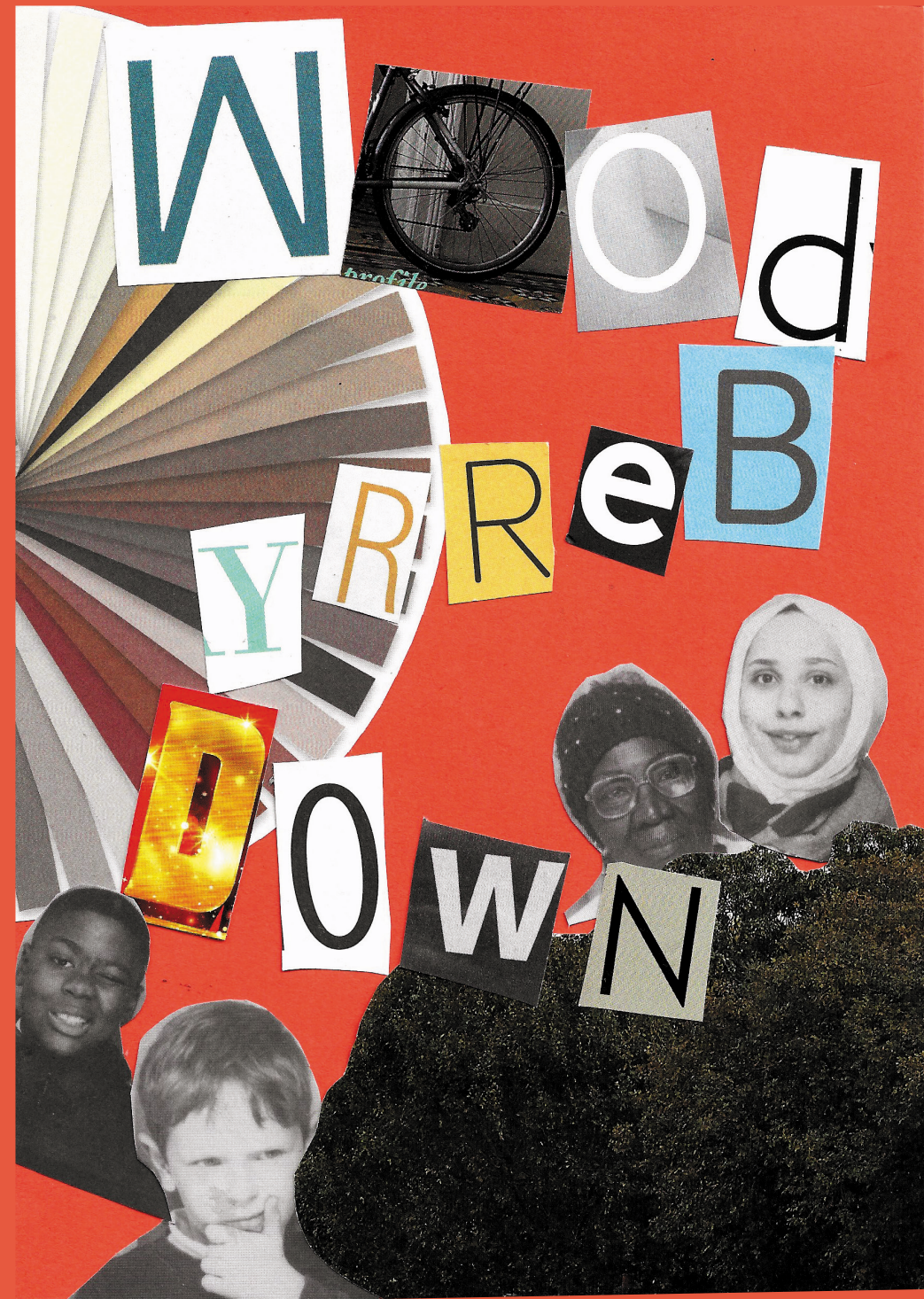
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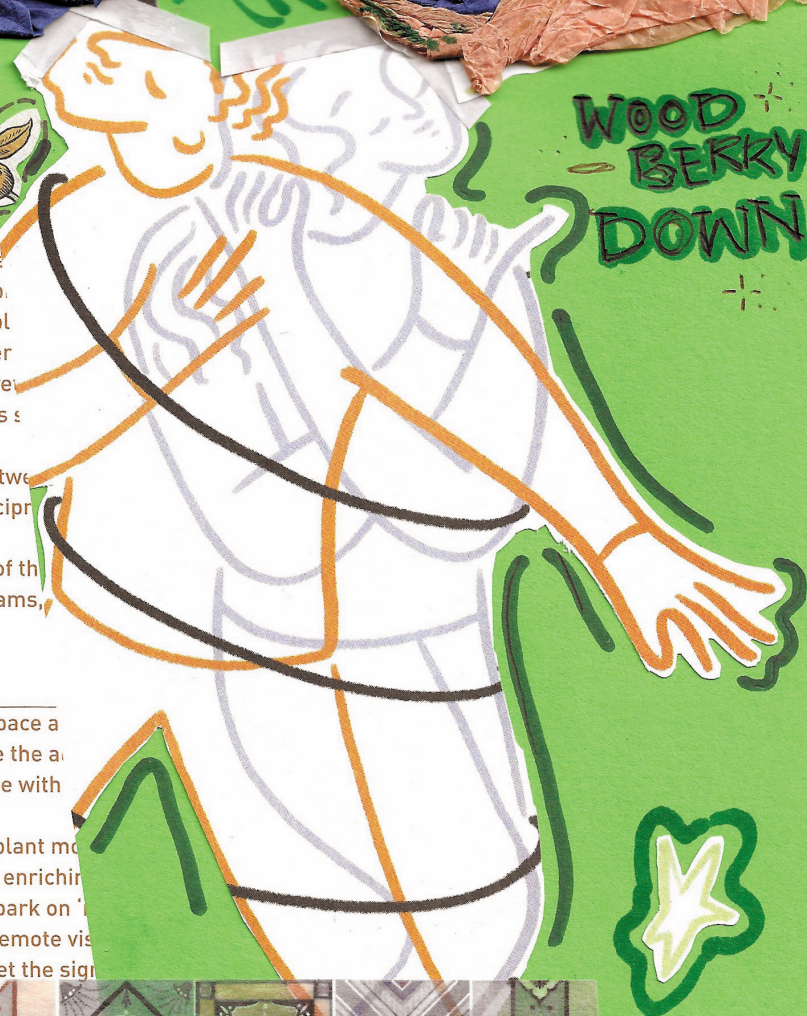
