



Developing a social infrastructure strategy

December 2023

Supporting social infrastructure to boost strong communities

Social Life has been working with councils and developers to develop a new approach to understanding and planning social infrastructure on regeneration and new build schemes. Our aim make the build on the strengths of existing social assets and relationships, and to create plans for new provision that complements what already exists and supports the social fabric and community resilience into the future.

This report sets out the our approach and examples of our work in Cambridge on the Beehive development for RailPen; in the east of Hackney in the Kings Park ward; and on the Woodberry Down regeneration, also in Hackney.

Who is Social Life?

Social Life has a decade of experience carrying out research and community projects exploring how people are affected by changes in the built environment

Social Life was set up in 2011 as a specialist centre of research and innovation about the social life of communities. Our work explores how people's day-to-day experience of local places is shaped by the built environment, and how change - through regeneration, new development or small improvements to public spaces - affects the social fabric, opportunities and wellbeing of local areas.

We have worked on many regeneration and new build schemes in London and beyond, using our social sustainability framework as the starting point for our work on social impact and social infrastructure.



The social impacts of regeneration on the Aylesbury Estate
9 Jun 2022



The impact of participation in People's Health Trust programmes: first report
8 Jun 2022



Forest CLT: a social listening exercise
15 May 2022



Southwark stories

Southwark Stories
22 Dec 2021



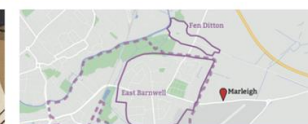
Understanding Southwark: an in-depth account of six areas
10 Dec 2021



Understanding Southwark: Daily life and the impact of COVID-19 across the borough
10 Dec 2021



Understanding Southwark: young people's perspectives
10 Dec 2021



Marleigh: initial social sustainability assessment
3 Nov 2021



Measuring the social impacts of regeneration in South Acton: third social sustainability assessment
21 Oct 2021



The impact of COVID-19 on Bernoldsey
9 Jun 2021



People Powered Places
1 Apr 2021



Social infrastructure in times of crisis
5 Mar 2021



Connective Social Infrastructure
1 Mar 2021



The Gramophone, Hayes: baseline study
10 Dec 2020



Understanding Southwark
3 Nov 2020

What is social infrastructure?

Social infrastructure covers a range of **services, networks and facilities** that meet local needs and contribute towards a good quality of life. These facilitate relationships, encourage participation and civic action and mitigate inequalities. Together these contribute to resilient communities. Social infrastructure depends on the people who use it to give it meaning.

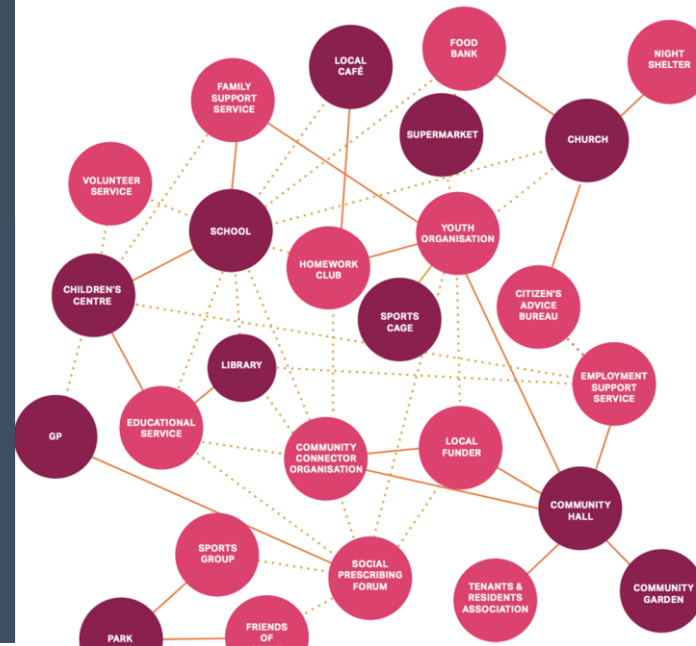
Drawing on [our work for the Mayor of London](#), we think of social infrastructure as an ecosystem of local organisations, networks and services, supported by different types of buildings and physical spaces.

Within a neighbourhood, a social infrastructure ecosystem can include community centres & charity-run spaces; green & outdoor spaces; sports, exercise and health facilities; youth centres and children's centres and playgrounds; places of worship; cafes, bars, pubs and local businesses from barbers to shops that go beyond their basic purpose to support communities; libraries; and a range of local group and networks that meet in person and online.

Formal and informal spaces where people interrelated reported spending time with people from a different background to themselves – highlighting the important role of parks and local businesses



An illustration of a local social infrastructure ecosystem



What is the problem?

It is rare that social infrastructure is included and designed into new developments or regeneration schemes. It often comes as secondary to other profit generating and commercial priorities. At worst, existing social infrastructure that supports communities can be threatened by built environment change.

Today we all face an interlinked social and environmental crisis that is fundamentally impacted by the built environment. The pandemic highlighted existing social fractures and the importance of access to public spaces, community amenities and of local social networks for support.

In this renewed push from all sectors to address our environmental and social crisis, there is an opportunity to systematise the protection and inclusion of social infrastructure in new development. This will protect existing communities, support people moving to the area, and support newer and older residents to come together to generate the strong social fabric that is needed to help places to thrive.

More segregated playgrounds revealed: 'We just play in the car park'

A Guardian Cities investigation into a development that barred poorer children from a communal play area has found similar examples around the UK capital

Have you experienced segregation in housing developments outside London? Let us know



A hedge divides private owners (top) and affordable housing tenants (below right) at a complex in south London, part of which includes the Mary Datchelor School conversion. Photograph: Google Earth

Several other housing developments in London feature separate playgrounds for richer and poorer children, Guardian Cities can reveal.

Politicians from across the political spectrum this week joined in denouncing developer Henley Homes after an investigation showed that it was blocking social housing residents from shared play spaces at its Bayliss Old School complex in south London. The furore led Henley to back down in a public statement and to say it would fund a new play area for the public.

Parks near new homes shrink 40% as developers say they cannot afford them

Green spaces near new housing developments in England and Wales down in last 20 years



People living in developments built after 2000 were about 5% less likely to visit green space once a week. Photograph: Alamy

New homes have a dwindling amount of green space because property developers claim they cannot afford to build parks, research has found.

Analysis from the New Economics Foundation (NEF) looked at data from the Office for National Statistics, data on the average age of local housing stock, Open StreetMap and national survey data on public perceptions of local green spaces to find the answer. Source: NEF, England

Embedding social value in development and regeneration with social infrastructure

The increasing density of our cities and the mainstream approach to development can negatively impact social spaces and networks, and community cohesion.

Communities often prioritise creating, restoring or maintaining social infrastructure in their responses to local development. Successful social infrastructure depends on complex networks of relationships, which take time and care to build up and can be difficult to restore once lost.

We must protect and embed social infrastructure in regeneration and redevelopment in creative new ways that add social value to an investment. Opportunities are often missed to leverage the best of what is already in place and to work with existing social networks to knit new communities into the existing social fabric of a place.

Respecting local assets and providing new social infrastructure to address gaps can ensure that existing communities benefit from development and begin to welcome investment opportunities.

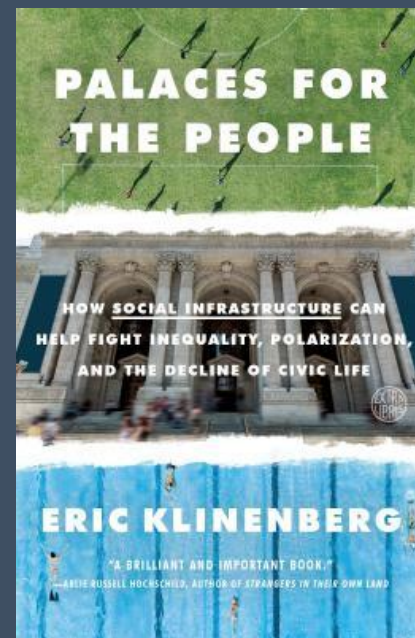
What do we know?

Research has demonstrated that social infrastructure is essential to support communities' well-being, health and ability to thrive in their neighbourhood.

Social infrastructure supports relationships within communities and between people from different backgrounds by providing places for people to meet friends and to make new connections.

It supports participation by giving people the opportunity to become involved in governance, management and volunteering, and by helping people who feel marginalised and powerless to gain more control over their lives.

