

DEVELOPING PARTNER SHIPS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



'WE ARE PART OF THIS COMMUNITY'

"It's an incredibly diverse area; there are so many things going on around us, and it's a huge melting pot for our students to connect with and help inspire their work," says Natalie Brett, and she should know.

Natalie has been Head of College at London College of Communication (LCC) and Pro Vice-Chancellor of University of the Arts London (UAL) since 2013. "In total, I've been at the University 23 years, and I've been working in this borough for about 11 of those," she said. "Many of our staff and students live in Southwark and, out of all six UAL Colleges, we have the largest number of students that actually come from the local area."

LCC itself has been around for even longer, dating back to 1894, and was known as London College of Printing up until 2004. It is part of the fabric of the community in Elephant and Castle, where it has been based since 1963, and its work with local groups, schools, charities, businesses and social enterprises has only served to embed it even further in recent years.

Natalie says: "Before I got here, the College was already doing a lot of outreach with local schools and community groups. For a time, it focused on school outreach as funding was ringfenced for those age groups, but what we've been doing more recently is rebuilding the community work.

"We are a part of this community and we make a major contribution in both education, through our links with local schools, but also economically. There is a lot of talent in our College that can help this area. Our Business and Innovation team have built things up gradually during my time here, and the current team, led by Tim Hoar, is absolutely brilliant. Gill Henderson, who is our Cultural and Communities Partnerships Manager, has helped to generate real momentum and impact through her strategic work with both Southwark Council and local community partners."

Fresh bonds between LCC and its surrounding area have been forged through bespoke partnerships, organised by LCC's Business & Innovation team, which match the creativity of the College's staff and students with local community projects and initiatives that can flourish by tapping into their talents.

Alongside LCC's commitment to social justice, and promoting collaborations between the College and local organisations to help



*Natalie Brett,
Head of College,
London College of
Communication*

Words: Eleanor Merry
Image: LCC

solve society's big challenges, is a determination to support and nurture new generations of graduates entering the creative industries.

"Encouraging local young people to explore their options in the arts and higher education should be something that every university strives to achieve, and it's something we are very good at," says Natalie proudly. "We're really interested in helping students have a better experience and give them that developmental boost."

Some of that comes via LCC's engagement programme, tailoring a more student-led and industry-focused approach to projects. The crown jewel of LCC's engagement activities is the Talent Works programme. "We've got a very diverse group of students, and we want them to use their talent to help the local community, but also ensure they are rewarded for their work," Natalie explains.

A realisation that many community groups and small businesses in Southwark do not have access to high-quality communications skills led the Business & Innovation department to establish Talent Works, which provides paid opportunities for LCC students to work on 'real world' project briefs at no cost to clients.

Over four years, around 170 students have worked on nearly 100 partnerships, providing invaluable experience as they look to expand their portfolios, and delivering fresh approaches and innovative thinking for local organisations. "Talent Works is brilliant," says Natalie. "I receive a lot of positive feedback from students, local groups and businesses, and individuals involved in its projects."

Natalie explains that LCC's approach is informed by its own diversity and vocational ethos. "We are definitely not elitist. We are the most diverse College in the University, and the reason for that is twofold. It is because of where we are; people feel comfortable here and they don't feel intimidated, and the other thing is our subject areas make sense because our course titles are what you see in many job descriptions."

LCC plans to continue playing a vital role in the local community as it prepares to move into a new building in Elephant and Castle. Natalie says: "We want to be a hub that supports and provides resources for graduates and local businesses, and our new building will help us do this. I really believe that we make a big difference to the local area, and we want that to continue."

Being a part of a future-facing university, LCC is committed to continuous evolution, and to best support its students as they prepare for their careers. "I think this is a very unique College," Natalie adds. "We're constantly changing because we're constantly looking at what's going on around us and in industry, and I think we are often a step ahead. People look at us to lead."

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Words: Isabella Colloff-Watson
Images: zapp2photo, LCC

Game over...

Immersive technology is not just for gamers. The ACE IT project, brainchild of London College of Communication and London Southbank University, proves that it has potential to change and influence industries far beyond entertainment

I am not a techie person (despite what my mother said when I taught her how to hashtag) and, until recently, immersive technologies such as virtual (VR) and augmented reality (AR) were more science fiction than reality, relevant only to gamers and the technophiles.

It belonged to the realm of The Matrix, someone adorned with a large clumsy cyborg-like headset, their arms flailing around in mid-air, trying to hit some imaginary enemy that is 'right in front of them'. To me, they were futuristic and inaccessible.

But VR and AR aren't future techs, nor do they exclusively belong to the entertainment industry: they're 'right now' technology. Many are seeing the vast and varied potential of Virtual and Augmented Reality beyond the sphere of hardcore gamers, and beginning to implement and apply the technology to a broad range of sectors, including healthcare, education, training and development and news and journalism to name but a few.

What was, until recently, a fantasy for technologists and gamers alike, is becoming an actual

reality, one that if harnessed correctly, has huge potential. There has never been a better time for businesses to jump on the immersive tech bandwagon and, with the the UK's world-leading immersive tech sector in London, there also seems like no better place.

I was made to see the error in my tech-illiterate ways at the launch of the ACE IT project. A collaboration between London College of Communication and London Southbank University (LSBU), ACE IT (short for Accelerating the Creative Economy through Immersive Tech) aims to fuse together both universities' extensive bank of expertise and facilities to support London's small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups to conceptualise, research and develop their ideas into real immersive products and services.

"We have done this because we know the potential for immersive experiences," Larra Anderson,

Dean of the Screen School at LCC enthuses at the the ACE IT launch, "and we know that they can be developed and adapted across a range of sectors as businesses innovate and fuse together skills in which to reach their audiences."

After a couple of hours at the launch event, it became apparent just how broad the range of industries from which the SMEs, guest speakers and experts hailed; I still spotted the gamers, but they were easily matched if not outnumbered by start-ups looking to harness the technology for ideas worlds away from PlayStations and Xboxes.

One of these was Nina Salomon, founder of Women in VR, who not only was a guest speaker at the launch but also a hopeful applicant for ACE IT support. "I thought ACE IT was interesting because one, it has got different universities that are a part of it so you have access to professionals, and two, it put me in touch with all these innovative people who wanted to industrialise, work in different sectors and do cool new things."

With a background in film, Nina began delving into the world of immersive tech five years ago, with the intention of using Virtual Reality as a tool for social impact storytelling. Since then she has worked with Cornerstone — a partnership charity organisation which is using VR to train foster carers and social workers in how to look after children from broken homes.

She is currently at the forefront of a project using immersive technology for rehabilitation and education in prisons, using VR to incentivise the incarcerated by giving them "the opportunity for 10 minutes not to be in prison. You get to be in space, you get to be in a forest you get to be on the beach, you get to be somewhere else." Her enthusiasm for the power of immersive tech in its new reimagined forms was inspiring.

Finding these people that Nina refers to is exactly what ACE IT aims to do, whether they are

"ACE IT put me in touch with all these innovative people who wanted to industrialise, work in different sectors and do cool new things." Nina Salomon



from the European Regional Development Fund. Talking to hopeful applicants, it became apparent that what ACE IT provides that is so vital to these start ups and SMEs is support that would be next to impossible externally whether that be access to facilities or academic and professional expertise.

"I think a big part of it is the academic side because it's really hard to find and work with academics, especially outside of an educational system. I've tried — not good. You feel like you're on the outside climbing up." George Taktak, one of the applicants for ACE IT, admits.

He shows me his app, called Feeliom, that uses haptics to allow the user to express their emotions more easily, whilst Artificial Intelligence provides continuous insights into the user's well-being. "It's about helping people to express emotions through technology. The idea came from my grandad, he had Alzheimer's and eventually couldn't speak anymore. It made me realise that actually there's way more to our communication than just words."

This struck a chord, as someone whose own grandfather's communication has been affected by illness: the idea that immersive technologies could help someone in such a profound way.

George is not alone in using immersive technologies for healthcare and well-being. Steve Dann, one of the guest speakers at the launch, and founder of Amplified Robot & Medical Realities, explains how immersive technologies can be used to train surgeons on massive scales across different countries all at once. "The great thing about virtual reality is we can transport people into the operating theatre and into the training room."

These projects, and many of the other ideas that will be made a reality by ACE IT, are eye-opening in their innovativeness and creativity, and are using immersive technologies in ways that would be unbelievable to those, like me, who stereotyped VR and AR as gamer-only technologies. They focus on the power immersive technologies have to tell stories, to engage and create empathy, making narrative and interactive experiences, which reach audiences to change lives for the better, be that through art, culture, education or industry.

Not only am I fully converted, but through ACE IT I've realised immersive technologies are here to stay, and with projects like this, supported by universities like mine, they are key to innovation within countless sectors and industries, and change how we live our lives — not just gamers, but everyone. ●

LCC students help bring new Elephant Arcade to life

Words: Selina Lampard
Images: LCC

A collaboration between students at LCC and Southwark Council to help with the design of a new home for neighbourhood businesses in the heart of Elephant and Castle

"One of the things I find really really important for innovation is to have people come in from outside of that box of all the people who already work in technology and gaming and bring in new creative insights."

already operating (or aspiring to) in the immersive tech industry, and regardless of the industry their idea will contribute to, and as Danyl Bartlett, LCC's lead academic on the project and Programme Director of LCC's Moving Image and Digital Arts, put it so succinctly to potential applicants, "We want to talk to you about your ideas. Which is a rare thing for most SMEs and start ups and small companies to hear. We want to talk to you about what you want to do and help you achieve it."

They plan to achieve this by supporting 70 SMEs over three years, with 35 working on one-to-one research collaborations with their teams. They expect 20 of these to add new products and services to their own business or portfolio, and with their invaluable expertise and support, they hope that 10 of their applicants will develop and contribute new products and services to market.

What would normally be exorbitantly expensive for the SMEs is being subsidised with £1.4m of funding for the project, including £721,589



Elephant Arcade is a collection of small new retail spaces that will enable existing traders to relocate from the old Elephant and Castle shopping centre, which is earmarked for demolition.

It occupies a space previously taken up by unused garages on the ground floor of Perronet House, and has been transformed by Turner

Works Architects, whose previous redevelopment projects in south London include Pop Brixton and Peckham Levels.

Since it was announced that the shopping centre is to be replaced by buildings which include a new home for London College of Communication, Southwark Council has been working on plans to



but Turner sees this as presenting opportunities to work creatively within those limitations, rather than kicking against them.

Tom said the most important aspect of this project was “creating a welcoming public asset whilst also respecting and responding to Perronet House’s strong architectural language”.

Looking through archives, they discovered that the early 1960s plans for Perronet House, an 11-storey block of local authority housing, included a parade of shops on the ground floor, so in some ways the new retail space represents a return to this original intention.

When asked if the Elephant Arcade has been utilised to its full potential, Tom added: “Definitely, the retail units are in an arcade arrangement with traders facing each other so the central zone acts as a shared communal space.”

Southwark Council approached LCC’s MA Graphic Branding and Identity course to help create a new vibrant personality for the new arcade. Its students were split into groups and a competition was held in which their ideas were presented.

One of the winners, Vania Jasmine, explained

that working on the Elephant Arcade project provided great exposure for her group and enhanced their employability. “When we won the competition, I knew it would be an exciting opportunity for us,” she said.

Vania and her group took it upon themselves to talk with the traders in the shopping centre in order to understand more of how they are feeling about this change. “From talking to the business owners, they see the shopping centre as their home, especially as some of them have been situated there for over a decade.”

*“This collaboration with LCC has given us access to a pool of talented graphic designers.”
Dan Taylor, Southwark Council*

She said many expressed worries about losing their bond with their loyal customers but, at the same time, are positive that the new space will enable them to maintain those links and also build fresh friendships as Elephant and Castle’s regeneration continues.

Dan Taylor, Southwark Council’s project manager, described how the designs by LCC’s students will be used to help create an inclusive community.

“It will be weaved into the new arcade so that it reads as one community of spaces, using as many channels of communication as possible.

“As LCC neighbours the project and has expertise in graphic design, we were keen to get in touch and explore a possible partnership.”

Dan added that Southwark Council was keen to tap into the creativity and imagination of LCC’s students, who were encouraged to deliver a huge range of ideas and inspiration, rather than simply putting the project out to tender among established graphic design companies.

He added: “This collaboration with the College has given us access to a pool of talented and creative graphic designers.” ●

accommodate long-standing independent traders within the heart of Elephant and Castle as it undergoes major redevelopment.

Elephant Arcade provides 11 new retail units for those small traders to occupy, helping to retain some of the vibrancy and community spirit for which Elephant and Castle is renowned.

It has been developed in partnership with Meanwhile Spaces, which works specifically with independent businesses to breathe new life into neglected urban spaces. The aim of the project was to create an inclusive and dynamic new environment by using the empty garages.

Tom Wright from Turner.Works architects said the practice has its roots in small projects and the development of new community-focused spaces in existing urban locations.

This means that certain decisions are governed by the constraints imposed by an existing building,





The Preface to the Colour Palace

The latest collaboration between LCC and the prestigious Dulwich Picture Gallery was the design of hoardings surrounding the grand summer pavilion. The project was initiated to champion emerging young talent and celebrate London's vibrant architectural scene

June 2019 saw Dulwich Picture Gallery reveal its second summer pavilion. The victor of the public design competition, supported by the London Festival of Architecture, was Pricegore's and Yinka Llori's "Colour Palace" — a riotous, bold architectural structure, gracing the lawns of Sir John Soane's esteemed gallery.