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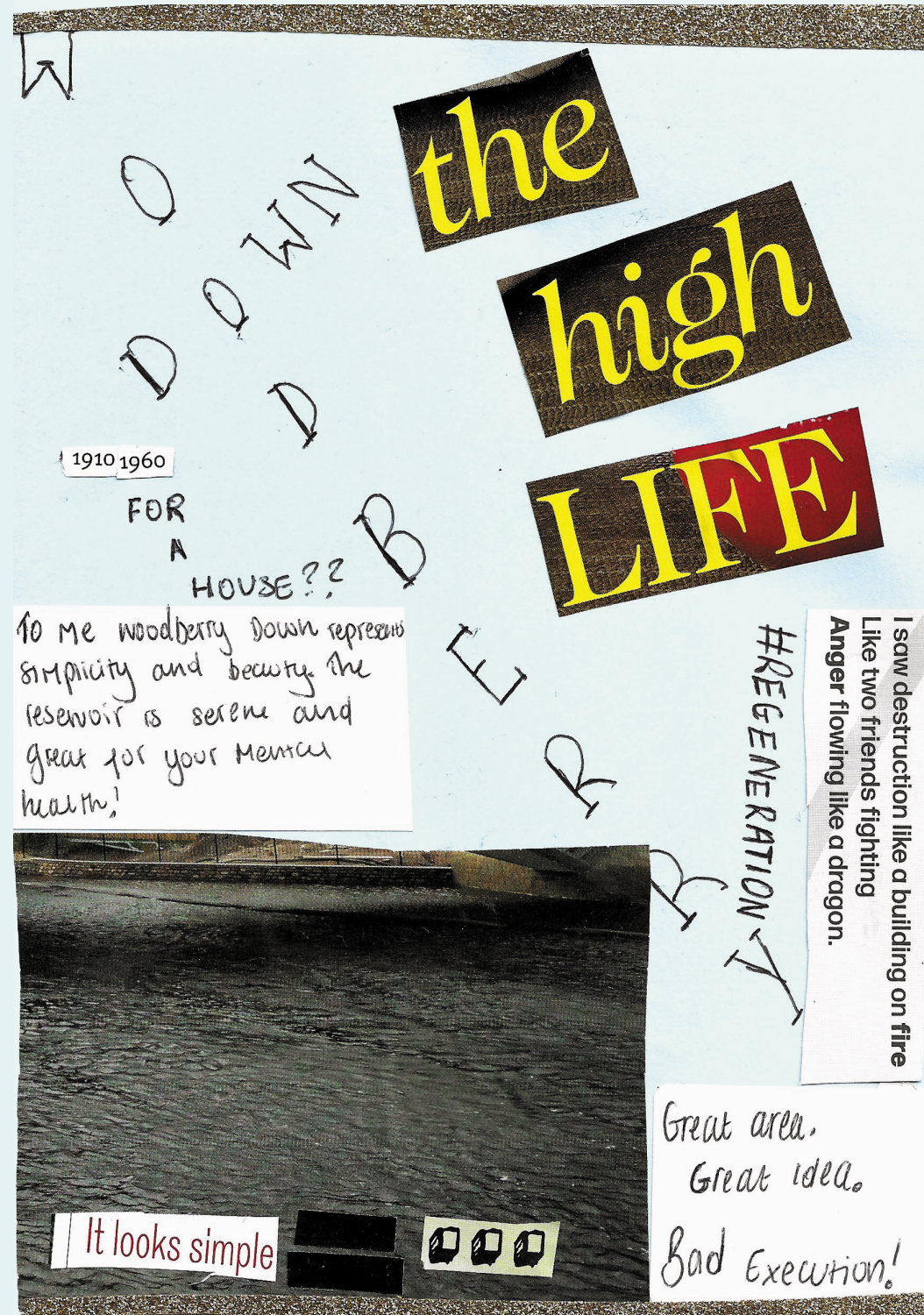
“I feel like compared to the other places I’ve lived in...it’s a really nice area. It’s really **peaceful**...in terms of **going for walks**, looking around **nature**, Woodberry Down is a nice place to live in.”