Finally, social infrastructure supports equality by providing access to support and services, particularly to those who are more vulnerable or disadvantaged.



Walkable neighborhoods associated with lower risk of some cancers - study

Denser neighborhoods with more amenities associated with lower rates of obesity-related cancers in women



Living in densely populated neighborhoods with accessible amenities promotes walking. Photograph: David Grossman/Alamy

Living in more walkable neighborhoods can lower the rate of obesity-related cancers in women, a new study has found.

Living in a densely populated neighborhood with accessible amenities such as grocery stores and small businesses promotes walking, and women living

Looking for all Articles by Charlotte Webber?

Beyond books: School libraries as sources of safety, inclusivity, and wellbeing

Last updated: 02 October 2023



What have we been doing?

We have been working in several places to establish a social infrastructure strategy that responds to local needs and demand and that strengthened the assets within communities. We have been testing a process that is founded on the rigorous research we have established over the last ten years. We have been working with delivery partners to develop tangible and deliverable social infrastructure strategies:

1. Using our place-based research methods to understand local perceptions, use and demand
2. Generating insights that culminate into a social infrastructure strategy for an area
3. Co-developing with delivery partners a plan for amenities which cultivate social relationships and well-being and build on existing strengths
4. Establishing governance models for long-term neighbourhood assets that will help areas going through change to thrive in the long term.



What is our process?



Deliverables

- Baseline asset mapping
- Demographic / census / community dynamics research
- Policy context
- Review of masterplan / regeneration documents
- Primary data collection including: street survey, stakeholder interview, observations, etc.
- Data analysis
- Use and demand mapping
- Place-based social values framework.
- Demand and implications report
- Workshop with delivery partners to discuss emerging recommendations
- Social infrastructure plan
- Comparable case studies
- High level governance strategy
- Delivery and phasing strategy
- Public consultation on findings and plan
- Final plan incorporating feedback

Example project 1

Social infrastructure strategy for council-owned assets in Kings Ward, Hackney

Commissioned by Hackney Council, 2023

Social Life in partnership with Matter Architecture were commissioned to review six council owned community buildings in King's Park and one public space.

Community assets are vital for supporting health, wellbeing and integration, key tenets of social capital and sustainable communities. The review included research into the use and access of existing amenities. Our analysis used an appraisal framework to capture social value developed for this work.

This has provided insights and recommendations that reflect community need and that can maximise long term use and benefits.



Developing an appraisal framework that captures social value

Research methods used

- 1 Street survey
- 2 Interviews
- 3 Focus groups/ workshops
- 4 Observations
- 5 Secondary local policy research
- 6 Case study research

Physical	Physical condition	Good external conditions of building (building envelope)
		Good internal conditions of building (plumbing, electric, structural)
		Presence of visible signs of deterioration inside and outside (paint, mould, vandalism)
		Has outdoor space
		Good outdoor space condition (invites use)
		Welcoming reception and entrance
		Internal spaces size and type (open, public, private, natural light) are adequate for use
	Accessibility	ADA accessible
		Good digital connection
	Sustainability	Good environmental performance
		Located near public transport
	Location	Easily accessible by walking / cycling
		Located near other key assets & services and potential for relationships with those
		Safe cycle parking facilities
	Flexibility	Space are flexible to deliver different types of activities
		Development opportunity site (housing, mix used)
	Development opportunities	Opportunity for cross-subsidy
		No regulatory barriers to expanding use / programming of space

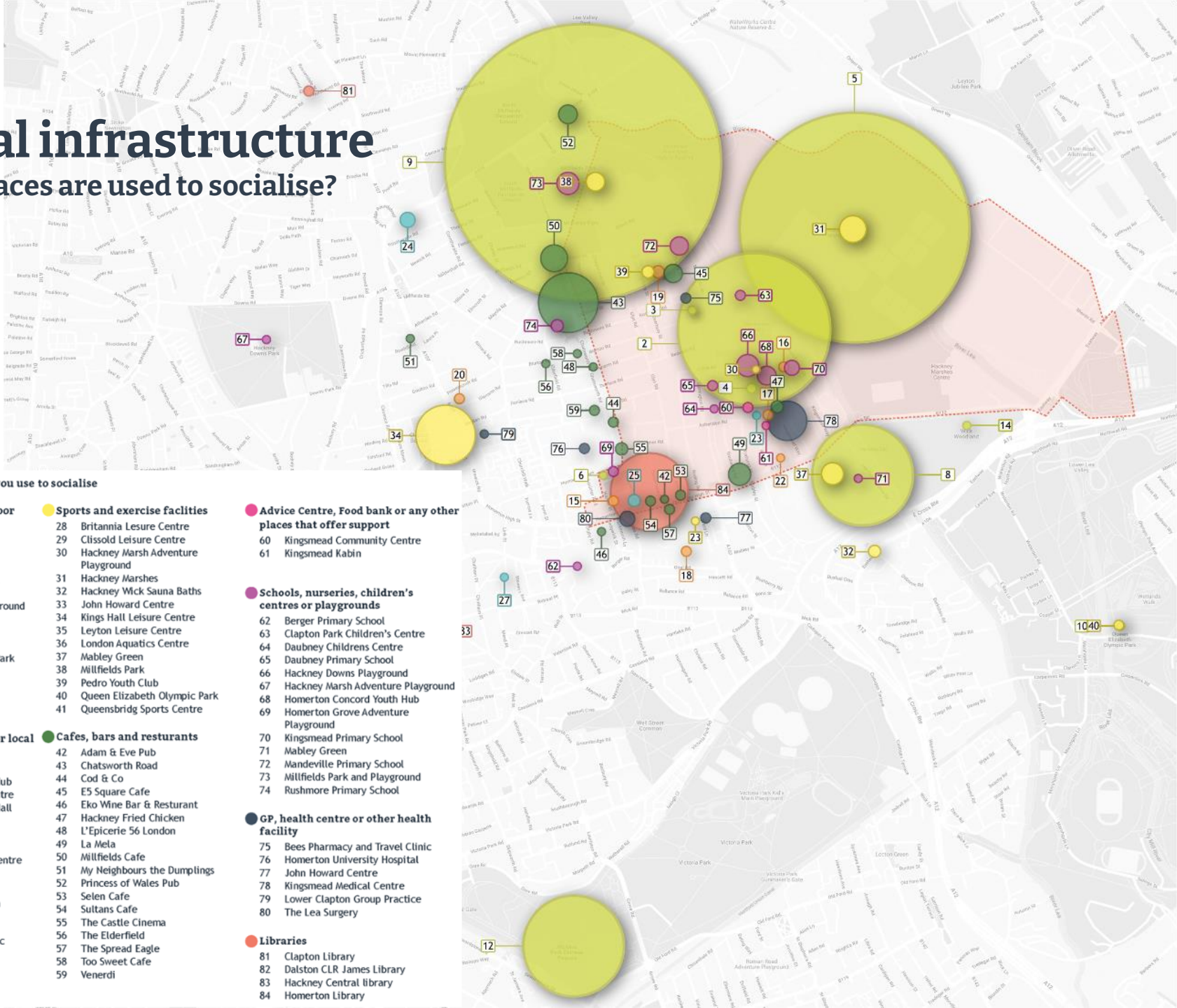
Use	Programming	Active/ongoing programming/ use of the spaces
		Good attendance levels of programming
		Type of programming/use reflects local need
	Audience	Good target audience reach
		Type of audience served reflect local need
	Outreach	Good outreach culture that encourages people to use premises

Governance & Management	Management	Adequate financing
		Management has the skills needed to adequately manage the asset
		Long term viability of management and finances
		Adequate security
	Maintenance	Adequate staffing
		Manageable maintenance costs
	operation	Well maintained day to day with adequate resourcing for cleaners and caretakers
		Community representation/involvement in governance and operation of spaces

Social outcomes	Perception	Feels safe
		Feels inviting
		Is valued by local communities
	Social	Supports people's sense of belonging
		Is a place to meet others from similar backgrounds
		Is a place to meet others from different backgrounds
	Health	Tackles inequality and poverty
		Is a place that supports wellbeing
		Is a place that supports healthy lifestyles
	Engagement	Is a place the promotes exercise
		Encourages people to participate in decision making
		Encourages people to have influence over their neighbourhood
Social progression	Provides employment, skills and learning support	
	Encourages progression into other activities	

Social infrastructure

What places are used to socialise?