This creation was a testament to artist Llori's cultural heritage, celebrating the synthesis of African and European cultures. Yet, that wasn't the only creation worth attention.

An invitation was presented to students of the design programme at London College of Communication to create murals for the hoardings that were placed around the timber structure during its construction. Supervisor of the project Jane Findlay said: "The hoardings were a reflection of the gallery, echoing the ethos of the pavilion, which is very much about collaboration."

The collaboration began with a tour of the grounds, an invitation to browse the gallery's collections and a briefing about the paid commission. Over 20 pitches were presented to the committee as a celebratory response to the vibrant civic building. From the astounding designs presented, two emerged victorious. These were by India Wilson and Veronica Jones.

India and Veronica approached the challenge with differing techniques. While Veronica's pitch featured illustrations, India's works experimented with graphic design. As noted by Veronica: "The representatives hadn't said 'This is what we want.' We had the freedom to experiment and proffer our own unique design aesthetics."

Words: Ugne Zukauskaitė
Images: Adam Scott, courtesy
of Dulwich Picture Gallery



India's designs celebrated London's vibrant melting pot of cultures. She said: "My murals featured the many eyes of London, coming together, from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures, to look forwards and backwards in time." India's designs commemorated the diverse and eccentric heart that is London.

Veronica drew inspiration from the gallery's collection of Old Master paintings, in particular the depiction of light in Bonavia's and Poussin's mythological artworks. Her creations brought together illustrations based on colourful Ankara paintings, elegant Greek

architecture, alongside the work of Llori. She was likewise inspired by her African heritage, peaking interest in the parallels between African and European cultures.

Both parties took delight in the success of the collaboration, reflecting on the level of professionalism and artistry that emerged from it. Jane Findlay stated: "It was really a challenge and wonderful experience to adopt a different way of thinking and to observe the ways in which the students approached the design."



Yet, no collaboration is without its challenges. The size of the hoardings, their suppliers and the fabric on which the designs were printed on were all subject to change. However, through numerous negotiations and adjustments, the final design was delivered in time and of highest quality.

The outcome of the collaboration was 12 panels, designed to warm people up and indulge their curiosities to explore what is yet to come. Veronica explained: "Our aim was to help bring the broader community together, by being a nod to our wonderfully diverse and multicultural city."

LCC's involvement in the project benefited the gallery by providing insights into approaching a younger audience. Jane Findlay said: "This collaboration was a great way of reflecting upon how younger audiences approach the collection, what the barriers they have are, the ideas that they are bringing to it and how they communicate their thoughts to the broader community."

The collaboration between Dulwich Picture Gallery and LCC's students is the embodiment of what happens when artistic boundaries are transcended and young talent is given a platform to champion their creativity. ●

'The outcome of the collaboration was 12 panels, designed to warm people up, indulge their curiosities to explore what is yet to come.'



No logo?

What happens when a change management company wants a re-brand? MA Graphic Branding and Identity tutor Sunita Yeomans talks about working with high-powered consulting firm 4OC

Located on Cole Street by Borough Station, 4OC Consulting is a fairly young management consultancy company with one goal — to manage change in organisations in the easiest and most efficient way possible.

Created by Paul Murray, in its short existence, it has already built up an impressive resumé and has worked with major organisations such as the NHS, the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London.

The one thing they lacked though, having grown so fast, was time to develop a sleek brand identity themselves, and that's where a chance encounter with London College of Communication came about early this year. "We wanted a complete rebranding of our design," explained managing director James Curran, recalling a conversation with LCC MA Graphic Branding and Identity tutor Sunita Yeomans.

We asked Sunita about the collaboration involving three MA Graphic Branding and Identity students — Serena Fanelli, Lucie Gundlach and Disha Grewal — consulting and pitching ideas about 4OC's brand and what it should connote.

How was the project between 4OC and LCC managed?

"The students had an initial 'getting to know you' meeting. When I joined the team, we held a briefing meeting with 4OC, in which we learnt about the vision and values of the organisation and immersed ourselves in what's important to them and how they work.

"We then spent time as a creative team developing different routes that we felt expressed 4OC, what they stand for, and what they would like their clients to feel when they work together. We shortlisted the routes for a creative presentation at the 4OC offices.

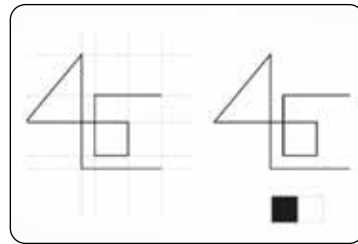
"The entire process was very collaborative — we held a number of meetings with 4OC so they felt ownership of the brand identity as it developed. However, all the designing was done by the students, with formal sign-off meetings at every stage all the way through to approval of the final identity and brand toolkit."

Did the students find the project beneficial?

"I believe they did, for all sorts of reasons. Client projects like this are very different from university projects. Students have to learn how to make collective decisions which can be very difficult when there

Words: Simona Kostova

Images: LCC



is the pressure of responding to the client's feedback (which you may disagree with), imminent deadlines, and differences in creative vision. It's tough, but a great learning experience. I was immensely impressed with all three of the students — and I hope the experience will empower them in the future."

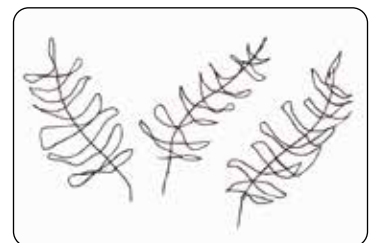
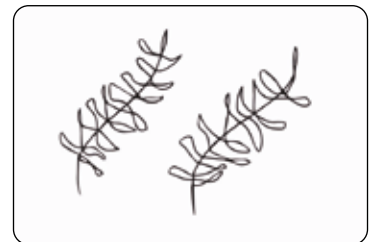
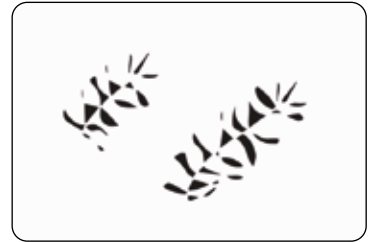
Did they like the ideas: was the project a success?

"Very much so, despite 4OC deciding not to go ahead with the suggested brand identity in the end. During the final 'hand-over' meeting, the 4OC team were delighted with the final designs and offered to provide the students with testimonials expressing how intelligent, creative and professional the LCC team were.

"However, overcoming challenges and difficulties are what makes a design project the best it can be. If everyone agreed on everything all the time, then the designers wouldn't have pushed their creativity to its limits. There will have been very valid reasons for their decision."

What did the client gain from the process, ultimately?

"I believe the 4OC team very much enjoyed the experience, especially discussing the pros and cons of different design routes and how they might influence perceptions of the organisation. Rebranding is a big business decision, and I hope working with LCC will have given 4OC a good insight into the process and how critical branding is to the success of an organisation." ●



Elevating sound arts to a new level

Words: Amy Pateman
Images: The Collective/LCC

Students from LCC's MA Sound Arts course worked on the lifts at a new co-living development aimed at creatives in Canary Wharf

Living in London can be tough, particularly for those people in the creative industries who need both a place to live and space in which to collaborate on projects with others.

The need for both is recognised in a new building in Canary Wharf by The Collective, a property company which specialises in co-living developments, offering creatives the room to both live alongside and share ideas with like-minded individuals on a day-to-day basis.

Its CEO, Reza Merchant, noticed that flexible developments of this nature were in short supply whilst he was studying at the London School of Economics, and became inspired by the concept of co-living and its advantages over traditional flat-shares.

Tenants typically lease ensuite rooms and then also have access to lounges, kitchens and other communal spaces, while amenities such as cleaning services are included in the rent, as are utility charges and wi-fi.

According to Olivia Plummer, The Collective's partnerships manager, the company is "re-imagining renting with co-living communities in the city. It builds and activates spaces designed to connect and inspire."



Tenants are referred to as members, and their monthly bill also includes access to a programme of events — but how to build the notions of creativity and being inspired into the very fabric of the new building?

Olivia said: "In the spirit of artistic collaboration, we asked local creatives — each making waves in their individual fields — to design pieces for our latest Canary Wharf space."

These local creatives were given the option to choose their favourite space within the building and asked to fill it with colour, texture, soul and purpose, all coming together to evoke emotions.

Some of their work even invites visitors to contribute their own ideas, adding a greater sense of community and belonging.

When it came to the lifts at the new building, their visual appearance was designed by the Alexander Owen Architecture practice, with each based on an emotion. Sound was deemed to be an important part of the experience of using the lifts, and a further collaboration was established with London College of Communication.

Olivia explained: "Following a tour of the Canary Wharf space, we asked LCC Sound Arts students to present their ideas in response to the lift artwork and associated emotions. We chose the work of Yifeat Ziv and Marco Tarantino, whose concept included the human voice and heartbeats, leaving space for speech and using visuals as graphic scores."

The idea is that the use of colour and sound will provoke emotion in each elevator, creating an immersive experience for members of The Collective.

The art and sound installations were due to go 'live' in the lifts in January 2020 and feature for an initial period of six months.

Olivia added: "We chose to collaborate with LCC as we wanted to support and work with young talent, giving them a platform and voice. This project has been the first in what we hope will be an ongoing relationship."

The Collective's future projects will continue to involve the creative arts. Depending on location, demographics and scale, it plans to look at supporting all aspects of design and creativity, from spoken word to 3D printing and more immersive installations. ●



Showcasing 'the Elephant's' unheralded cultural scene

Creative Elephant, staged across five summer days, highlighted the lively arts and cultural scene in Elephant and Castle, supported by London College of Communication

Words: Oliva Quebrada-Abbot
Images: Nadia Oshitudo



In the early 20th Century, Elephant and Castle was known as 'the Piccadilly of south London' — an area to which people would flock to shop and be entertained. It further bustled with activity with the opening of the Bakerloo line, making it a major transport hub.

As time went by, however, 'the Elephant' became a less desirable part of town, and one with which the word 'culture' was rarely associated, despite the area's thriving, if low-key, arts scene.

As Elephant and Castle undergoes another period of change and transformation, the summer of 2019 saw several creative organisations come together, along with London College of Communication, to showcase the area's rich but perhaps under-appreciated cultural dynamic.

From 19–23 June, more than 4,000 people enjoyed a range of shows and performances staged by 13 creative local institutions. One venue was the Blue Elephant Theatre, where audiences enjoyed *Ironing Out*, a production exploring the complexities of being a young migrant in a big city.

The show was performed as part of Refugee Week by Alleyway Radical Theatre, a collective of artists from all around the world. It was 2014 when Alleyway Radical Theatre formed, creating, rehearsing, and performing in various old buildings in south London. They were busy putting on screenings, benefit parties, or campaigns against gentrification in the area. Many of their old rehearsal spots have since been demolished, illustrating an interesting comparison between real life and *Ironing Out*.

The play centres itself in an ironing shop, a neutral location where people from all walks of life come together and interact by reminiscing, dreaming, searching, or ironing a shirt, all without fear of judgement or solitude.

Cast member Sara El Sheekh said: "*Ironing Out* is a play about exile and community; it draws on the experiences of the cast, who are migrants, refugees, or Londoners who have felt the brunt of austerity and gentrification. We chose to set the play in Elephant and Castle because many of the

cast members have lived there or in surrounding areas and we felt that it was representative of the London we wished to portray."

This idea of community radiates throughout Elephant and Castle — it's a mentality so many local residents share, and Alleyway Radical Theatre wove this sentiment in their production. This sense of togetherness also holds true of the Blue Elephant Theatre, which Sara describes as "a local theatre with community at its heart"

She added: "Since our early days, we [Alleyway Radical Theatre] have had a good relationship with the Blue Elephant Theatre; they have been very supportive of us as an emerging company."

It meant a lot to Sara and the rest of the cast that the theatre wanted to give them the platform to showcase *Ironing Out*, giving the group an opportunity to reach out to new audiences as part of the Creative Elephant programme.

Niamh de Valera, executive director and co-artistic director for Blue Elephant Theatre, said it is "always keen to make more connections in our local area".

She added: "It's really flattering to be thought of as an integral part of the creative community. So often you're working alone, late at night, wondering if you'll ever get all the work done and if anyone will

"It's really flattering to be thought of as an integral part of the creative community... to be seen like that helps to keep us motivated." Niamh de Valera

care if you do, so being seen like that helps to keep us motivated."

Niamh added that the enthusiasm of LCC's Cultural and Communities Partnerships Manager Gill Henderson and her team played a key role in making Creative Elephant happen. "Gill is so passionate and keen to reach out. People like that are brilliant to work with," she said.

Creative Elephant shone a well-deserved spotlight on these creative organisations, and delivered an initiative that underlined their place in the local community. When asked to describe Elephant and



'In the eyes of many of its residents, Elephant and Castle is what London is all about. It's a place where diverse groups come together to share common causes'

Castle in 10 words or less, Sara and Niamh both used "supportive." Other words included eclectic, diverse, surprising and resilient.

Elephant and Castle is host to so many forms of art, entertainment, education, food and culture that its lack of appeal in the eyes of many Londoners is certainly unfair. Creative Elephant gave the area a chance to collectively challenge any negative perceptions.

In the eyes of many of its residents, Elephant and Castle is what London is all about. It's a place where diverse groups come together and share common causes; putting on parties, events, plays, exhibitions, and so much more in a host of community spaces.