“For well being I’d say there’s a lot of like green spaces, right here or behind some of our houses? Or the park, definitely. Apart from that, health wise when it comes to sports and stuff, I don’t think or activities I don’t think there’s a lot for our age specifically.

“We didn’t have all these nice **green spaces** before. It was a bit drab but I feel like they’ve added a bit more **life and color** to the area. So I appreciate it.... The [New River] path never used to be here...it’s where I go for my jogs.

“[A big impact is] the fact that people might not be able to **afford these buildings**. One of our research topics was the gentrification, because in a way, they’re kind of kicking out the old residents, and they’re not really giving them an option to be able to buy the the newer ones because they’re so expensive. And you might find it hard to pay the rents there. I don’t think it’s fair because the old the old residents didn’t actually ask to be kicked out.”

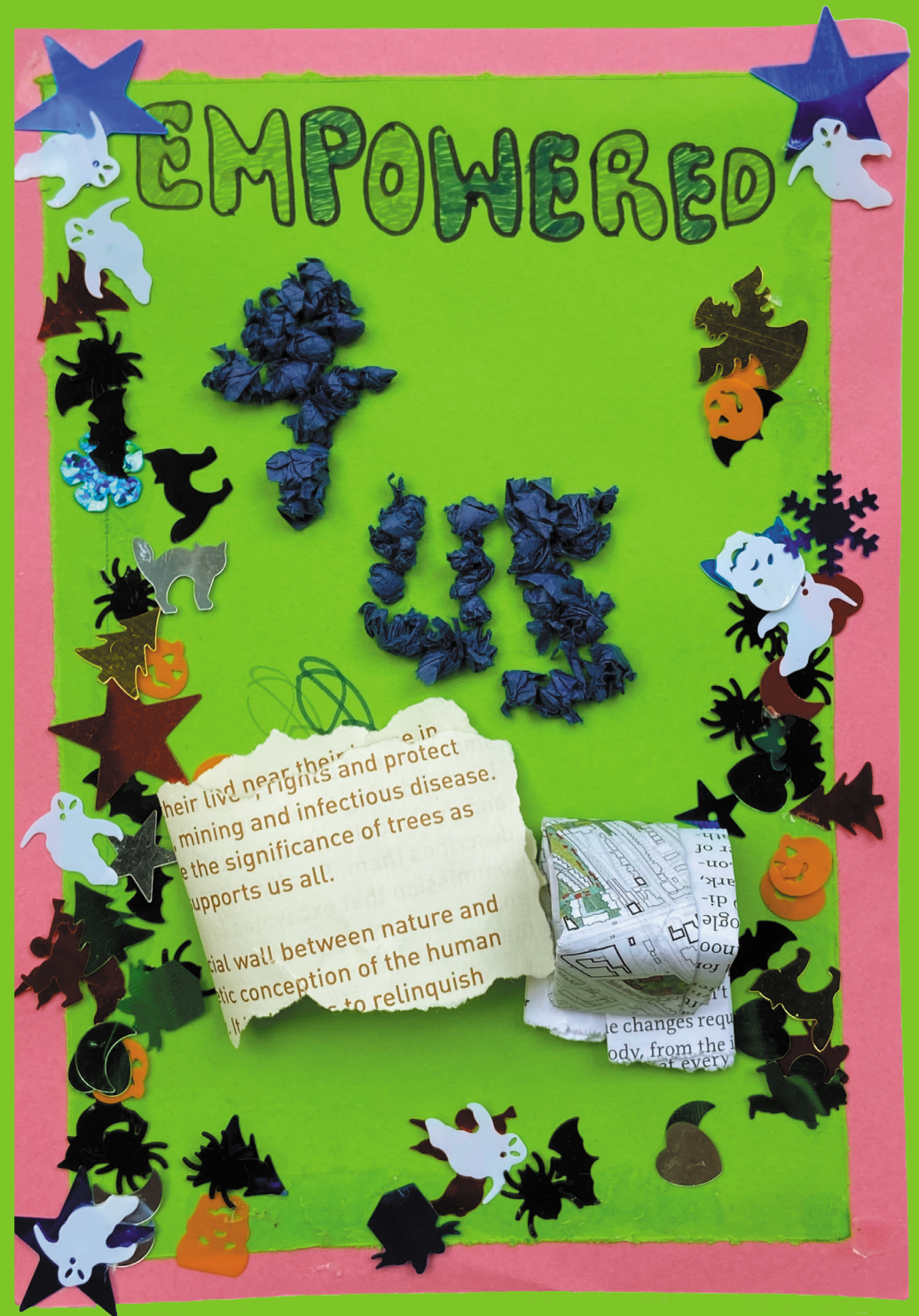
“I like the idea of the regeneration. **It shows us that our area, in a way, is being seen.** There’s things that need to be changed. But from what I hear, and other people’s point of view, I feel like a lot of people should have been considered. [For example] we talked about there’s a big tree...there was a protest for people not to cut down. But because of the new builds, they had to cut it down. I think a lot of people has said that they didn’t protest because they cared about the tree, but it was just the fact that they are angry about regeneration...**they just haven’t kept a lot of people in the loop** or gone about it in the right way.”



“I just think it [Woodberry Down] could really do with a lot more **leisure places**, where you **don't have to buy anything**, just to chill. With the regeneration, when building things like the parks, [they should try to] tailor it to young people because they're trying to cater to young professionals who are looking to start a family to buy an apartment in that area, but **they don't really care about the older kids**.”

“There's quite a fair bit to do if you're a young kid...my age group, I don't think as much, because we're not allowed to go to the youth hub if you're 24. I mean there's martial arts at the community centre, health and fitness classes, yoga, which is free at the Redmond. But I would say other than that **there's not that much for kids my age**, to be fair.”

“I feel like when it comes to younger kids, we have seen them coming together [through] activities. But maybe for people our age [older teens], **I'd love to see something that brings us all together**. So you can get to know each other, the people that live here.”



Woodberry Down

and

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REGENERATION

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Light is what you make it.