Places in the local area do you use to socialise

Green spaces or other outdoor places

- 1 Clissold Park
- 2 Daubney Fields
- 3 Gilpin Square
- 4 Hackney Bumps Skate Park
- 5 Hackney Marshes
- 6 Homerton Adventure Playground
- 7 London Fields
- 8 Mabley Green
- 9 Millfields Park
- 10 Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- 11 Springfield Park
- 12 Victoria Park
- 13 Walthamstow Marshes
- 14 Wick Woodland

Sports and exercise facilities

- 28 Britannia Leisure Centre
- 29 Clissold Leisure Centre
- 30 Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground
- 31 Hackney Marshes
- 32 Hackney Wick Sauna Baths
- 33 John Howard Centre
- 34 Kings Hall Leisure Centre
- 35 Leyton Leisure Centre
- 36 London Aquatics Centre
- 37 Mabley Green
- 38 Millfields Park
- 39 Pedro Youth Club
- 40 Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- 41 Queensbridge Sports Centre

Advice Centre, Food bank or any other places that offer support

- 60 Kingsmead Community Centre
- 61 Kingsmead Kabin

Schools, nurseries, children's centres or playgrounds

- 62 Berger Primary School
- 63 Clapton Park Children's Centre
- 64 Daubney Childrens Centre
- 65 Daubney Primary School
- 66 Hackney Downs Playground
- 67 Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground
- 68 Homerton Concord Youth Hub
- 69 Homerton Grove Adventure Playground
- 70 Kingsmead Primary School
- 71 Mabley Green
- 72 Mandeville Primary School
- 73 Millfields Park and Playground
- 74 Rushmore Primary School

GP, health centre or other health facility

- 75 Bees Pharmacy and Travel Clinic
- 76 Homerton University Hospital
- 77 John Howard Centre
- 78 Kingsmead Medical Centre
- 79 Lower Clapton Group Practice
- 80 The Lea Surgery

Libraries

- 81 Clapton Library
- 82 Dalston CLR James Library
- 83 Hackney Central library
- 84 Homerton Library

Community centres, halls or local charities

- 15 Core Arts Ltd
- 16 Homerton Concord Youth Hub
- 17 Kingsmead Community Centre
- 18 Nisbet House Community Hall
- 19 Pedro Youth Club
- 20 Round Chapel
- 21 The Crib
- 22 Wally Foster Community Centre

Places of worship

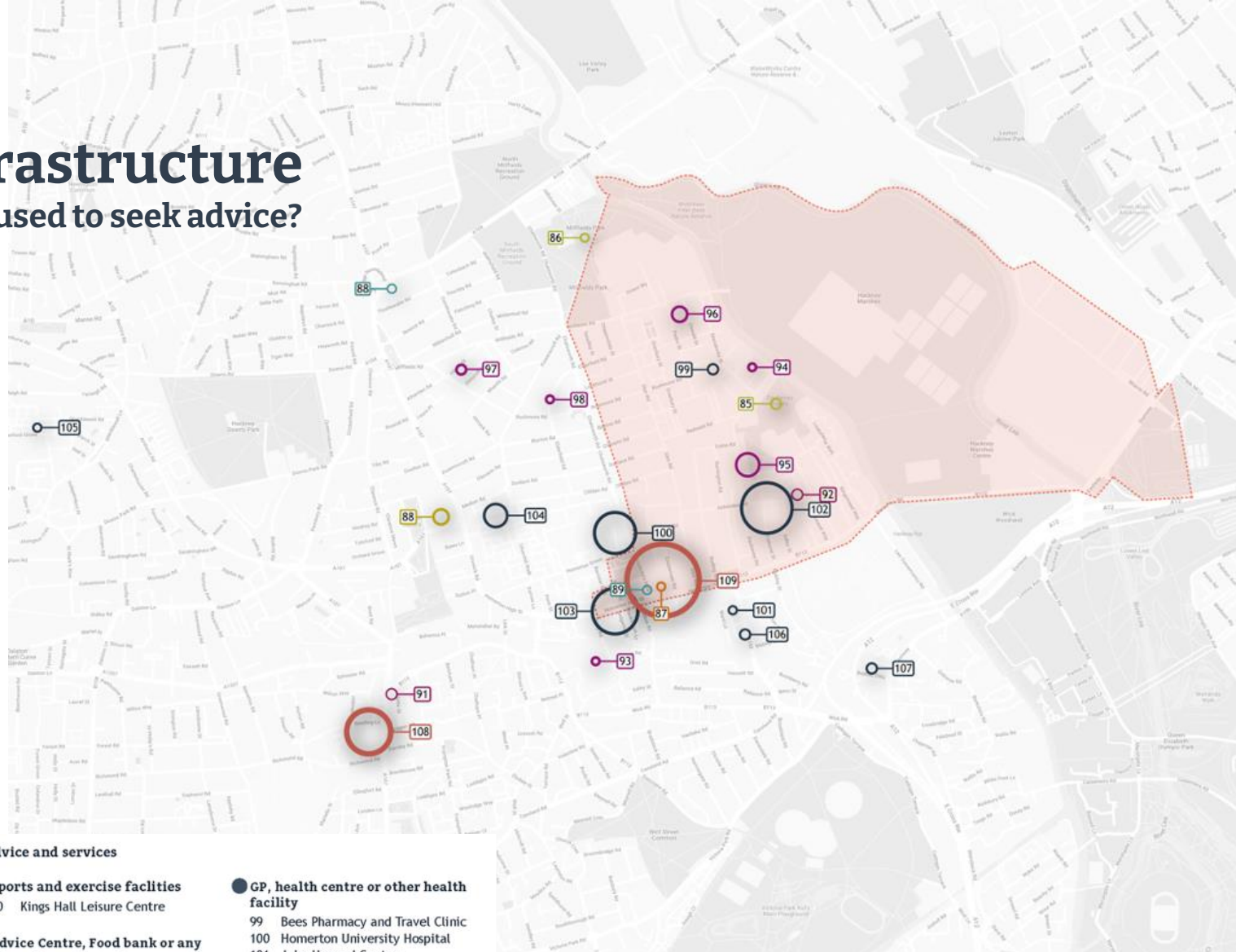
- 23 Kingsmead Centre Jummah
- 24 Madina Mosque Trust
- 25 Saint Barnabas Homerton
- 26 St John the Baptist Catholic Church
- 27 St Lukes Catholic Church

Cafes, bars and restaurants

- 42 Adam & Eve Pub
- 43 Chatsworth Road
- 44 Cod & Co
- 45 E5 Square Cafe
- 46 Eko Wine Bar & Restaurant
- 47 Hackney Fried Chicken
- 48 L'Epicerie 56 London
- 49 La Mela
- 50 Millfields Cafe
- 51 My Neighbours the Dumplings
- 52 Princess of Wales Pub
- 53 Selen Cafe
- 54 Sultans Cafe
- 55 The Castle Cinema
- 56 The Elderfield
- 57 The Spread Eagle
- 58 Too Sweet Cafe
- 59 Venerdi

Social infrastructure

What places are used to seek advice?



● Places in the local area you use to seek advice and services

● Green spaces or other outdoor places

- 85 Daubney Fields
- 86 Millfields Park

● Community centres, halls or local charities

- 87 Homerton Library

● Places of worship

- 88 Madina Mosque Trust
- 89 Saint Barnabas Homerton

● Sports and exercise facilities

- 90 Kings Hall Leisure Centre

● Advice Centre, Food bank or any other places that offer support

- 91 Citizens Advice Hackney
- 92 Kingsmead Community Centre

● Schools, nurseries, children's centres or playgrounds

- 93 Berger Primary School
- 94 Clapton Park Children's Centre
- 95 Daubney Primary School
- 96 Mandeville Primary School
- 97 Millfields Park and Playground
- 98 Rushmore Primary School

● GP, health centre or other health facility

- 99 Bees Pharmacy and Travel Clinic
- 100 Homerton University Hospital
- 101 John Howard Centre
- 102 Kingsmead Medical Centre
- 103 Le Surgery
- 104 Lower Clapton Group Practice
- 105 Somerford Grove Practice
- 106 Wick Health Centre
- 107 Trowbridge Surgery