In some ways, this made it easy for Creative Elephant to showcase what Elephant and Castle has to offer. It was all already there — and it's amazing — it just needed someone to shine a light on it. ●



Reconnecting Grange Primary School with its community

Words: De'Anna Watkis
Images: Grange Primary School and Sunita Yeomans

Students from LCC's MA Graphic Branding and Identity course helped a local school to raise its profile and forge fresh relationships with pupils and parents

What does a school do when it needs to spread the word about a fresh chapter in its existence, thanks to a multi-million-pound investment in new facilities?

In the case of Grange Primary School in Bermondsey, the solution to this challenge came via the creativity of three students from London College of Communication who helped to give the school a fresh image to go with its re-build and refurbishment.

Staff and children at the 388-pupil school, rated 'Good' by

Ofsted, collaborated with the postgraduate trio from LCC's MA Graphic Branding and Identity course to design and produce captivating and distinctive materials for the rebranding campaign.

Hand-picked by project leader Sunita Yeomans, Sara Norrbom, Oliver Young and Harry Chen set out on a mission to create head-turning waves in the local community, producing a prospectus, social media content — including the hashtag 'GROWWITHGRANGE' — posters and animations.

The partnership came about after a six-year £8m programme of renovations and upgrades at the school, transforming its Victorian-style aesthetic into a state-of-the-art seat of local learning for the great minds of tomorrow.

The aim of the relaunch was to attract interest from families looking for the right school for their children, but also to reconnect with existing pupils and their parents, making everyone connected feel proud to be part of the Grange Primary School family.

Real students, real teachers and real parents from a wonderful multicultural mixture of backgrounds were placed at the heart of the campaign. Pupils warmed the hearts of the community by sharing their hopes and dreams for the future, while their families spoke of their trust in Grange Primary's teaching and support teams.

Headteacher Diana Valcheva said she viewed the rebranding as part of a wider effort to build a vibrant school community. She wants her school to offer a unique learning experience catering to all levels of primary learning, closing gaps where they exist and ensuring all children are given the best possible chance to succeed in a caring and supportive environment.

This involves Diana and her staff working closely with parents and students from less privileged backgrounds, providing the help and support they need, and ensuring that Grange Primary is the right place for their children.

The campaign was highly praised by Diana, who admitted she had some doubts initially. "At the beginning, I was unsure about how it could work, but the students from LCC really did a good job. Their level of responsibility and commitment was quite endearing to me."



Project leader Sunita said: "The majority of the campaign's success is due to the participation of real families and the very welcoming staff members within the school."

Since the relaunch of the school's identity, Grange Primary has seen a rise in the number of parents enrolling their children in its classes. Families have relayed their appreciation for and trust in the school since both its buildings and brand were given an overhaul.

The collaboration gave true meaning to every sense of the word 'community', bringing parents, children and teachers together in partnership with LCC. It was also truly meaningful for Sunita and her team. "We found some really good friends at Grange Primary School, and the effect the campaign had on the community was truly rewarding for us," she said.

Sunita added: "It was a phenomenal experience, and the feedback we received from Diana was amazing."

Diana said: "We were very pleased with the outcome of the project. We've learnt so much about ourselves and our children. Our vision and aspirations were captured really well in the campaign, and the final outcome reflected that." ●

Tackling loneliness one 'Hi!' at a time in Elephant and Castle

How to keep people connected in an area of London being transformed by change?

Say 'hello' to Elephant Says Hi!

Elephant Says Hi! is an outreach programme that encourages local people to connect with each other through the 'places and spaces' in Elephant and Castle.

One of the main aims of the initiative is to help tackle isolation in the city, by getting people to welcome, support and embrace new and existing members of the local community.

Elephant Says Hi! stemmed from the Loneliness Lab sprint held in October 2018. The Loneliness Lab was co-founded by developer Lendlease and sustainable development champion Collectively and supported by numerous groups including the British Red Cross and Southwark Council.

Co-founders Liza Makarov and Jenny Sawyer met on the project and formed the idea of ESH!. They have been working to deliver the ambition of 'creating the most welcoming place in London' ever since. The initial seed funding to get this initiative off the ground was provided by Lendlease (and ESH! is also looking to make applications for funding from other sources).

Liza said she and Jenny were "interested in the social issues and what we can do about it," She added: "We also understood that it was really interesting that most of the people that we talked to would go elsewhere in London to do certain things, rather than necessarily stay within the area. Then we looked at how can we then create more of a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood."

"We really enjoyed working with LCC's students: they gave creative input, challenged us, and gave real thought to the purpose of the project" — innovation consultant Liza Makarov

London College of Communication came onboard as a partner, with its students helping with the website design and branding for Elephant Says Hi! Liza said the the project genuinely aspired to engage with the local community, not getting people to acknowledge what is going on in their neighbourhood, but to really get them meeting new people and supporting local businesses and organisations.

In September 2019, Elephant Says Hi! threw a street party which brought around 200 local residents together, getting them to interact whilst eating, drinking, mingling and enjoying the party atmosphere. The event was hailed as a big success, and similar ones are planned to maintain the project's momentum.

Liza Makarov said: "Through the campaign, we are getting more visibility through our website, brand identity and our members. I think it's sort of small scale; at the moment, it's more about raising awareness and making sure people know what we're doing."

Liza believes Elephant Says Hi! is an important initiative for the local Elephant and Castle area and community. The pace of change is fast, and how neighbourhoods evolve, respect their past, and link to their surrounding areas is an ongoing topic in many London locations.

LCC is involved in that conversation, and was keen to support this project with creative input from its staff and students. Karol Tylke and Justas Benaravičius, both studying BA (Hons) Information and Interface Design, became embedded into the Elephant Says Hi! team.



Words: Adilla Khan
Images: Elephant Says Hi!

"We really enjoyed working with LCC's students: they gave creative input, challenged us, and gave real thought to the purpose of the project. Through their enthusiasm and energy, they have helped us to shape the project both from a visual and conceptual perspective." Liza Marakov

Karol said: "I was responsible for creating branding identity of the project, and Justas handled user interface and experience design of the website. The logo I created is a combination of a map pin and an elephant silhouette, while the identity consists of several vibrant colours and dynamic patterns. I also created brand guidelines and a couple of layouts for some printed materials like leaflets and post-cards".

The whole project took the students around four months to complete. It wasn't without its stressful moments, but both agreed that they thoroughly enjoyed it. Justas said: "We developed an interactive map using Google API, which we coded on the Wix platform. It was a fun and demanding project."

Liza Makarov said: "We really enjoyed working with LCC's students: they gave creative input, challenged us, and gave real thought to the purpose of the project. Through their enthusiasm and energy, they have helped us shape the project both from a visual and conceptual perspective."

"We have had great feedback on the simple, friendly and impactful branding and web design that we hope will help us create great engagement with Elephant Says Hi! and take the project further." ●



Words: Kayley Stanbridge
Images: Imperial War Museum

On the trail of attracting visitors to the Imperial War Museum

Imperial War Museum curator Vikki Hawkins and LCC MA User Experience Design student Yae Jin discuss the challenges of creating a family 'walk' through warfare

Of all the major museums in London, the Imperial War Museum may just be the most overlooked on a list of attractions for both foreign tourists and British visitors.

A pair of huge 15-inch naval guns from a First World War battleship help to give it an imposing entrance, but the museum's location in Lambeth — on the south side of the river and some distance away from many of the capital's main cultural attractions — is not ideal.

Then there is the sensitive topic of its main subject matter — military conflict. So, how do you

attract people to the museum in the first place, and then make walking through exhibitions about warfare, death and tragedy a positive, engaging and thought-provoking experience?

To help achieve these aims, the Imperial War Museum (IWM) decided to tap into the creativity of MA User Experience Design tutors and students from its near-neighbour, London College of Communication.

User experience design refers to 'the judicious application of certain user-centered design practices, a highly contextual design mentality, and use of certain methods and techniques...to produce cohesive, predictable, and desirable effects in [people]... All so that the effects produced meet the user's own goals and measures of success and enjoyment, as well as the objectives of the providing organisation.'

"User experience design is about designing better experiences for people."
Yae Jin, MA User Experience Design student



It was originally coined by Don Normal, former vice-president of the advanced technology group at Apple, who explained: "I invented the term because I thought human interface and usability were too narrow. I wanted to cover all aspects of the person's experience with the system including industrial design, graphics, the interface, the physical interaction, and the manual."

LCC student Yae Jin puts it more simply: "User experience design is about designing better experiences for people."

During her Masters course at the LCC, Yae Jin was among four MA UX Design students selected by the Imperial War Museum to take part in a paid six-week project called 'Family Trail'.

Part of the IWM's new Second World War galleries, which are set to open to the public in 2021, the Family Trail is series of activities placed throughout the galleries for visitors to interact with and learn through in a more engaging, hands-on way.

The project involved the students visiting the museum once a week in order to develop prototypes for those activities and user test their designs on members of the public.

The exhibition is focused on stories and family, showcasing the different roles ordinary people undertook during the war. Each of the MA students used a variety of approaches to plan, design and test the trail. Methods including storyboarding, UX speed dating, coding, and the use of visual or audio elements to enhance the visitor experience.

Vikki Hawkins, the IWM curator involved in the process, explained: "We are going to make sure that our audiences have the ability to find information in a number of ways, and that could be traditionally through the object that we display... it could be through audio or film, or photographs.

"Another way we have found to be really successful is through having family trails within our museum, with elements positioned throughout the gallery spaces where families or groups can interact in a more tactile way to find out information."

"We have based the ones that are going to be in the Second World War galleries on people and roles, and what we wanted to do was work with students at UAL to help us develop what those activities could be for our audiences — to make them as user-friendly and interesting as possible."

Yae Jin said: "I learnt a lot of design research methods and just how to speak — to really speak — to people and to learn what people want and need. Every single person has a different life, a different experience, and we should try to design for each and every experience."

"This was especially helpful for the Imperial War Museum project because I had the mindset that I am not designing just for a five-year-old boy, I am designing for 12-year-old girls who hate history, and a 40-year-old man who brings their son every month. Everyone has their own story, everyone has their own mind, and through the course I have learnt how to design for different backgrounds."

At the beginning of the project, Yae interviewed members of the public to find out more about what kind of 'audience' the museum attracts, and explore what they want from their visit.

She said: "I think that because it is a war museum, it's not one of those 'easy' places that lots of people go; it's not like the Natural History Museum or Science Museum. At least one person [in a visitor group] has to be interested in war; it could be a kid, the dad, the mum, the grandma. I think that's why the museum created the family trail to bring in more visitors who are part of families, because at the moment its very educational. They are doing this project to attract more people to the museum."

UX design is not a new phenomenon among museums and galleries, and one ahead of the game — and not far from the IWM — is the Tate Modern. One of its most successful uses of UX design is through its long-standing partnership with Hyundai Motors — The Hyundai Commission.

It is through this project that the Tate has been able to fund an array of exciting, thought-provoking and interactive displays in its giant Turbine Hall exhibition space. One of the most notable displays was 'One, Two, Three, Swing!' by artist collective SUPERFLEX, which encouraged people to

interact and swing in pairs or threes on orange swings around the Hall.

Another installation, created by artist Tania Bruguera, consisted of a large heat-sensitive floor on which visitors could interact with each other to reveal a hidden portrait of a young man who left Syria to come to London. Their pressure on it also produced low-frequency sounds to create an unsettling energy, producing tears and creating what the artist referred to as 'forced empathy' — her response to the use of emotion in politics.

"We realised that, by working with people that hadn't had the same relationship with museums, we were getting some really fresh and exciting ideas." Vikki Hawkins, IWM curator

The UX approach towards the IWM's Second World War galleries, using the Family Trail, is an exciting step towards achieving its goal of bringing in more visitors and focusing on people and personal experiences.

Vikki, the curator of the new galleries, said: "It was such a good opportunity to be able to work with designers early in their careers, who are experimental, who might not see the museum as the usual place where their work could be exhibited, so to speak. Building that collaboration, showing the students what we do, but also getting those fresh eyes and fresh perspectives, was really important for us."

"Sometimes, when you work with the bigger design companies, they know how museums work and they know the types of activities that are popular. You can get very similar types of styles [of design solutions], but we realised that, by working with people that hadn't had the same relationship with museums, we were getting some really fresh and exciting ideas."

"I think it's really important that we can encourage people [to visit], especially locally ...it's great that the IWM is so close to the university, and it was such a simple collaboration, but so effective." ●



Supporting local school pupils through arts and design

A collaboration between LCC's Outreach team and Southwark Arts Network encourage local school pupils to envisage their future educational path through the Insights programme

Every year, London College of Communication's Insights team works with schools in Southwark to engage with pupils who are exploring their options and deciding whether to go to university.

They are supported earlier on in their journey through the education system by the Insights core and pre-16 offering which delivers workshops and gives access to LCC exhibitions for students and teachers in the local area.

The focus is on engaging collaborations which help to develop the skills and experience of young people — both those with existing ambitions to work in the creative industries, but also those who might not have considered it as an option.

"We want to stand out to students, to show who we are and that we are here," explained Susannah Rees, LCC Outreach practitioner.

Through the Insights programme, the Out-

reach team's work with Southwark Arts Network is designed to help build confidence amongst those young people — some of whom may be the first in their families to consider going to university — to explore the worlds of arts and design.

This year, the project also included a focus on primary school teachers, allowing them to strengthen their skills through a programme of Continuing Professional Development. The workshops, offered via the Southwark Arts Network, were successful and influenced the LCC Outreach team to develop further projects involving the local community.

One of the most successful of these was the Local Heroes Project, and Susannah said: "We wanted something that had meaning to young students and the community."