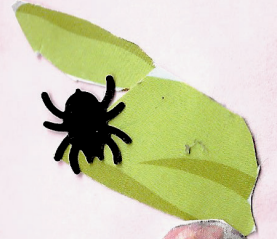


“Overall I would say it’s definitely more positive than negatives. **People are happier in the new houses** it seems. For me the only negatives I can think of is a bit of tension with the new residents. Some of the buildings not being up to scratch. But on a whole I will it’s largely positive. All the new, the new community centre, the new parks, the new football pitches, they have done a lot...**in the grand scheme of things it’s still early stages.**”

“ I kind of hope that when the regeneration is over, that Woodberry Down doesn’t just become like some sort of dead city area, and that everyone...the community still **stays in tact.**”

“I like the concept of it [the regeneration], **I like that they’re building better homes.** To be fair, the old builds, they’re really really old, they’re literally falling apart... But I just feel like there’s ways that they could have done it that would have been better, like taking more care of people in the old blocks. I feel like now that they’re knocking down all the old blocks, they don’t really care to maintain the old blocks. **I think they forget that people are still living there...** I would say that’s a sign of the regeneration. Just the **lack of care** for the older tenants.”

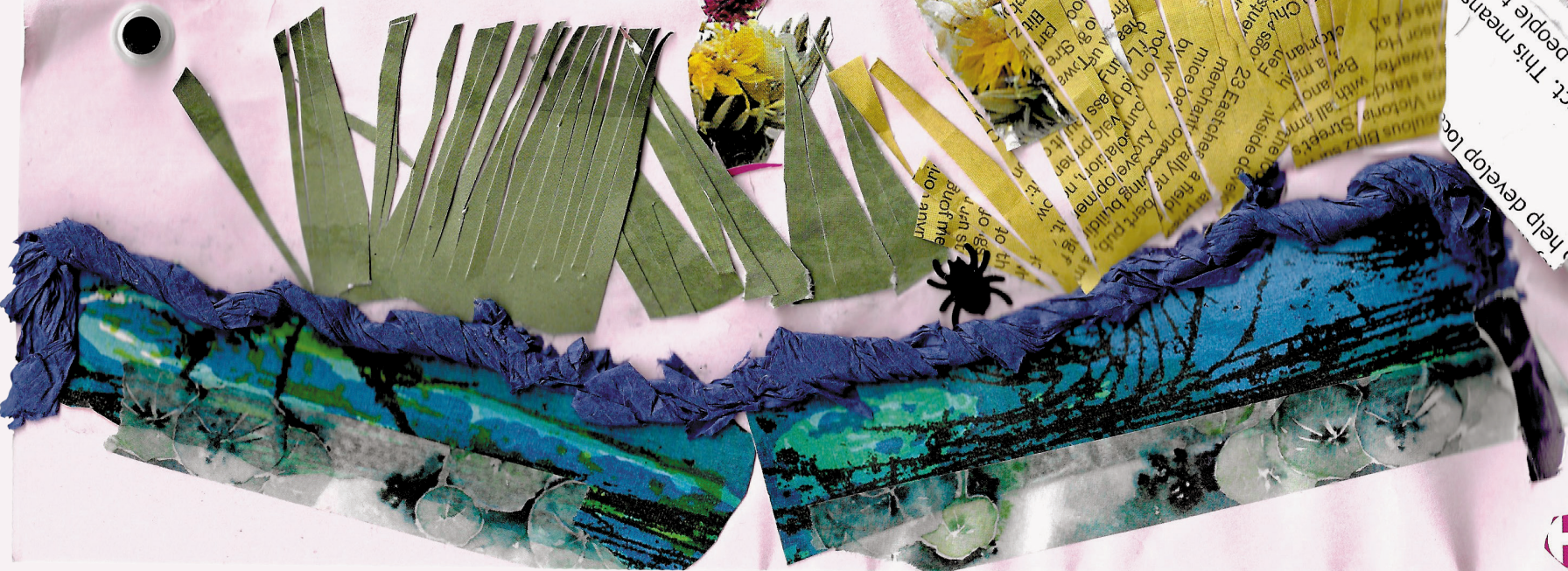
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Social Life was created by the Young Foundation in 2012, to become a specialist centre of research and innovation about the social life of communities. All our work is about the relationship between people and the places they live and understanding how change, through regeneration, new development or small improvements to public spaces, affects the social fabric, opportunities and wellbeing of local areas. We work in the UK and internationally.

For more information about this research, visit www.social-life.co.