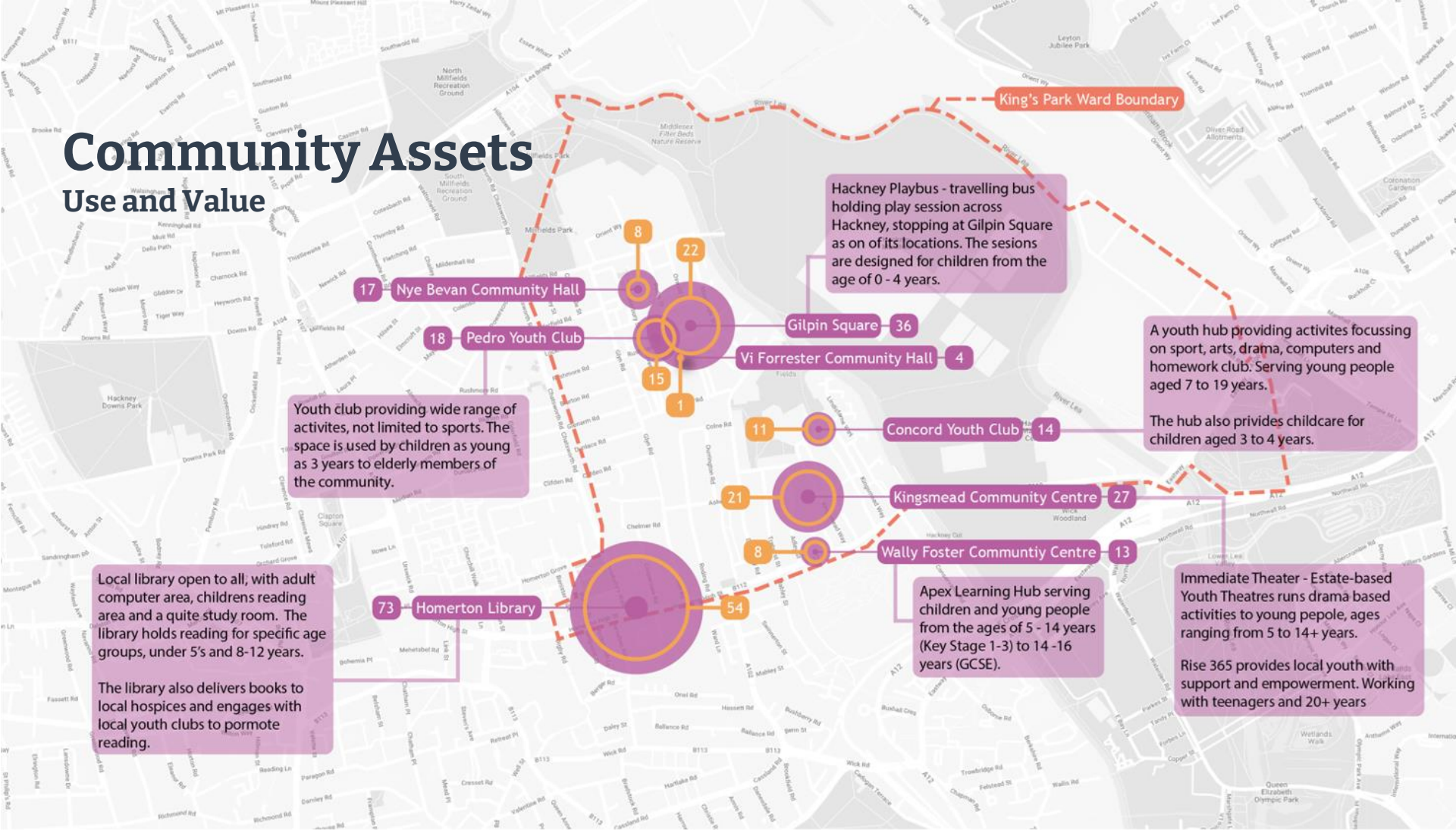
● Libraries

- 108 Hackney Central library
- 109 Homerton Library

● Frequency of mentions

Community Assets

Use and Value



Which building have you used in the past 3 months?



Which two buildings are most important to you?



Assets appraisal against a framework that capture social value

7.1 Homerton library

7.1.1 Location

Summary

- Good transport connectivity to reach wider audiences from other parts of Hackney.
- Located near key assets and services such as Homerton Hospital, Daubney School and Chats Palace, with potential to build relationships and partnerships.
- Flexible spatial layout with potential for expanding upwards.



Homerton Library is situated on the border of King's Park ward, adjacent to Homerton High Street. The strategic positioning of the building ensures good links to public transport, with a PTLA rating of 5. Homerton Overground station is located a 4-minute walk away and bus stops are located nearby. Bus routes from stop L (Glyn Road) 236, 276, 308, 488, W15 head towards Hackney Wick, Stratford City and Leyton. Similarly, the buses across the road, bus stop M (Glyn Road), head towards Finsbury Park station, Hackney Central and Clapton Pond. Whilst these options facilitate efficient travel within the borough, travelling into Central London may take longer than 45 minutes.

The building is easily accessible by walking and cycling with a pedestrian crossing situated right in front of the building and large spanning pavements leading to the building's entrance. The entrance is equipped with a ramp with handrails, accommodating wheelchair users and individuals with walking aids. There is car parking located behind the building which provides 6 car parking spaces along with parking for blue badge holders additionally, there are three cycle racks to secure park bicycles.

Homerton library is located near Homerton Hospital, Daubney Primary School and Chats Palace, an art centre and theatre which aims to provide creative and educational opportunities to the local community.

There is the potential for these two facilities to support one another and provide their users with opportunities to experience arts and culture and reach new audiences. Castle Cinema is an independent community cinema which is located on Chatsworth Road, is also close to Homerton library. One respondent from our survey highlighted that the cinema acts as a community hub and provides mental health support, which presents the potential to serve as a social hub adjacent to the library which is unable to provide such services.

The library space on the ground floor presents an open-plan layout which allows for a flexible spatial arrangement. This layout allows for connectivity between the children's library, computer suite and adult library. The upper floor has a fixed layout with designated rooms for the quiet study space, the hall, and offices, each of these areas is situated within their own distinct rooms. Several development opportunities have been identified for the library, presenting viable options for expansion. One option explored the addition of two floors to provide an additional 1000 sqm of leasable work space. Additionally, the car park located at the rear of the library also provides for additional space to be utilised as part of the regional regeneration of Priory Court estate, a housing estate located behind the library comprising three blocks.

7.2 Physical conditions

The building's external envelope is in poor condition, with the roof in major need of repair. The felt roof cover is prone to weather damage and junctions where the roof meets the flashing are weak, leading to leaks. The windows are single glazed and the entrance door is damaged which is a security risk. The internal building fabric is also in poor condition with damp visible on the inside and the internal doors need upgrading to meet fire safety standards. The services and electrical cabling need replacing or need to be updated to modern standards. Security measures such as barred wire, fence toppers, window grills and anti-climb paint are not aesthetically pleasing and negatively impact the space.

In general, the finishes and fittings, including the floor and wall finishes have fallen into disrepair and need upgrading. There is a lot of damage due to damp and the building has generally not been maintained to a suitable standard. There is external space around all four sides of the building however, the front area of the building which also serves as a carpark is not an inviting space. The outdoor spaces have not been well maintained and the amphitheatre to the rear of the building has potential for outdoor activities. The entrance of the building is dark and uninviting and there are a lack of windows on the front façade.

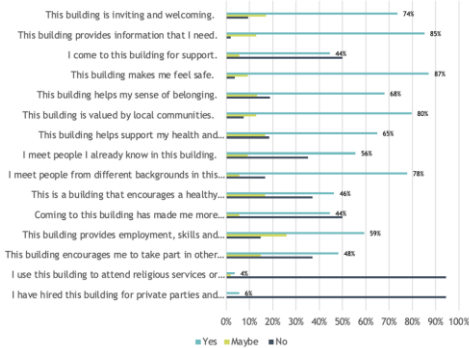
Whilst the building has a good mix of types and sizes of spaces, the quality of the spaces need major improvement, the building is also not accessible. The building is not thermally insulated and has poor environmental performance, the services need major upgrading, along with lighting fixtures and changing the windows to double or triple glazed. The building has valuable architectural features and retaining them would be a challenge. The scale of the site and its use may also benefit from a partial demolition to allow for residential housing, perhaps in the form of townhouses to the rear of the site, depending on what would be most beneficial to the community.