In July 2019, a variety of primary schools around the area were visited by LCC staff and students to collaborate on the theme of 'Local Heroes'.

Susannah worked alongside the teachers and young pupils in the design of a series of artworks which showcased who their local heroes, and an exhibition was staged at LCC to highlight the work produced.

Over 600 pupils participated in the Local Heroes Project, and many of them visited LCC to see their work on show across the exhibition's three days. Susannah said: "We had 11 or 12 amazing pieces of work being displayed."

After receiving positive feedback, Insights will continue next year focusing on the theme of community and mapping the local area.

Another highlight for the Insights team came when they worked with Angel Oak Academy in

"Through arts and design, we can engage with students and show them what LCC is about."
Susannah Rees



Peckham. Staff at the school were encouraged to join art and design workshops, and Susannah recalls: "One of the teachers did a photography session through the CPD programme but didn't have the right equipment, so instead, used iPads to produce photographs with natural lighting. These turned out to be really good and helped their confidence."

LCC Outreach practitioner Gavin Waters said: "Many schools do not have the funding and money to send their teachers on this professional training programme, so they can attend it for no cost during their free time. At LCC, it is important for us to engage with local schools as they are such an important part of our community."

The work of the Insights team has built a rewarding symbiotic relationship between LCC, its staff and students, local schools and the Southwark Arts Network.

Pupils who develop a deeper interest in arts and design, and working in the creative industries, can then take advantage of further support from the Insights programme from the age of 16. It is open for students to sign up during school holidays to take part in additional workshops which help them to develop their portfolios in readiness for applying to university courses.

Gavin added: "Everyone is invested in the process, and we are there to support students and help with applications." ●



Words: Haajira Khan
Images: Simeon Sapaiev





Words: Eleanor Wigley
 Images: Art Institute of Chicago, The National Museum of Art Architecture & Design, Norway and Dulwich Picture Gallery

Art and Gen Z: an LCC-Dulwich Picture Gallery collaboration

An immersive exhibition at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, focusing on the works of Harald Sohlberg, was produced with the help of students from three LCC courses



How do art galleries and museums keep up the with times and ensure they remain relevant in today's digital age?

Interactivity is one of the directions they can pursue when it comes to reaching out to a generation which never switches off. Audio and visual stimulus is already used to good effect in many cultural institutions, but the very latest technology is creating new ways in which to engage with younger audiences.

Elements such as enhanced user experience and virtual reality are beginning to feature in the world of exhibitions, and students from three courses at London College of Communication worked with Dulwich Picture Gallery in south-east London on one such project.

The gallery commissioned them to help create an immersive experience celebrating the works of Norwegian artist Harald Sohlberg (1869-1935), whose work was going on display in an exhibition entitled 'Painting Norway'. Rosie Allen, from LCC's Business & Innovation team said the initial brief was simply to 'deliver a project in response to Norwegian artist Harald Sohlberg'. Students from LCC's MA Virtual Reality course were approached and asked to pitch their ideas, coming up with the

concept of an immersive experience for visitors. Like many other programmes at LCC, the main focus of the course is to 'give as many students real-life [work] experience as they can' whilst giving them the opportunity to make industry contacts.

Undergraduates from BA (Hons) User Experience Design and BA (Hons) Sound Arts & Design were then introduced to the collaboration to further develop the creative media needed to deliver a truly enveloping and captivating sense of participation in the Sohlberg exhibition.

The aim of the evening, dubbed 'Norwegian Nights' and including live music and guest speakers, was to be a celebration of Nordic culture. Sohlberg's art offers representations of the harsh contrasts of the Norwegian landscapes: beautiful, bright summer days juxtaposed with bleak, bitter winter evenings.

To complement the 100-piece collection of his work on show, VR was a fitting medium through which to mesmerise guests and submerge them

'Elements such as enhanced user experience and virtual reality are beginning to feature in the world of exhibitions.'



in his artistic vision. Collaboration is one of the cornerstones of LCC's identity, and this one gave students an exceptional opportunity to work with a prestigious cultural establishment and gain 'real world' experience.

Ana-Despina Tudor, LCC's MA Virtual Reality course leader, explained: "Our students had a live brief with a hard deadline, so they learned a lot about time and resource management. We applied agile software development frameworks to manage the project, and enjoyed a fruitful partnership with BA (Hons) Sound Arts. Sound is very important in VR, and through this collaboration, students created truly immersive experiences."

The project proved to be mutually beneficial, and Dulwich Picture Gallery is keen to develop this working relationship on other ventures. Jane Findlay, head of learning at DPG, said: "The students required some guidance, but the gallery was happy to offer them support and help, so any challenges we faced together were quickly resolved."

Jane described Sohlberg's work as having themes of "symbolism, colour and spirituality" which encouraged the idea of using more interactive media to really communicate these motifs. The students valued the experience as an opportunity to take a first step into professional practice.

Ana-Despina added: "As a course, we are definitely interested in collaborating with other courses again, and to work with external clients such as Dulwich Picture Gallery." ●



Words: Megan Hynes
 Images: Alex Mertekis at Mundial and Sam Diss

Taking an ethical stand against work placement exploitation

London College of Communication is determined to fight for fairer treatment of students working in industry placements

Of all companies which currently offer internship programmes 'almost half report offering unpaid placements', according to educational charity The Sutton Trust.

Is this hindering diversity within industry by excluding entire classes of people, particularly within the creative world? London College of Communication is looking to lead by example by offering a paid placement scheme that benefits both its students and the creative sector.

UCAS reports show that in 2019, 34% of home students at the University of the Arts London — of which LCC is part — fall into the lower groupings on the socio-economic spectrum, referring to those whose families may not have the financial capa-

bility to support them or any connections with the creative industries served by UAL.

Due to London having the highest private sector rents in the UK, many working-class students struggle to fund their basic living costs, and accepting full-time unpaid placement opportunities is almost impossible.

Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are also more likely to work long hours in part-time jobs alongside their university degree; another factor which makes unwaged internships harder for them to contemplate.

Research by the Sutton Trust shows that 40% of students who did not complete a placement said it was because they could not afford it, or were unable to move to a city to take up the opportunity, highlighting the financial struggle faced by many from lower-income backgrounds.

The placement scheme at LCC aims to help students in securing paid internship opportunities, on either a long or short-term basis, during their university degree.

The programme strives for inclusivity by only offering placements which are paid to allow students from all socio-economic backgrounds to take advantage of the opportunities available. Sarah Sheikh, Placements Manager at LCC, said no-one should be compelled to work for nothing as a trade-off for gaining industry experience.

She added: "This is not just about students — anybody and everybody should get paid for their work because how are people supposed to live? How are you going to eat?"

Morgan Allan, a BA (Hons) Graphic Branding and Identity student at LCC, landed a position as a designer at the quarterly football magazine *Mundial* as part of the placement year on the Diploma in Professional Studies (DPS) currently offered by the college.

What are the benefits of a DPS year?

"I would highly recommend DPS. I have learnt more in the three or four months I've been working in the industry than I had in the previous two years of uni. I have learnt a lot, working how the industry works and seeing it from the inside has really given me an advantage when it comes to getting a job on the other side."

"I would not have been able to take an unpaid placement; I'm very lucky that Mundial value me as a creative and so they pay me properly." Morgan Allan



How have Mundial responded to your design role?

Mundial have responded really positively, they offered me part-time and then full-time work. I had a review last week, and they basically said that I'm doing really well, that they are very impressed with the fact that I can fit in well, and that I can do the stuff that I can do at the age of 20.

How did you get your foot in the door?

"I went to one of their launch events back in February, introduced myself and from that got work experience. They liked me from the work experience so then they asked me to work part-time and then this year in summer, I was working full-time and kept on from there. Not really the most traditional route."

How have you benefitted from the DPS scheme?

"I have benefitted immeasurably from the DPS scheme, as in my practice as a designer has improved dramatically — and not just the technical skills. Before I started at Mundial I had a basic understanding of InDesign, now I'm pretty much fluent. But also, with the way I think about design and being in a real world setting has informed my practice in a positive way. I do photography and styling, part of my job is also working with logistics and stuff."

What support have you received from LCC while on your placement?

"I've been really impressed with the support that I've got. Initially I was apprehensive because I thought the uni would want me to be doing lots of different stuff, but my tutor Chris, he's proper sound, and he says that as long as I keep growing as a designer and as a creative, improving personal equity... Even if I didn't have Mundial, I receive constant e-mails from [DPS co-ordinator] Sarah Temple saying 'there's this internship or this internship, or this competition you can enter!'"

Would you have been able to take a placement that was unpaid?

"No, I would not have been able to take an unpaid placement opportunity, I'm very lucky that even though Mundial is a small company they value me as a creative and so they pay me properly. I don't have the money to be able to work full-time unpaid. I'd have to work in a pub which would be horrible." ●

Combatting loneliness at Christmas for senior citizens

Tackling loneliness and isolation among older people through tea parties... How LCC teamed up with Posh Club to stage festive events for local senior citizens



Words: Tamay Aldemir
Images: Unai Mateo Lopez,
LCC and Posh Club

Old age can be very lonely. More than two million people in the UK over the age of 75 live by themselves. Some have little or no family; many go for days and weeks without speaking to friends or neighbours.

In an ageing society, the issue of social isolation is only likely to worsen, but there are charities, community groups and other organisations determined to tackle the problem.

One of these is Posh Club, which bills itself as 'a glamorous performance and social club for older people'. It is especially keen to get those living alone to come along to its events, stating on its website that it 'extends a particularly warm welcome to those attending on their own and will ensure that you are supported to feel comfortable and included at all times.'

For two consecutive years, Posh Club partnered with London College of Communication to stage Christmas parties in LCC's studio space at the Elephant and Castle shopping centre.

Christmas is a time of year which can emphasise feelings of loneliness and isolation for people of all ages. Yet, as families come together and friends celebrate the festive season as an excuse

to get a spiced latte from their local Starbucks, senior citizens living alone are often left with shadows of the past — memories of loved ones who are no longer here.

Posh Club was started off in a front room in Crawley by two siblings, Annie and Simon Casson, for their mum who was feeling a bit lonely after moving to Sussex from vibrant Hackney in London.

Simon recalled: "For a special treat, Annie decided to hold a tea party in her front room for mum and her 90-something neighbours Esther and Frieda — to serve them nice sandwiches and cakes

'Groups such as Posh Club not only aim to combat issues related to mental health and isolation: they also help communities maintain their sense of identity.'



on fancy crockery. The ladies had fun chatting and eating and being served like they were important guests. They discussed their more social early years before they were married, and especially the dances and variety shows."

From these small beginnings, Posh Club was able to expand to a local church hall, and is active in five different locations across London and the South East.

Simon Casson, who acts as a producer for Posh Club's performances, said the aim is always to stage its events in "in the heart of the community, in elegantly-transformed church halls and other grass roots spaces". That is why LCC's space, in

'The aim for Posh Club is to always to stage its events in the heart of the community.'

the shopping centre, just across the road from the college, lent itself to being a great venue for Posh Club's festive treats.

Posh Club's parties can involve drag artists, flapper dancers, a 'Black Elvis' and even an 80-year-old American comedian. At the start of the event, everyone is welcomed by a host and taken to their table where they are served afternoon tea. Entertainment for the guests has been curated in such a way that anyone would like to be a part of this swanky senior citizen club.

Despite many of the 100+ guests arriving alone, people quickly become acquainted, with laughter and conversations being sparked almost immediately. Posh Club gives elderly people a chance to meet people from all walks of life and create new friendships, with the possibility of staying in touch after the event is over.

Groups such as Posh Club not only aim to combat issues related to mental health and isolation: they also help communities to maintain their sense of identity. With Posh Club events now being held in Crawley, Hackney, Hastings, Brighton and Elephant and Castle, why not volunteer? It could really help someone. ●







Words: Holly King
 Images: LCC, Two Fifty One
 and Grainge Photography

The art of property development

A photography competition for students at LCC aimed to tie a new residential building in Elephant and Castle to the area's rich culture and history

Standing tall on Southwark Bridge Road at 41 storeys, Two Fifty One is a building which can be said to encapsulate the current debate over gentrification in London.

For critics, it is evidence of an unwelcome trend which is turning certain central districts of the city into enclaves for the wealthy. For others, it is a bold architectural statement which symbolises its constantly-evolving nature.

Nowhere is this change more evident than in Elephant and Castle, where the demolition of blighted social housing estates and arrival of several shiny new residential schemes and mixed-use developments has undoubtedly altered the area's former character.

The developers of Two Fifty One approached this potentially thorny issue from two directions. The first, more obvious one was to incorporate a number of shared ownership properties into the new building, meaning people can get onto the property ladder there by purchasing a minimum 25% share of an apartment.

The second, more subtle method was to incorporate Elephant and Castle's rich culture and history into the development — which also includes an adjoining eight-storey commercial building — through the medium of art.

A competition was devised in which BA and MA Photography students at London College of



Communication collaborated with Two Fifty One on creating art to be exhibited in the building's communal areas. LCC's programme director for photography Dr Christopher Stewart, tutor Harry Hardie, a former picture editor at The Times, and Paula Lent, director of Artmasters Design Solutions all helped to organise the competition.

Paula Lent said the aim was to achieve "the integration of art with the building and its occupants, having a cultural and social link with the surrounding areas".

A total of 27 students took part, commissioned to create fine art photographs to be displayed in Two Fifty One and working to brief which asked them to: 'Produce an unusual and thought provoking art exhibition and photography installation to support and promote Elephant and Castle as an arts hub in Central London'.

They created an exciting array of work, ranging from Briony Mitchell's documentation of Elephant and Castle's pubs and Ruby Steele's humorous shots of elephants roaming the streets of south London, to more abstract offerings from Jekatarina Ignatijeva, consisting of vibrant multi-layered photographs of the area's architecture.

After their completion, the students' work was exhibited at Elephant and Castle's lively food court and entertainment space, Mercato Metropolitan, as part of a launch event for Two Fifty One,

with promotional postcards of their photographs produced to give to attendees. The winners of the competition were announced during the event, with William Scheepers' series of film noir stills, which captured the building's construction by moonlight, coming out on top.

This earned him the grand prize of his photos being used to decorate the penthouse apartments, along with four runner-ups including Dorota Beau-Ingle's melancholia photographs, created using dying flower displays collected from local flower sellers.

All students were paid to have their work placed within the building, decorating the hallways, entrances and communal spaces.

The competition's judging panel included the editor of Bonhams Magazine Lucinda Bredin, the director of the Contemporary Art Society, Caroline Douglas and the chair of the Ethics Advisory Group of the Royal Academy, Brendan Finucane.

Along with the students' work, local street artist Pegasus was also commissioned to create art for the building, namely his well-known graffiti art of silent movie star Charlie Chaplain, who grew up in the area.

According to Artmasters Design Solutions, there has been an overwhelming response from the residents of Two Fifty One to the work displayed, with them being "very loyal fans of the artwork of their own floors". ●



Words: Issah Nalzar



Where Walworth Eats: A map connecting the community

A project which started out as a mapping exercise quickly transformed into something that connected businesses, local people, and London College of Communication

Elephant and Castle's Walworth Road offers a taste of the world when it comes to eating out, with everything from authentic Columbian cuisine through to traditional Korean restaurants.

To help highlight the neighbourhood's amazing culinary diversity, London College of Communication teamed up with Southwark Council to create an interactive map highlighting the best restaurants and cafes on or near Walworth Road, with an emphasis on healthy eating.

Where Walworth Eats was part of a wider campaign to promote food businesses in the area, and also links in to Southwark Council's annual High Street Challenge initiative in which it offers funding to organisations to devise and promote schemes that help keep the 'high street' alive.

The project not only helped restaurant and cafe owners to promote their businesses, but also staged workshops for them in social media and photography skills to assist them in growing their online presence. These workshops, run by LCC students, were initially predicted to be less popular

but were quickly oversubscribed.

Luisa Charles, a BA (Hons) Interaction Design Arts graduate who acted as project co-ordinator, said: "Many business owners have premises across the street from each other, but have never interacted. The nicest thing about the workshops was that they got to learn a lot about social media, but even more than that, they all started networking together, swapping business cards... it brought a community of food together."



The map also had a spin-off benefit for LCC as it has been able to distribute copies to students. "It's something I would have loved to have had in first year," Luisa explained. "When you're at LCC, students sometimes only explore limited places such as Pret and Wetherspoon's. This area is booming with culture, and yet it is still untapped by so many students and locals alike."

Healthy eating eateries are emphasised on the map. In order to be eligible for inclusion, they have to meet two main criteria. Firstly, they had to be of a place where you could go for lunch. Secondly, healthy options had to be on the menu, at least as part of balanced meals containing plenty of fruit and vegetables.

One cafe which passed the test is Rude N Boomin. It serves an array of healthy options, from vegan acai bowls to freshly made smoothies, drawing inspiration from New Zealand, where owner Colin Webb lived for many years before returning to south London.

Colin also adds strong influences of London's

grime movement to the mix, having worked with artists such as Skepta. Despite this, he felt the cafe was struggling to connect with the local community, with some residents suspicious of gentrification without realising that Colin has strong connections with the area.

He explained: "My aim with this cafe is to bring all walks of life and build a stronger community. Since I came back, I felt there was a huge disconnect between people, and I really want to bring them together again."

Rude N Boomin also struggled initially with trying to attract students living locally, but Colin added Where Walworth Eats has helped the cafe to connect with them, and forge good relations with LCC. "We are perfectly happy to collaborate with film students to come use our cafe as their location, host society meetings, and even hang their

*Main photo:
the Rude N
Boomin cafe,
by Laura Blight*

projects and art works on our walls," he said. LCC's support for Where Walworth Eats involved both current students and alumni, and courses ranging from Photography to Graphic Media Design. They walked along Walworth Road, visiting as many eateries as possible, persuading around 30 of them to work with the project.

Luisa Charles admitted that some businesses, established in the community for many years and concerned about the impact of Elephant and Castle's rapid redevelopment, were wary of the scheme.

"So many doors are closed in your face, some places did not want to hear you speak. Some didn't really trust you, especially when you're offering something for free... they think there is some sort of catch," she recalled.

However, other businesses saw the project as a great opportunity and were willing to get on board. "Many of them were extremely excited about it, and responses would be immediate after the initial contact," Luisa added.

"Getting to know our team on a human level definitely produced a tangible effect, as well as seeing their online presence on social media



This page: Theo's. photos by Indira Harrison. Opposite, top: Costa Azul. bottom: Sabor Peruano; photos by Veronica Otero



improve through the directions we took."

Camberwell College of Arts BA (Hons) Fine Art Photography student Indera Harrison, worked closely with many of the cafes and restaurants, helping to develop their brand identities and taking photographs for their online presence.

She said: "This project has benefitted me personally as it gave me experience of working on commissions. I was able to build up my food photography portfolio through it, and I fully enjoyed the experience."

Indera added: "It was great working with LCC, especially the dynamic of knowing that we were supporting local businesses and improving their online presence. Since then, it's been nice to see my work on different brands' social media such as Tupi London and Hej Coffee."

Where Walworth Eats started out as a mapping exercise but quickly transformed into something that connected businesses, local people, and LCC. The map is currently available in print and online. ●



Top: Baldwin;
photo by Indera
Harrison
Bottom:
Sidecar Coffee
Bar: photo by
Anne Alagbe



Dragon Castle:
photos by
Anne Alagbe





Louie Louie:
photos by
Lily Boyle



Longdan
Express:
photos by
Lily Boyle





El Paso
(top & centre);
Rude N Boomin
(bottom);
Casa Colombia
(right): all photos
by Laura Blight



Kerbside project tackles traffic and pollution

LCC students helped to deliver designs to make streets in Southwark greener and more pedestrian friendly

Words: Jennifer Shen

Image: LCC and Southwark Council

Busy roads and heavy traffic are major issues in London, particularly in residential areas, where air pollution and parking problems affect people's quality of life.

One strategy aimed at tackling them is to make some thoroughfares less car-friendly, with a focus on the needs of pedestrians and an emphasis on environmentally aware solutions.

Southwark Council teamed up with London College of Communication and the Living Streets charity to deliver one such scheme in East Dulwich, which has become one of south London's most desirable neighbourhoods in recent years, leading to more traffic congestion.

Students from the College's BA (Hons) Spatial Design course helped to come up with plans to repurpose some of the area's parking bays as miniature green spaces. This strategy serves to deter drivers from using certain streets and makes those roads greener, quieter and more pleasant for local people.

LCC places an emphasis on getting its students out of the classroom and into the wider world, gaining valuable experience by collaborating on a variety of projects with community groups, businesses, charities and social enterprise schemes.

The idea is these organisations get to tap into their imagination and creativity, harnessing it to come up with effective solutions to a range of challenges, whilst the students test their problem-solving abilities, build their network of contacts, add to their portfolios, and generally become better prepared for seeking jobs when

the graduate.

Around 50 undergraduates from BA (Hons) Spatial Design course worked on this project, dividing up into a dozen or so small teams to devise ways of making East Dulwich a safer, more pedestrian and environmentally friendly part of the Southwark borough.

Some of them designed a space where parents can wait for their kids as they come out from school in the afternoon, bringing them together to chat and interact, thus encouraging community ties. Another group came up with a children's see-saw which actually generates electricity via its up-and-down motion.

Southwark Council officers came to LCC to check on work-in-progress and offer their opinions on the solutions being devised. The council also funded the construction of prototypes for some of the designs, and the students' work was put on display at its offices near London Bridge.

The first phase of the collaboration went so well that a second one was launched, involving students from BA (Hons) Design Management and Cultures working on an activation and marketing campaign for the project.

American educator Samuel Butler once said: "Every man's work, whether it be literature, or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself." With this project, LCC's students painted a picture of themselves as creative, energetic and passionate about solving society's many pressing problems. ●



Picky parents pose a challenge for schools

Students from LCC's BA (Hons) Advertising course designed posters to promote a South London school to local families

Words: Cleo Mitchell

Image: St Andrew's School

Choosing a school for their child is potentially one of the most important choices parents can make. Schools themselves know that families are becoming increasingly picky when it comes to making the right choice for their kids. For many parents, simply sending them to the one round the corner and hoping for the best is not a viable option.

Mums and dads want to know about Ofsted reports, SATS results and teaching facilities; they need recommendations from friends and family; they look for good news stories about schools in the local media. In short, it's imperative that schools put their best face forward, and this means knowing how to market themselves.

In order to do this, St Andrew's Church of England Primary School in Stockwell, south London, worked with staff and students from London College of Communication to spruce up its image and get the message across to local families that it is a welcoming, supportive, inclusive and academically solid place to send their children.

Opened in 2001, St Andrew's is a voluntary-aided primary school which partnered with nearby Christ Church School in 2016. It was rated as 'Good' in January 2019 by Ofsted, with 80% of pupils expected to reach at least the average standard for reading, writing and maths.

Students from LCC's BA (Hons) Advertising course, led by Steve Spence, were given a brief to come up with a series of posters for St Andrew's with the aim of creating a fresh wave of applications for places. To begin with, they went to the school and interviewed parents and pupils to get a



feel for its sense of community. Valentin Crisan, a student who worked on the project, said the goal was to make "the school more visible in the local community and increase the number of applications [to the school]. We included real testimonials from real parents on the posters.

"Our research found that parents will predominantly choose a school based on word of mouth — recommendations from family or friends. So we decided to use that in our campaign, showing people talking about their experiences of St Andrew's."

Headteacher Jayne Mitchell said: "LCC's students produced some lovely posters to promote our school in the local community. The posters were then used in our own digital marketing campaign. As a result, we had over 100 applications to join our reception class in September 2019."

So what makes a good school?

A Parentview survey coincided with the January 2019 Ofsted inspection, a few months after the poster and digital marketing campaign had been rolled out.

It found that the school has improved in the eyes of parents. In a 2013 survey, 79% parents felt they were getting enough information about their child's progress, and 72% felt any concerns had been dealt with. Both figures have now improved.

Parents like to be in touch with the school about their child's learning, and 82% parents now feel they get enough information about their progress from teachers, while 87% believe their child is being taught well at St Andrew's.

The reputation of any school is crucial for its future, and 94% parents surveyed said they would recommend St Andrew's, with 87% saying Stockwell is a safe area and that the school provides a secure environment for their children. ●



Words: Nela Juricova
Images: Cafod

Learning how to tell stories in ways that change lives

How one charity turned to London College of Communication to improve its digital storytelling

There are nearly 170,000 registered charities in the UK, ranging from small, local ones all the way up to huge organisations operating on a global scale.

In essence, though, they all face the same challenges: ensuring their good work is noticed, getting key messages across, and persuading people to support their cause, whether that is financially or through volunteering.

In our technology-rich, time-poor digital age, charities are increasingly assessing how they need to improve their communication skills — otherwise, they risk falling off the radar of public awareness and into a downward spiral of dwindling donations.

The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (Cafod) is one of the world's largest aid and community project networks, operating in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. It is the job of creative content manager Laura Storr to share a variety of stories — some heartbreaking, many uplifting — about its work.

To enhance their ability to connect with audiences using today's multitude of digital platforms, Laura and her team collaborated with London College of Communication to create a bespoke short course in 'transmedia storytelling'. The aim



was to help them create more engaging content which would not only spread the word about Cafod's campaigns but also reach out to potential donors, sponsors and volunteers.

Laura said: "The course definitely opened our eyes to different ways of thinking about campaigns and how to make the most of that multichannel approach, as well as how to put things together and reach out to people in different ways which makes them more engaged with what we do."

"As a charity, we wanted to do some content marketing in an entertaining way as well. Thinking of various ways in which we can make our campaigns more interactive was something we particularly took away from the LCC course."

Cafod currently generates most of its funds through print campaigns, but Laura said it is becoming increasingly active in the digital sphere. "We're aware that engagement with younger audiences, in particular, needs to be in that digital space, so we are trying to make better use of our resources in this respect."

"The course was definitely very useful for that, as well as helping with developing new ideas for our campaigns and taking these ideas forward. It provided fresh motivation and energy for the whole team, and since the course, we have talked a lot about what we learned so it was very helpful and very engaging for all of us."

"I can see that it definitely gave my team plenty of inspiration about the content marketing side of things. They are using what they learned to think about more entertaining, persuasive, educating and inspiring ways to produce content. It certainly gave us a lot of ideas."

LCC tutor Kalina Pulit, a photographer and film-maker who helped to create the short course for Cafod, said: "It was a very positive experience. We focused mainly on different ways of telling stories to make them more alluring, attentive

"We were brainstorming ideas, giving space to everyone to share their thoughts and opinions." Kalina Pulit





and thoughtful. “We were brainstorming ideas, giving space to everyone to share their thoughts and opinions, which they may not always have opportunity to do in a busy workplace. This created a very inclusive atmosphere, and together we came up with some amazing ideas on storytelling for their future campaigns and articles.”