Indicators	Willy Foster Community Centre	
What success looks like	Roof needs major repair. Windows and external doors need replacing.	
Good external building envelope	Roofs of building seem ok but damp may indicate larger issue. Doors not fire-rated.	
Good internal building fabric	All MEP systems need modernising.	
Good mechanical, electrical & plumbing (MEP) services	All finishes, internally & externally, and fittings need replacing/repairing.	
Finishes & fittings in good condition	Good amount of outdoor space on 2 sides of the building but needs improving.	
Good outdoor space that invites use	Entrance space is large & has potential to be welcoming but needs improving.	
Welcoming reception & entrance	Reconfiguration of all spaces required to be up to standard but good mix of space sizes.	
Adequate internal spaces that are varied in use and offer good natural light	Aisle from residential unit, all space accessed from ground floor.	
Accessible	The spaces are large enough to accommodate offering activities.	
Flexible spaces for delivery of different activities	Building has minimal thermal insulation and dated MEP systems.	
Good environmental performance	Major opp. for significant improvement and potential new housing to back of site.	
Development opportunity for site		
	Total cost (£)	Cost / m² (£)
Renovate	2.0M - 2.2M	1.7K - 1.9K
Part renovation & redevelopment	3.9M - 4.8M	5K - 5.5K

"It would be great if they could provide another community space... a place that is more relaxed, it will be good for young people because a lot of them come here. Study area is great but you can't have a drink, meet with others."

Homerton Library N=54



7.1.5 Social outcomes

Summary

- Based on our survey data, 39% of respondents stated that Homerton library was an important asset to them.
- 87% of respondents felt that the building makes them feel safe. From our open-ended questions five users emphasised that the library's welcoming and safe environment was its most important feature for them.
- In the open-ended responses, two individuals mentioned that the library contributes positively to their well being.

According to our survey data, 39% of respondents stated that Homerton library was an important asset to them, making it the most valued asset in the area. Among these respondents, 74% expressed that they felt the library is inviting and welcoming, while 87% reported that the building makes them feel safe. Five users specifically emphasised that the library's welcoming and safe environment was its most important feature for them.

The survey results showed that a majority of respondents perceived Homerton library as a space that fosters a sense of belonging. Specifically, 78% of respondents associated the library with the opportunity to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

7.1.6 Opportunities

- Homerton Library is well used by the community and attracts a wide ranging audience, it is in a good location with good transport connectivity meaning it has the potential to reach users from other parts of Hackney.
- The library has a flexible spatial layout, the study space is used the most during term time, beyond this it has the ability to be repurposed and adapt to accommodate different activities and programs. There is potential to expand the library by adding additional floors which could provide office spaces for lease which can help generate revenue.
- The recent restructuring within the council which has merged culture, heritage, and libraries into one remit, can open possibilities for exciting new partnerships. The library can become a focal point for cultural events and even build a network with Chats Palace and other services in Hackney to generate revenue.
- The library spaces have to be booked directly with the library staff, there is the opportunity to centralise this and merge it with the community halls booking system.

5.1.7 Constraints

- The libraries physical conditions could do with modernising, especially updating the services to make the building more energy efficient. Whilst this will require significant investment of between £700,000 to £800,000, this will help to save on utility costs in the long term.
- It is typically challenging for public goods such as libraries to generate significant revenue, limited funding and budget constraints are the biggest barrier to expanding programming and services.

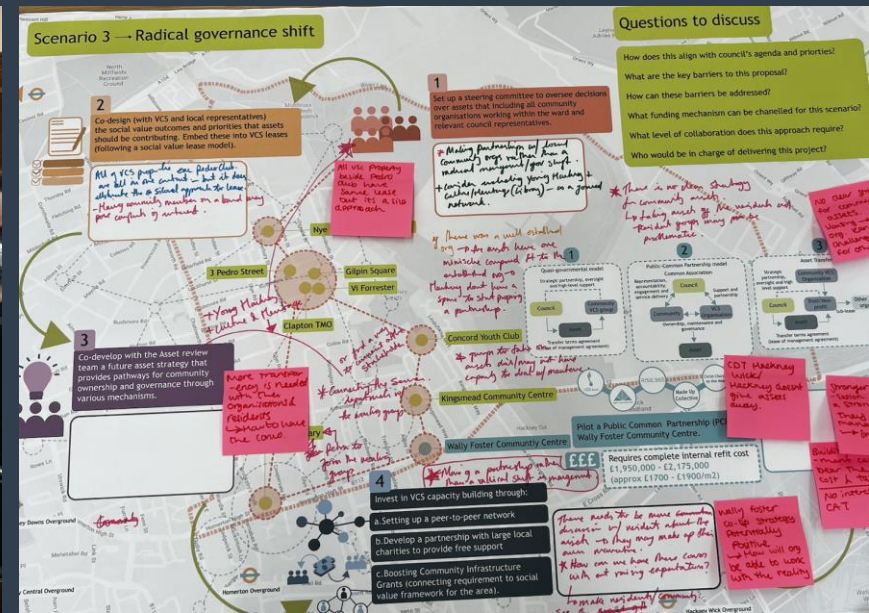
5.1.8 Recommendations

- The library would benefit from light-touch renovation which could transform the space significantly.
- The outdoor space is not utilised, some landscaping improvement could significantly transform the space and allow for outdoor programming and activities.
- The department for libraries culture and heritage would benefit from being invited into the working group and engaging in this project.
- The library is a key hub for information and services, the library would benefit from expanding further those services and building partnerships to generate supplementary revenue.



Internal library area

Engagement with the council & local organisations



Example project 2

Social infrastructure plan for The Beehive redevelopment

Commissioned by Railpen Investments

In partnership with LDA design and Leonard Design

Social Life reviewed existing community assets, amenities and local perceptions of the area surrounding a north Cambridge retail site. This was part of a planning application for a mixed-use purpose-built technology and life science workplace development.

The aim was to ensure that the future development plans met local needs and built on what was already succeeding socially, so that the future development became a thriving extension of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Research methods used

- 1 Street survey
- 2 Interviews
- 3 Community workshop
- 4 Case study research



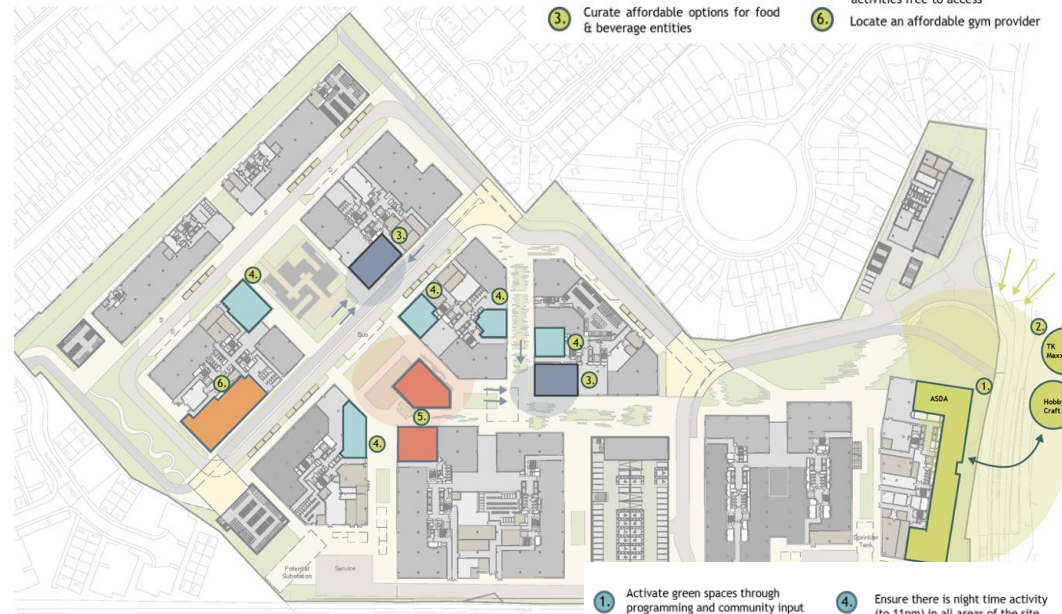
Curating an affordable place |

1. Keep ASDA on the site
2. Relocate TKmaxx and Hobby craft
3. Curate affordable options for food & beverage entities
4. Offer cheaper rents to 5-7 smaller units for the first 5 years
5. Make the community space and its activities free to access
6. Locate an affordable gym provider