Laura’s own dedication to the Cafod cause comes in part from her own experiences in the field, seeing how the work of charities can change people’s lives for the better, alleviate poverty and provide support for those caught up in conflicts or natural disasters.

“I travelled quite extensively, so I met lot of people, including tsunami survivors and refugees living in camps. It can be emotionally draining and difficult to see so many people struggling, but you learn to deal with it and how to process it when you return back home.”

One story especially touched her heart. “When I went to Mozambique after bad flooding there, I met a 15-year-old girl and her two younger brothers whose mother couldn’t cope and had left them.

“They lived in a one-room house made of mud, with no blankets or anything, all alone and struggling for food. It was really awful and upsetting. Things like that definitely give you perspective and make you appreciate what you have.”

It is these kind of experiences that underline the importance of charities reaching out to as many people as possible. LCC’s tailored short course for Cafod is helping it to stay relevant and relatable as the ways in which people engage with the world evolve via digital technology. ●



Words: Eleanor Merry
 Images: Eleanor Merry,
 Veronica Otero

'We wanted something to represent us and that has meaning'

Traditional Colombian bakery La Calenita took part in Shop Front, a partnership with LCC design students to create striking new identities for 25 local businesses

Elephant and Castle's food scene has long been hailed for its diversity. For many, there is no collection of restaurants that better mould themselves to the rhythms of its residents' daily lives.

Communities are often signposted by their restaurants and cafes, clustering together to serve up specialities of their respective cuisines: Ecuadorean, Bolivian, Peruvian, Venezuelan, Domini-

can and Colombian. Many are gathered in quiet corners or shelter beneath railway arches.

One such arch, ensconced within Eagles Yard, is number 143. Hidden away within it, you must make your way through a corridor surrounded by other small businesses; a hairdresser's above and a financial service vendor to the right. The light at the end of the tunnel is La Caleñita — a Colombian bakery and restaurant and well-known hub for the Latin American community.

In Autumn 2017, husband-and-wife team Oscar and Valeria of La Caleñita took steps to branch out to attract new customers and applied to the Southwark High Street Challenge.

Funded by the local council, the project — entitled Shop Front — involved local traders working in partnership with LCC's Business and Innovation team, along with five design students, to create new logos, brand identities and branding materials for their businesses.

It is clear that patrons at La Caleñita regard it as a second home; the atmosphere is relaxed, much like that at the end of a large family party; with the buzz of chat simultaneously excitable and subdued. "We are always busy and have many regulars," said Valeria. "There was a time when all of our regulars were Spanish speaking, but we

wanted to attract more English-speaking customers. We do not speak English very well, so it [could have been] difficult to get help with new designs for our logo because we need to be able to explain exactly what we want to a designer."

La Caleñita was one of 25 local businesses involved in the project. "Shop Front was great for us because we were able to work with people who could speak Spanish," Valeria explained.

Veronica Otero, the project's co-ordinator, acted as the prime point of contact and translator for many of the local businesses, including La Caleñita. "Veronica was very helpful; she met with us and showed us how design can help us," said Valeria.

Being a Spanish speaker, Veronica was able to liaise with Valeria and Oscar and give them confidence in the project and LCC. Valeria said. "We were given a letter in Spanish to explain that the project was free for us; we really appreciated that."

For small businesses such as La Caleñita, finding time to participate in the design workshops initially seemed challenging. Valeria explained how grateful she and Oscar were for the efforts of Veronica and LCC's design team. "We had many meetings here in La Caleñita; it was better for us to be here to attend to our customers; our designer was very flexible."

The name La Caleñita is derived from caleña, which refers to a woman from Cali, (as one would call a Londoner from London), Oscar's home city in southwestern Colombia. This maternal vibe denotes the sense of comfort and community that radiates from La Caleñita. "It is a place you can call home," said Valeria.

Their new logo, by BA Design for Graphic Communication student Stanislava Stoilova, features the vibrant yellow, blue and red colours of the Colombian flag; bolding showing off La Caleñita's heritage. "We wanted something to represent us and that has meaning, we want customers to know who we are and understand us," Valeria emphasised. Stanislava also added a hand-written style for the logo, hinting at La Caleñita's homemade ethos.

La Caleñita serves many traditional Colombian delicacies including almojábanas (a cheese bread), carimañolas (a torpedo-shaped meat pie), and of course, traditional Colombian coffee.

La Caleñita is filled with the distinctly warming scent of fresh coffee, and beans can be heard constantly on the grind. Most regulars cradle a cup in

their hands, many opting for the 'tinto' style, which is black coffee with panela, an unrefined whole cane sugar, on the side.

"My favourite food we make is pan de bono, which is a warm bread, and I like empanadas, too. They normally have meat and potato in them but I prefer vegetarian," says Valeria. "A lot of people ask for our Colombian porridge — that is a favourite."

"[Stanislava] designed new menus in English and Spanish, to help us attract new customers; we want people to try Colombian food, it is delicious," Valeria added.

Oscar and Valeria have seen the difference the new-look menus have made to their business. "The English menus have definitely brought in more English-speaking customers," said Oscar, "and the design goes well with our new logo."

After Shop Front, Oscar and Valeria have continued to work with LCC, and took part in the 'Where Walworth Eats' project in 2019. They have also supported an LCC Refugee Journalism initiative by catering for an event. "I think it is a good idea for local businesses to work with the university," Valeria said.

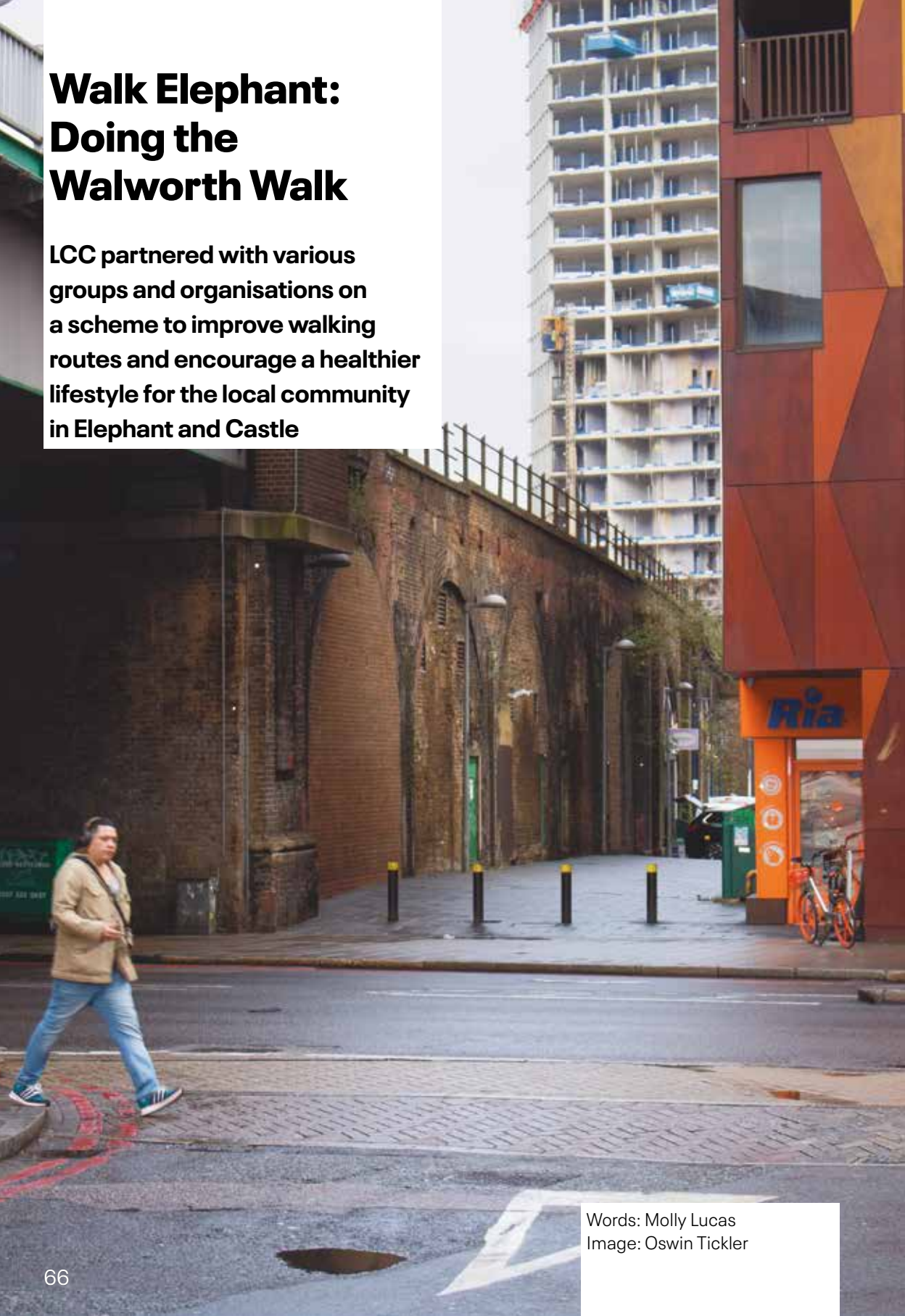
La Caleñita is an example of a small business with a big vision, not to go global or make millions of pounds, but to make a real difference in their community and welcome everyone to experience their 'little Colombia', as Oscar calls it.

La Caleñita has developed a strong relationship with LCC. Valeria said: "The Shop Front project was our first time working with LCC and we enjoyed it very much." Oscar added: "LCC has helped us make La Caleñita even better." ●



Walk Elephant: Doing the Walworth Walk

LCC partnered with various groups and organisations on a scheme to improve walking routes and encourage a healthier lifestyle for the local community in Elephant and Castle



Words: Molly Lucas
Image: Oswin Tickler

The future of Elephant and Castle is ever-changing says Jeremy Leach, chairman of Walworth Society. "It's still got another 10-20 years of regeneration ahead of it, and we are continuing to work hand-in-hand with new projects."

One of those is Walk Elephant, a partnership between Southwark Council, the Walworth Society, the charity Living Streets and other local organisations including London College of Communication.

The project began in February 2017 with the aim of improving existing walking routes, and creating new ones, to help residents and visitors get from A to B in the safest, greenest and most picturesque way. Another goal was to encourage people to scratch below the surface and uncover the area's hidden gems.

With 100,000 people living densely populated areas in and around Elephant and Castle, Jeremy Leach said the Walworth Society wanted the project "to focus on the quality of life for local people".

Walk Elephant was designed to intertwine with the many new developments happening in Elephant and Castle as it undergoes radical transformation and regeneration. It links local parks, the current shopping centre and the Low Line, a new community asset made up of walking routes running alongside railway arches, connecting Bankside in the north to Camberwell in the south.

This also serves another aim of the project: to draw pedestrians and cyclists to under-used routes which take them to the River Thames. Jeremy said: "People don't sense how close the river is: they usually get a bus from the top of Walworth Road, but it's really not that far."

LCC was an active partner in the development of Walk Elephant's positive outcomes, enlisting the talents of its students to contribute to the project.

Students from LCC's MA Graphic Branding and Identity course came up with ideas for the Walk Elephant logo and the design for the project's maps.

"It was done with local people to engage with them, and it allowed residents to have their input." Jeremy Leach, Walworth Society

Jeremy said: "LCC are great at engaging with projects like this one. It's always great to work with the College's staff and students because they're so creative."

Residents also played their part in the project, getting involved in walks around Elephant and Castle to identify opportunities for improvement such as new crossings, better landscaping and clearer signage in order to help pedestrians. Jeremy added: "It was done with local people to engage with them, and it allowed residents to have their input."

Southwark Council, with the creative support of LCC helped the community bring the best of these ideas to life through research done by LCC students. The students of LCC researched into marketing communications in order to understand how the project could best be communicated and engaging to the public.

The research resulted in creating communal maps and a website which people could use to continue to comment on where they believed improvements and green linkages could be made throughout the routes.

The maps show walking routes going as far as Kennington, Bankside, London Bridge and Burgess Park, with improvements plotted on them under three different headings: Green Links, Low Line and Better Streets.

The routes they highlight incorporate 'hidden gems' such as the Charlie Chaplin pub, named after the silent film star who was born in the area, Pasley Park in Kennington, site of the former Royal Surrey Gardens, and the plaque which commemorates Victorian chemist John Newlands, who devised the Periodic Table and was born in Lambeth.

As well as helping people to explore local history, the routes also create safer, more enjoyable walks to work and school, aiding their health and helping London to become more environmentally friendly. The Walworth Society was created in 2011 to help give local residents a bigger voice in the future of their area of South London, supporting them — in the words of Jeremy Leach — to "focus on change and shaping those changes."

Walk Elephant is an ongoing project, with regular get-togethers for community groups, developers, council officers and other interested parties to assess whether its aims are being successfully delivered. Jeremy said: "The idea is to make sure we are all still on same page. It's a gradual process, and a challenging one." ●



LCC and Science Museum Lates

A series of collaborations between LCC and the Science Museum has tested the ingenuity and design flair of students on BA (Hons) Interaction Design Arts

Words: Tola Folarin-Coker
Image: L.T. Lee/flickr.com

Science Museum Lates is a monthly series of after-hours theme nights at one of London's major tourist attractions. London College of Communication has collaborated with the museum on a several projects for these 'Lates', which mostly attract 18-35s, with students from BA (Hons) Interaction Design Arts creating immersive and interactive displays.

Course leader Joel Karamath, who has also worked with other renowned institutions including the V&A and the Museum of the Home, has guided his undergraduates through projects including one to celebrate the Principia space launch, which involved British astronaut Tim Peake's mission to the International Space Station.

Joel admitted that forging a partnership with the Museum took some time. "There was scepticism about students coming in. They were probably asking 'can they really do this?' It's like most things that involve student projects: people always expect them to be a bit [low] budget and a little bit basic, so it's just a matter of convincing people."

To help mark the Principia launch, LCC students were asked by the Science Museum to create a simple, engaging demonstration, interactive installation or performance relating to the theme 'space'. It involved students initially creating working prototypes at LCC, with the Science Museum then selecting projects to be displayed.

Joel explained: "The way we have to do it is always stressful because we have to make stuff here [at LCC], then take them to the museum and we have a 45-minute window to set up.

"So, not only do we have to build stuff, we have to dismantle, transport and reconstruct it and make sure it's working again in very short space of time. On top of that we then get loads of people coming in and engaging and prodding and pulling!"

As well as showcasing their creativity and problem-solving skills, LCC's students also get to experience the many challenges of collaborating with a major scientific and cultural player.

Joel said: "It's the experience of working at a big institution and creating stuff that involves dealing with the public, because one of the major factors with these projects is that they have to be engaging and interactive. That means not that just in of itself, but also that our students have to be there, explaining things and engaging with visitors, talking about a project and the process of making it.

"So there's a whole host of stress that goes on along with projects like these, and not least of all the intensity of the evening on top of all of the other things and processes that lead up to the production of that project." Joel admitted that, compared to other university projects, collaborations such as these can have "the gestation period of an elephant".

"The lates are also specifically designed for adults, so you can deal with adult themes, and you also deal with people going around with a drink. The museum wants to let visitors sort of behave like kids, without real kids there. But adults behaving like kids is sometimes even worse in some ways, and you've got to negotiate that as well."

With further collaborations with the Science Museum in the pipeline, Joel concluded: "These projects have to be imaginative, but in a way which engages with the public. Essentially, that's a component of anything that's going in an exhibition space — interactivity. How do you get people to interact with what is on display? The design has to take that into consideration." ●

TALENT WORKS

Talent Works gives London College of Communication students paid work with local charities, social enterprises and community groups. So far, 170 students have worked with nearly 100 organisations. Thanks to funders, all of our clients received the work at no cost.

LCC discovered that local social enterprises, charities and community groups can't access high-quality communications talent to help them grow. Students, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, can struggle to get their first paid work. Talent Works is designed to address these two challenges.

It has built websites, run social media campaigns, created new branding, made films, taken photographs, designed print and digital materials, and written stories.

Talent Works has helped organisations both large and small, new and established, mostly based in Southwark and Lambeth. It continues to develop, building on its successes in order to support more students and local organisations.

Words: Charlie Dale
Images: Laura Lewis



Sanctuary Space

Knife crime in the UK is on the rise and it is becoming clear that young people need an escape from the worries of London streets. The Southwark Peace Garden aims to provide that escape

According to the Home Office, a total of 14,800 knife-related crimes were recorded in 2018-19, a massive 80% increase from 2013-14. The problem is worse in urban areas, with the majority of the attacks occurring in London.

Many of Walworth Methodist Church's members have been directly affected by knife crime and its consequences. They wanted to create a safe place where those who had lost loved ones could go, but which will also serve as a general space for community use.

Located in the Methodist Church's garden just off Walworth Road, the Peace Garden came into being after Abdulrahman Musa-Johnson was attacked in an alleyway near his home.

With the help of local residents, members of his church, representatives from the police, local council and an anti-knife forum, Abdul aimed to create a inclusive amenity that could act as a statement of the community's commitment to taking action.

The Garden is hidden down the Walworth Road, in the centre of the Methodist Church building. Peace is definitely a key element, and the hustle and bustle from the main road just outside is unnoticeable from the garden itself. As if often the case, the church provides sanctuary away from the stresses of London's crowds and hectic pace of life.

Although funding issues have led to the original plans for the garden not yet being fully completed, the array of greenery on site still serves its tranquil, calming purpose.

The original vision for it included a sculpture made of some from the metals of weapons seized by or handed in to the police during knife amnesties. Although it has taken slightly longer than planned, the sculpture is due to be unveiled at some point during 2020.

Kate Sedwell, a member of the committee for the garden, said: "With projects like this, it takes lots of little parts to come together. I think one of the hardest things for grass roots projects such as ours is getting funding."

Despite this, the garden seems almost unaffected by the funding issues and still serves its purpose of helping provide a sanctuary space for the local community.

The garden began crowdfunding in 2018, with the aim of creating a tranquil hub for remembrance, education, community events and more. Community is a key theme, and it would not have been possible to open without the help of local people and institutions.

London College of Communication has played its part, with students from LCC designing the Southwark Peace Garden website and creating a data report, while others from Camberwell College of Arts helped with designing the actual garden. Other local groups helped provide labour, plants and the concept for the knife sculpture.

The Golden Oldies, another community group which LCC's Talent Works initiative is involvement



"I think for some of these local kids, it's about opening their eyes to what they can do...there are so many opportunities for them." Kate Sedwell

with "gave moral support and probably a bit of bossing around, which was very sweet," said Kate.

She explained how community is a key factor of the garden, particularly helping children. "I think for some of these local kids, it's about opening their eyes to what they can do...there are so many opportunities for them."

One year after its formal opening, the garden is providing educational programmes for the local community. Kate continued: "We obviously want

to sustain the garden so it's a nice place to be, but we want to reach out into the local community and help kids that maybe aren't in school."

The garden recently hosted Street Doctors, a group who teach young people life-saving skills. The group gave the young people who attended some basic medical training, including advice on how to help stab victims. Kate hopes it could potentially pave the way for anyone interested in becoming future paramedics.

Despite the challenges faced in getting it completed, with the help of other local organisations, the garden has been already been a success. A high percentage of local children and young people have taken part in its programmes, with 50% of the 14-year-olds who have visited returning to join in with further activities.

Providing young people with this kind of support is crucial. Ministry of Justice figures for 2013/14 show that 1,132 young people aged under 18 were convicted for knife-crime offences, while 39 of the possession cautions issued were for children aged 10 or 11. Projects such as the Southwark Peace Garden can only have a positive effect on tackling the problem. ●

Talent That Works

How London College of Communication's Talent Works programme helps both students and social enterprises to flourish

Words: Blake Creighton

Image: InUse ReUse

At The Remakery, social enterprises, artists, makers and local residents work to recycle and re-use materials such as chairs and wooden pallets destined for landfill.

By providing a creative, welcoming space that helps up-skill the local community through subsidised training and workshops, volunteering and job opportunities, The Remakery has helped social enterprises such as InUse ReUse to flourish amongst their organised clutter of reusable materials.

The non-for-profit space, located in a disused carpark between Brixton and Camberwell since its inception in 2012, exists to enable people to actively re-source, re-use and recycle through talks and workshops.

In Use ReUse has had a workshop in The Remakery for 18 months and are a social enterprise that upholds its ethos. Founded by Dennis Boateng, working with business partner and long-time friend, Oz, alongside Lambeth Council, it upcycles, recycles and re-uses wooden pallets and

wood waste left in and around the Brixton area. Dennis said: "Without The Remakery we would not have been able to get the subsidised rent we have now. They are super-helpful, if they have any potential jobs available they would throw it our way."

Using the Remakery as its base, InUse ReUse has so far have distributed 7,000 pallets back to suppliers and recycled half a tonne of wood waste. They have worked with the Brit School, Slade Gardens and Urban Growth to create bespoke benches and tables, and created several prototypes available to be made to order via their website.

Dennis said he has faced plenty of challenges along the way. "Marketing, getting our story out there and getting it to resonate with other people about what we do as a social enterprise."

LCC students have helped InUse ReUse with these challenges, working with Dennis through the Talent Works programme. He said: "Some of the work that we have in terms of the graphics, the logo and everything that is up on the website would not have happened [without them]."

This relationship has also fostered an ongoing professional relationship with LCC student Jodie, who studies Illustration and Design and has worked on content for the website, including an animation presenting the journey of the recycled wood, and illustrations for the packaging.

She said: "Working with InUse ReUse has really helped me. It has enabled me to learn how to communicate with clients, adapt to a working schedule, and the importance of time management."

The Talent Works programme enables personal and professional growth for both students and social enterprises. ●



Using the power of sport to inspire local communities

For many people, living in London means opportunity and the chance to achieve their ambitions, but the city is not always a place of personal growth for everyone. This is where Burgess Sports steps in

Words: Amy Clarke

Image: Burgess Sports

With eight years under its belt, the past two as a registered charity, Southwark-based Burgess Sports is on a mission to give local residents a unique opportunity to 'develop leadership, organisational and physical management skills' in a safe environment with a strong sense of community.

"Yes, I like sport [though], I'm not particularly good at any, but it doesn't matter," laughed Alejandra Teixido, the CEO who has previously worked for charities in her home country of Chile, where she gained the experience, passion and skills to succeed in this sector.

"Sports are a good tool for social integration," she adds. And it's true — the various nationwide campaigns that have brought communities together through sporting initiatives have boomed and been successful.

The project itself began from an idea by founders Vernon Neve-Dunn and the director of the local tennis centre, Tom Ulicsak, which envisaged sports clubs working together in Burgess Park SE5 to provide better opportunities for the local community, whilst making sure these were accessible to all.

Alejandra said: "I got involved through my husband who has run a rugby club in Burgess Park for over 20 years now. We only have one full-time member of staff and two part-time roles, but we have an amazing number of volunteers and participants involved in our activities."

Ambassadors

Not only does the project provide a fantastic place for children, young adults and families to take part

in physical exercise, but those who would like to forge a new sense of purpose and follow a fresh direction in their lives can go on to become coaches themselves.

Alejandra said: "This year, we have trained 20 new ambassadors. Some of them will come to our programme and some will support their clubs — with the ladder of progression made by ambassadors; two of them so far having become coaches.

"We definitely have a great connection with our local community, and projects have been developed according to its expectations and needs."

Burgess Sports has produced many success stories, with its ambassadors at the top of the list, showing that those who attend can build their self-belief and develop into aspirational — and inspirational — young people.

"One young girl who was a very shy participant

"Partnerships are so important, everyone contributes to making a real impact or change — nobody on their own can do that." Alejandra Teixido

[and] not very keen on sports has become an amazing young leader. Children love her, and she has flourished with great self-confidence."

Others have become young coaches after

progressing from ambassadors, with help from Burgess Sports to pay for and support their Level 2 Certificate in coaching. All of the people who contribute their time and energies are locals who have embraced the charity and what it offers.

Working alongside others outside of the charity is also something Alejandro strongly believes in. "Changes are not possible if you don't work with others. Partnerships are so important, everyone contributes to making a real impact or change — nobody on their own can do that."

Dedication

One such partnership came about when Burgess Sports teamed up with Year 2 students at London College of Communication to create a video for its website, giving a practical, 'real world' outlet for the skills they are developing at university.

Second year BA (Hons) Live Events and Television student Lauren Williams, who led the LCC team working with Burgess Sports, said its sense of community was a major motivating factor. "The dedication of everyone involved was the story that we wanted to tell because they are so important to many young people and families.

"All of the workers are either from the area or had been through the programme themselves, and their commitment and desire to give back to a cause that had helped them was truly inspiring."

It wasn't just the project itself that prompted Lauren to produce a video; hearing Alejandra talk about why she is involved gave the team a sense of direction and a better understanding.

"Hearing her passion for community, and not just getting children involved in sports, but giving them an outlet and opportunity to learn important life skills, made us focus on telling their whole story," Lauren explained.

These life skills play an important role for the young people who attend, especially as Southwark had London's worst record for knife crime (with injury) in 2018, and the third-highest figure for knife crime in general with 777 offences.

"This issue is everyone's concern," Alejandra confirmed. "We work hard to keep our policies up-to-date and to stay well connected with our local community."

The opportunities offered by Burgess Sports helps young people stay off the streets and gives them focus, as well as a safe place to go.