Social infrastructure plan for The Beehive redevelopment

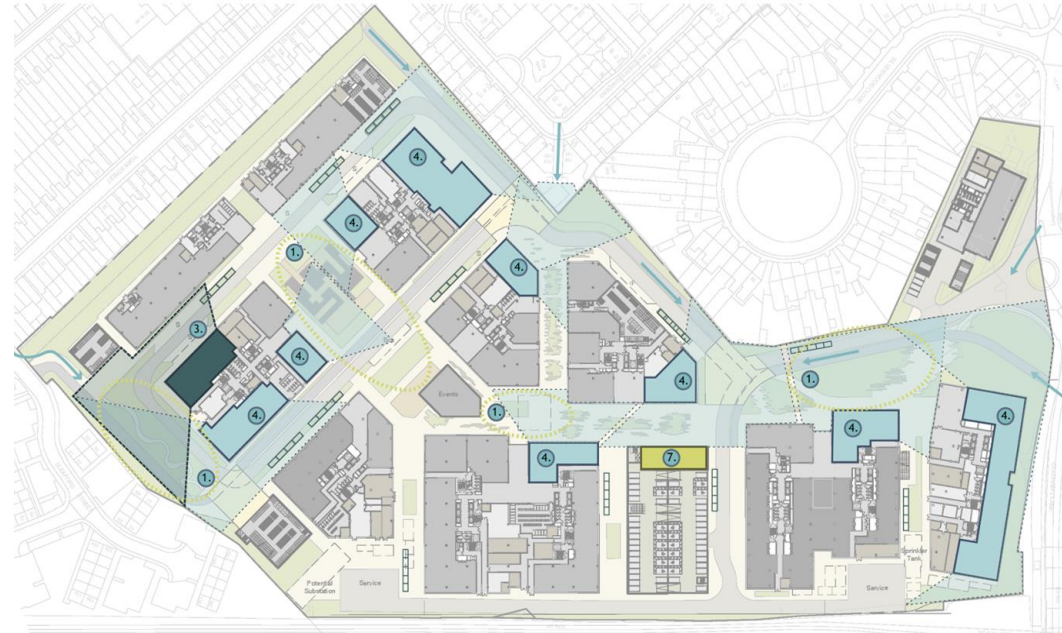
The project established a placed based set of values for the public aspects of the development (affordability, safety, interactive and unique) while addressing the local challenges to achieve these.

A social infrastructure proposal was developed in collaboration with the development team to support the social sustainability and integration of the project into the wider neighbourhood and community.

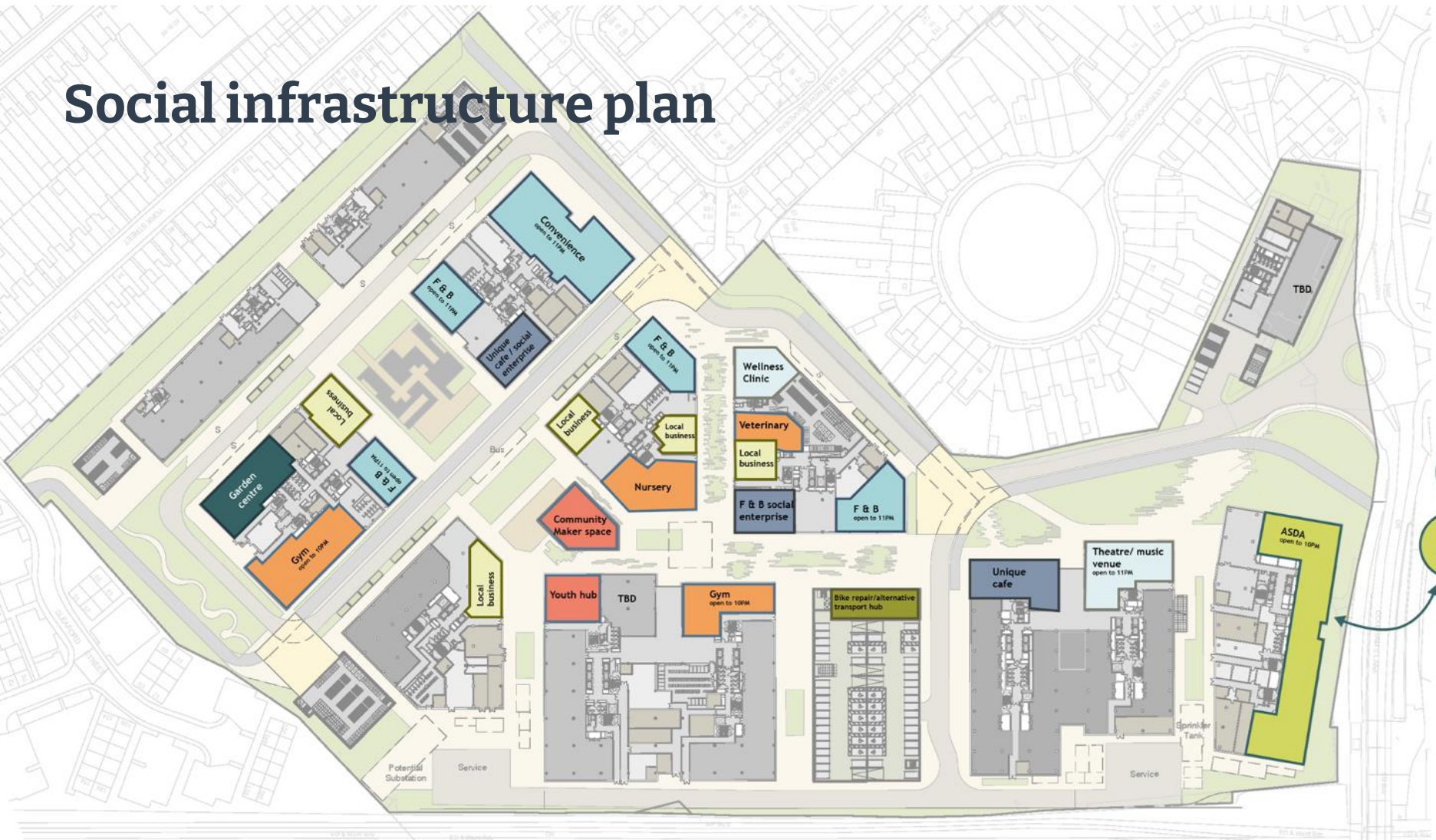


1. Activate green spaces through programming and community input
2. Develop a meanwhile strategy
3. Activate ground floor uses on all corners, especially the community garden side
4. Ensure there is night time activity (to 11pm) in all areas of the site
5. Secure 24/7 security patrolling
6. Incentivise cycling through dispersed parking provision

Designing a safe space



Social infrastructure plan



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Garden centre to address safety concerns in community gardens | Units opened to 11PM to address safety concerns | New unique facilities to make place a destination |
| Types of facilities that are valued and to be maintained on the site | Unique cafe and F & B propositions | Dedicated community spaces |
| Small spaces for local entrepreneurs at discounted rate for 5 | Maintaining the ASDA on the site | Alternative transport hub / bike repair to incentivise micro mobility usage and cycling |

TK Maxx
Hobby Craft

Media and partnerships

MAKE SPACE FOR GIRLS

MAKE SPACE FOR GIRLS/JKA

Railpen has partnered with Make Space for Girls and Julia King Associates (JKA) to work with local young women and girls to co-design part of the external public space in the Beehive Centre redevelopment.

"We are very excited to be working with Railpen to co-design a space with young women and girls at the Beehive Centre. Traditional approaches to provision for teenagers and young people (fenced pitches and BMX tracks) tend to be dominated by boys and young men. This project isn't about painting things pink or creating separate spaces for boys and girls. But by working with young women, the Railpen team can co-design a space that is welcoming to young women, non-binary young people and the boys and young men for whom traditional lean provision doesn't work."

Imogen Clark
Co-Founder, [Make Space for Girls](#)


"We are pleased to launch this work on the back of 8 years at the London School of Economics where we have established a record of groundbreaking work with young people. This is an exciting opportunity to further our existing work which centres young people, particularly young girls into design, planning, and development processes. The hope is to improve the sense of ownership of local public spaces by young girls and women."

Julia King
Founder, [JKA](#)

indie CAMBS

INDIE CAMBRIDGE

Railpen has partnered with Indie Cambridge to help rejuvenate the Beehive Centre into a vibrant and popular destination for local people that caters for all budgets, provides independent retail to complement existing facilities and contributes to the success of the City.



"The transformation of the Beehive Centre presents one of the most exciting and significant opportunities in the city and we are really pleased to be able to showcase the many talented independent businesses from across Cambridge."

Anne Beaman
Founder, [Indie Cambridge](#)

CAM SKATE

CAM SKATE

Railpen has partnered with Cam Skate to incorporate skateboarding and roller skating within the heart of the Beehive redevelopment through the integration of skateable features into the built environment. Consultation sessions with local skaters of all ages and abilities mean that architectural features and spaces are designed with the input of the people who will use them, ensuring the plans meet the needs of skaters and pedestrians.

"Railpen understands the benefits of embracing skateboarding as part of the Beehive redevelopment. Skateboarding promotes creativity, perseverance and positive mental health for young people. Skaters bring life to urban environments and make them safer for all users. Cam Skate is excited by Railpen's approach to working with the local skateboarding community and the possibilities it brings for improving skateboarding facilities in Cambridge."

Cam Skate

ABBEE PEOPLE

ABBEE PEOPLE

Railpen has established a new long-term partnership with local community charity Abbee People to support some of the most vulnerable and excluded groups in Cambridge, with a particular focus on the Abbey and East Barnwell areas of Cambridge. The overall aim of the partnership will be to ensure local residents benefit from the investment coming forward in the area through the proposed regeneration of both the Beehive Centre and Cambridge Retail Park. Key activities include providing core funds for the Abbey Food Hub, working with Abbee People to inspire people from underrepresented backgrounds to consider careers in Life Sciences, creating opportunities and reducing barriers to work and developing a community volunteering programme for Railpen and its partners.

"The support of Railpen shows how the benefits of investment can be shared throughout our communities. We've been inspired by Railpen's openness to explore innovative new ideas, and their interest and enthusiasm to really get to know the community that they are part of in Abbey. We are looking forward to seeing the positive impact that this partnership will have on the lives of local people."

Nicky Sheppard
CEO, [Abbee People](#)

CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE CENTRE

CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE CENTRE

Railpen and Cambridge Science Centre are working together to create The Makers Lab at the Beehive. The Makers Lab will be an energetic hub of youth engagement and activity throughout the day, providing an inspirational and distinctive STEM educational resource nestled in the heart of a vibrant Beehive community.

"Working in partnership with Railpen, we have a real opportunity to create a new and engaging STEM educational facility at the Beehive Centre where children and young people can put their hands on science, to stuff and learn about STEM."

How the Beehive Centre in Cambridge could be transformed into 'innovation and community space'

By Paul Brackley - paul.brackley@liffemedia.co.uk

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A bold vision for the future of the Beehive Centre in Cambridge has been unveiled, with a promise that it will put the community at its heart.

Railpen, one of the largest pension funds in the UK, now owns the site and Cambridge Retail Park next door.



Example project 3

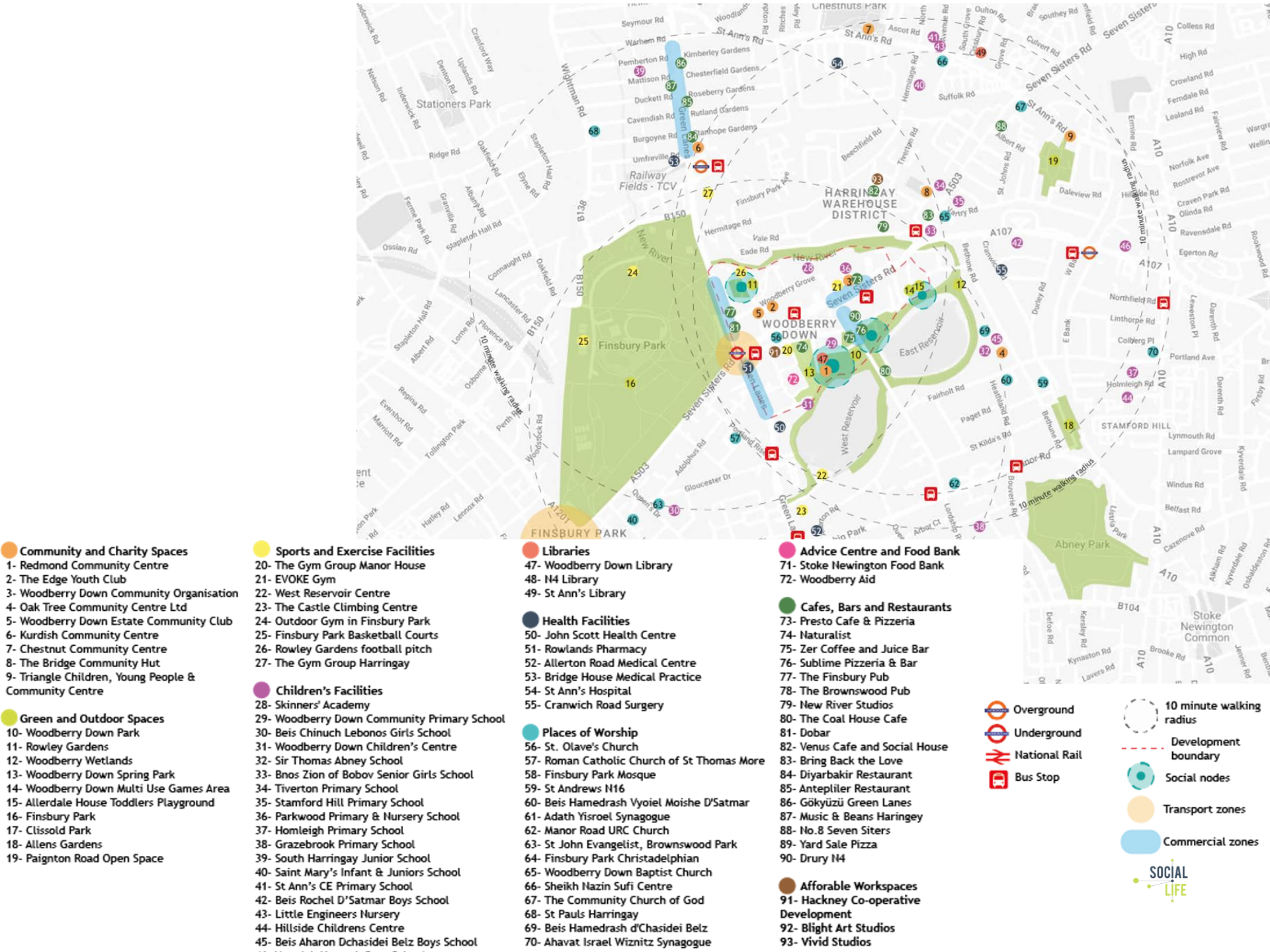
Social infrastructure strategy for Woodberry Down regeneration
Commissioned by Berkeley Homes

Social Life has been commissioned by Berkeley Homes to carry out a baseline and demand assessment of the social infrastructure in and around the Woodberry Down Estate. The insights generated from the research will form the basis for a ground floor strategy for Woodberry Down next phases 4-8 of the masterplan.

Research methods used

- 1 Resident survey
- 2 Interviews
- 3 Youth workshops
- 4 Resident walking interviews
- 5 Observations
- 6 Case study research
- 7 Workshops with delivery partners





- Community and Charity Spaces**
 - 1- Redmond Community Centre
 - 2- The Edge Youth Club
 - 3- Woodberry Down Community Organisation
 - 4- Oak Tree Community Centre Ltd
 - 5- Woodberry Down Estate Community Club
 - 6- Kurdish Community Centre
 - 7- Chestnut Community Centre
 - 8- The Bridge Community Hut
 - 9- Triangle Children, Young People & Community Centre
- Green and Outdoor Spaces**
 - 10- Woodberry Down Park
 - 11- Rowley Gardens
 - 12- Woodberry Wetlands
 - 13- Woodberry Down Spring Park
 - 14- Woodberry Down Multi Use Games Area
 - 15- Allerdale House Toddlers Playground
 - 16- Finsbury Park
 - 17- Clissold Park
 - 18- Allens Gardens
 - 19- Paington Road Open Space

- Sports and Exercise Facilities**
 - 20- The Gym Group Manor House
 - 21- EVOKE Gym
 - 22- West Reservoir Centre
 - 23- The Castle Climbing Centre
 - 24- Outdoor Gym in Finsbury Park
 - 25- Finsbury Park Basketball Courts
 - 26- Rowley Gardens football pitch
 - 27- The Gym Group Harringay
- Children's Facilities**
 - 28- Skinners' Academy
 - 29- Woodberry Down Community Primary School
 - 30- Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School
 - 31- Woodberry Down Children's Centre
 - 32- Sir Thomas Abney School
 - 33- Stn Zion of Bobov Senior Girls School
 - 34- Tiverton Primary School
 - 35- Stamford Hill Primary School
 - 36- Parkwood Primary & Nursery School
 - 37- Homleigh Primary School
 - 38- Grazebrook Primary School
 - 39- South Harringay Junior School
 - 40- Saint Mary's Infant & Juniors School
 - 41- St Ann's CE Primary School
 - 42- Beis Rochel D'Satmar Boys School
 - 43- Little Engineers Nursery
 - 44- Hillside Childrens Centre
 - 45- Beis Aharon Dchasidei Belz Boys School

- Libraries**
 - 47- Woodberry Down Library
 - 48- N4 Library
 - 49- St Ann's Library
- Health Facilities**
 - 50- John Scott Health Centre
 - 51- Rowlands Pharmacy
 - 52- Allerton Road Medical Centre
 - 53- Bridge House Medical Practice
 - 54- St Ann's Hospital
 - 55- Cranwich Road Surgery
- Places of Worship**
 - 56- St. Olave's Church
 - 57- Roman Catholic Church of St Thomas More
 - 58- Finsbury Park Mosque
 - 59- St Andrews N16
 - 60- Beis Hamedrash Vyoel Moishe D'Satmar
 - 61- Adath Yisroel Synagogue
 - 62- Manor Road URC Church
 - 63- St John Evangelist, Brownswood Park
 - 64- Finsbury Park Christadelphian
 - 65- Woodberry Down Baptist Church
 - 66- Sheikh Nazin Sufi Centre
 - 67- The Community Church of God
 - 68- St Pauls Harringay
 - 69- Beis Hamedrash d'Chasidei Belz
 - 70- Ahavat Israel Wiznitz Synagogue

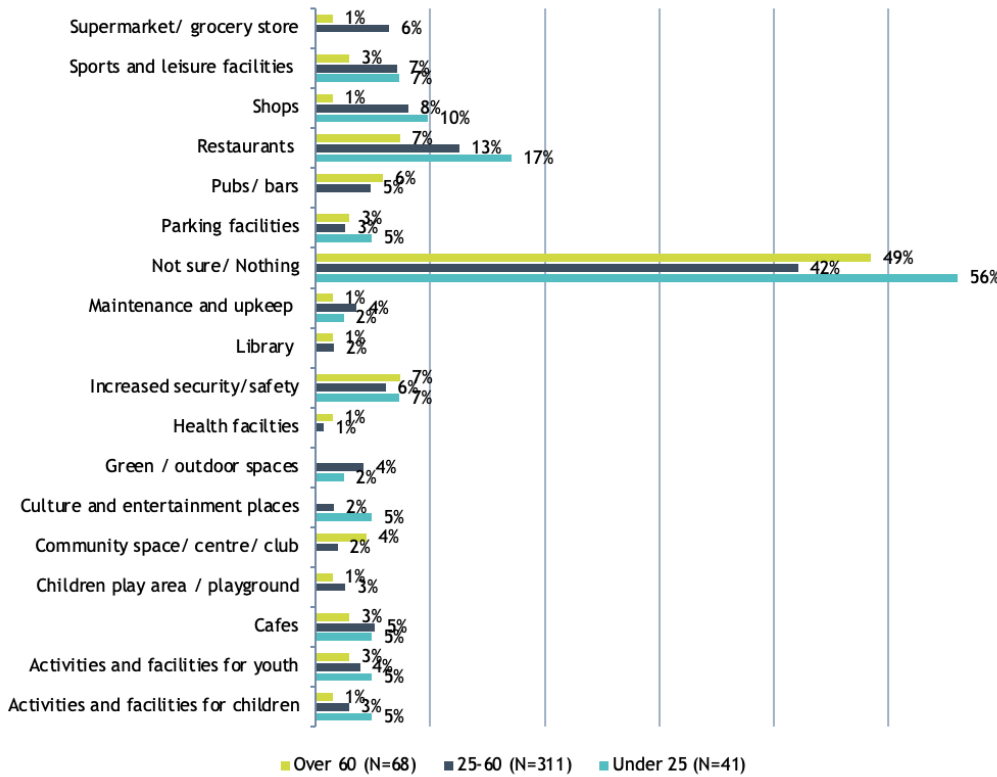
- Advice Centre and Food Bank**
 - 71- Stoke Newington Food Bank
 - 72- Woodberry Aid
- Cafes, Bars and Restaurants**
 - 73- Presto Cafe & Pizzeria
 - 74- Naturalist
 - 75- Zer Coffee and Juice Bar
 - 76- Sublime Pizzeria & Bar
 - 77- The Finsbury Pub
 - 78- The Brownswood Pub
 - 79- New River Studios
 - 80- The Coal House Cafe
 - 81- Dobar
 - 82- Venus Cafe and Social House
 - 83- Bring Back the Love
 - 84- Diyarbakir Restaurant
 - 85- Antepiluzi Restaurant
 - 86- Gökyüzü Green Lanes
 - 87- Music & Beans Harringey
 - 88- No.8 Seven Siders
 - 89- Yard Sale Pizza
 - 90- Drury N4
- Affordable Workspaces**
 - 91- Hackney Co-operative Development
 - 92- Blight Art Studios
 - 93- Vivid Studios

- Overground
- Underground
- National Rail
- Bus Stop
- 10 minute walking radius
- Development boundary
- Social nodes
- Transport zones
- Commercial zones

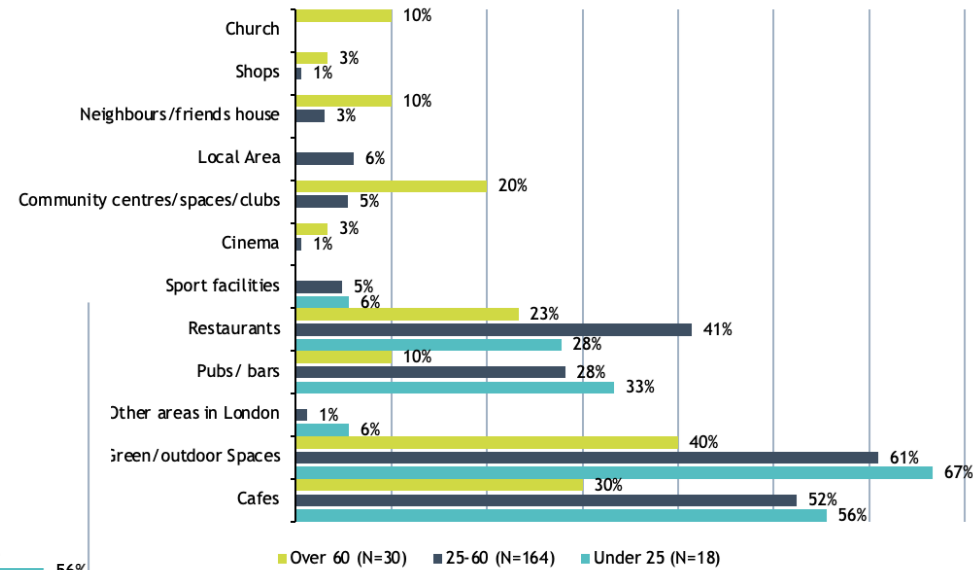


The data

What is missing locally?



Where do you go in the local area to socialise?



“[What’s missing is] studying, like quiet spaces, like libraries, but not libraries...because I feel like in libraries you feel like kind of compelled to stay quiet”

Youth workshop participant

To what end?

Good social infrastructure supports communities to **thrive in the face of change**. It helps people feel a sense of **belonging**, it builds **relationships** between people from different backgrounds, it gives a platform for **agency** and **influence** and it supports people who are struggling with the multiple challenges of everyday life to get by.

We believe that **we can plan, design and manage social infrastructure** for places that are going through change to support existing communities and help people moving into an area feel at home.

Central to this is **building on what already exists** and the **relationships** and networks within each neighbourhood.

Please get in touch if you would like to know more about our work, contact Larissa Begault:

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