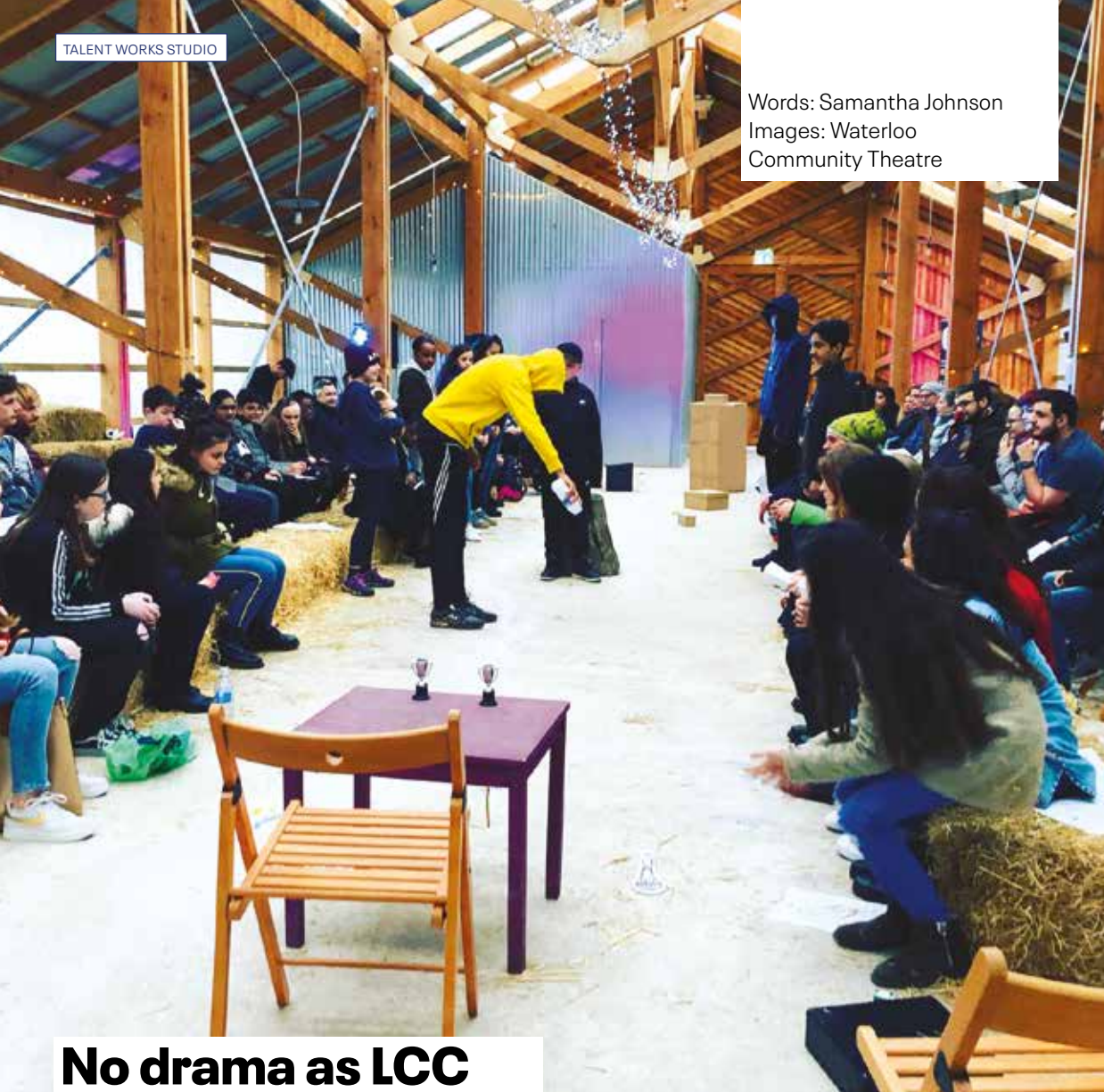
Alejandra added: "We recently started a girls-only club. They asked to have a space to meet and do different activities. They do not feel comfortable in the youth clubs in the area and they were very direct in proposing to have this opportunity, and I am so glad they did."

Over the past eight years, Burgess Sports has successfully embedded itself into the fabric of life in south London, but it wants to do more for those people who need its support.

Alejandra said: "I am looking for a business model that would provide Burgess Sports with financial stability and a bit of financial independence. The programmes are well appreciated by the local community; therefore, it is really important to give the charity sustainability." ●



Words: Samantha Johnson
 Images: Waterloo
 Community Theatre



No drama as LCC supports Waterloo Community Theatre

How staff and students from London College of Communication helped a local youth theatre tell its story

Waterloo Community Theatre (WCT) is an organisation that can feel the pain of youth funding cuts — especially those in the creative arts. The youth theatre was launched in 2015 by Anna Glarin and Mark Johnson, and has been delivering sessions since 2016 to an increasing number of age groups. WCT relies mainly on the goodwill of volunteers, and resources for marketing and promotional materials are limited.

To help solve this issue, and get its message out to the local community, WCT partnered with London College of Communication's Talent Works initiative which seeks to empower social enterprises, charities and community groups by giving them access to the creativity and drive of LCC's

students. Those students get paid 'real-world' experience of working with external clients, and the groups and organisations with which they team up see their profiles enhanced through imaginative digital content and print materials.

Anna Glarin, a theatre professional with 25 years of experience behind her, first came across Talent Works whilst working at Coin Street Community Builders, where she also works with young people. Through colleagues there, she was introduced to the idea of collaboration with LCC and she felt WCT could benefit from the support that Talent Works was offering.

Since making initial contact, the theatre has worked with LCC on three projects which have covered the creation of content including a website, leaflets and a promotional video.

Before partnering with Talent Works, Anna had created the WCT's original site with very limited web design experience and virtually no money.

"Nearly a third of local councils have planned cuts that would see their spending on youth services decline by 80 per cent since 2010-11."
 Arts Council England



She said: "The impact made by LCC's student was huge. They helped to make our website look professional and get our key messages across more effectively."

The website created by LCC students sought to embody the ethos of WCT which states: 'We work from a fundamental belief that the arts contribute to people's wellbeing and develop confidence, curiosity and imagination, alongside many other transferable skills.'

Initially, WCT had nowhere to hold their collaborative sessions with LCC, but Anna and her team then found a temporary space on The Cut in SE1 before eventually moving on to their current premises on Lambeth Walk.

The next step for the theatre, says Anna, is "to get a home of our own not a shared space" — but this will only happen if more sources of funding can be found. She added that collaborations such as the one with Talent Works, allows community organisations like WCT to build the profile they need when it comes to gaining access to grants, sponsorship and other income streams.

The hope at WCT is that as young people move up through its age groups, they will want to stay involved and mentor children who are joining its classes. Staff at WCT want them to know there are pathways into the creative industries — something which, again, LCC is well-placed to support.

Anna was particularly pleased with short film made for WCT by Talent Works students which is now a highlight of its website. It features some of the young people involved with the theatre and stresses its importance to the local community. "The film is amazing, I was quite surprised," she admitted. She takes special pride in the video as it shows how the young people at WCT gain in confidence and life skills, thriving within a safe and welcoming community space.

WCT's own promotional material includes a newsletter written by Anna when there is "something to shout about" — usually linked to WCT's latest production. In June 2019, its young performers staged *There Are Lots of Rooms Inside My Head* as part of the Waterloo Festival. This show was supported by the National Lottery's Community Fund, demonstrating its profile and reputation are rising.

Anna sees the next step in WCT's communication evolution as happening through social media — hopefully with further help from LCC. "There's scope to do so much more," she added. ●

Edible Rotherhithe — Get up and grow!

LCC Talent Works helped local gardening and sustainability charity Edible Rotherhithe get its message out there via a promotional video

Words: Toni-Ann Cover
Images: Edible Rotherhithe and Tom Pine/flickr.com

A key challenge in inner cities is the lack of green spaces, making the idea of growing your own food a dream seemingly reserved for people living in rural and suburban areas.

However, Christina Wheatley, creator and project manager of Edible Rotherhithe, has found a way to promote sustainability and healthy eating by bringing gardens closer to home.

In an age dominated by digital media, and living in a world which demands immediacy and instant connection, it is perceived to be particularly difficult to encourage children and young people

to disconnect and spend more time outside. For those raised on the internet and social media, commonly referred to as Generation Z, getting out and about in green spaces is more likely to involve a visit to Kew Gardens to get those likes on Instagram, rather than growing fresh basil and parsley on a windowsill.

As London continues to grow, so does the demand for more housing. With its population increasing by approximately 120,000 per year, it is expected that by 2021, it will reach 9.3 million and to keep up with this growth, Mayor Sadiq Khan announced his plan to start building at least 116,000 affordable homes by 2022.

However, 47% of London's overall area is still designated as green space — which is very high for a major city — so there is still room for families living in or near its centre to get into self-sustainable foods and healthy eating. The success of initiatives such as the Walworth Community Garden Network and Edible is proof that growing your own food in urban areas is achievable.

After moving back to London from the Isle of Wight, Christina first recognised the need for a gardening project when the children on the estate where she lived, thought that the green tomatoes in the plant beds were apples. This prompted her to create Edible Rotherhithe, based in Surrey Square Primary School in SE17, and then extend it out to the local community, so both children and adults can learn about gardening and sustainable food growth.

“Talent Works were able to do all the things that we as a board can't do. My skills are putting the plants in and creating networks, it's not anything technical. So, to have that available to us has been fantastic.” Christina Wheatley

“We're showing them that they can watch their food grow and they get a feeling about it and they enjoy it. It does change what they eat and how they eat,” said Christina, whose commitment to promoting healthy eating, particularly in children, comes from the prevalence of fast food takeaways in the area.

In south London, the popular chicken shop Morley's, has 63 branches, whilst Sam's chicken shop franchise, the preference of those living in the west and north-west London, has 34. “The Old Kent Road is covered with KFC, McDonalds, chicken shops and other fast food restaurants, and there is a lot of obesity in the area,” Christina observed.

However, the availability of fast food has not discouraged children from participating in Edible Rotherhithe's after-school gardening club. Christina said they take great pride in knowing how to plant vegetables and being able to take them home to their families. She believes the programme is successful because it promotes engagement with and immersion in nature, with a hands-on approach.

Christina added: “One of the things we find, especially in this area, is a lot of the kids live in tower blocks, so they don't have a garden, they've got nowhere to grow anything”, making the availability of gardens in schools and local communities even more vital in built-up areas.

Other gardening initiatives around London include Capital Growth, Incredible Edible, Mobile Gardeners and Surrey Docks. The Greater London Authority (GLA) is keen for all schools to have their own growing project, and a recent survey suggests that at least 25% already have one.

As a charity, Edible Rotherhithe depends on funding from public aid organisations such as Tesco's Bags of Help fund and Greggs Foundation community grants. To grow their knowledge and skills, Edible Rotherhithe links up with other groups and organisations within the local, and this prompted a partnership with London College of Communication's Talent Works initiative, which offered technical and communications support.

Christina said: “Talent Works were able to do all the things that we as a board can't do. My skills are putting the plants in and creating gardening networks, not anything technical. So, to have that help from LCC available to us has been fantastic.”

LCC student Elizabeth Connor, who helped to make a promotional video for Edible Rotherhithe,



said: “It was really cool to work for clients who really appreciate what we did and maybe wouldn't have the budget to outsource this type of work.”

The charity hopes the video will help them raise over £26,000 towards expanding the reach of its activities and carry out more after-school workshops for gardening and arts and crafts. Christina also hopes that Edible Rotherhithe's work and philosophy of self-sufficiency can be taken into women's refuges and detox centres. ●



Words: Danielle Woods
 Images: The Walworth
 Community Garden Network



Mapping a green path towards social change in Southwark

Past and present managers of the Walworth Community Garden Network explain how the power of collaboration has helped to sow the green shoots of positive change in Southwark

Southwark's sense of community. Vince explained: "The idea was to bring together the wealth of growing and gardening talent that exists across our area so that everyone can learn from each other and help each other grow."

Current co-ordinator Debbie Mitchener, who began her experience with community gardening with Garden Organic which supports low-income families in the Southwark area, said she took on the role with the aim of "supporting the network and moving it forward".

"Having the chance to work with local projects helps both them and us as students at LCC... It allows communities to grow together, even if they aren't usually connected. It's a cycle of giving back to the community whilst the community gives back to you." Thomas Nicolini

A significant factor in any form of social change is community development. According to the Scottish Community Development Centre "[It] is fundamentally based on collective action and working and learning together." The framework of the theory is about communities coming together with councils and local businesses in a combined effort to create positive change.

One of the ways in which the WCGN has sought to do this is by collaborating with other local groups and organisations including London College of Communication. The network teamed up with LCC's Talent Works initiative, which harnesses the energy and creativity of students in support of local businesses, charities and social enterprises, particularly with their communication needs.

Under the guidance of Talent Works, students from LCC worked with WCGN for a week to create a map, both online and in print, which charts the network's activities, and help with its website.

Walworth Community Garden Network (WCGN) aims to 'support and encourage neighbouring gardening groups whilst sharing resources and expanding the network of local volunteers.'

It was launched in 2017 with initial financial support from the United St Saviour's Charity after the Elephant & Walworth Neighbourhood Forum identified community gardening as something which could be a force for positive change in the Walworth and Elephant and Castle area.

A small team of volunteers included Vince Brown, the project's first and now former manager, who channelled his love of gardening into a green-fingered enterprise aimed at growing

Thomas Nicolini, partnered by Talent Works with WCGN, explained: "Having the chance to work with local projects helps both them and us as students at LCC as it keeps everything in house. It allows communities to grow together even if they aren't usually connected. It's a cycle of giving back to the community whilst the community gives back to you."

The idea behind the map — the print version of which will be distributed in Spring 2020 — is to not only promote the network but act as an invitation for people to join a community that celebrates togetherness and change, tackling social isolation and encouraging human contact.

Vince Brown said: "We thought it would be really useful to create a print map that was easy to read, and give out copies to local doctors' surgeries, libraries and so on."

Debbie Mitchener added: "Working with the [LCC] students is very valuable as it allows us, as a network of volunteers who are mostly over 40, to gain a younger person's perspective on how things should be represented. We don't want to get trapped by any [old-fashioned] views on how things should be branded."

With the help of local partners such as LCC, the network is aiming to go from strength to strength, and currently has its sights set on tackling problems of isolation and loneliness which can badly affect people's physical and mental well-being.

A report by the King's Fund charity, which helps to shape health and social care policy and practice, detailed how volunteering in an outdoor environment, especially engaging in gardening, can act as a means of therapy. It stated: 'Gardening-based mental health intervention... can, over time, facilitate recovery and social inclusion among people experiencing mental health difficulties.'

Vince said: "When the network first started, one of ideas discussed was that we should have contact with local GPs. We think it's a good idea for them to encourage patients out into the fresh air and meet new people. It's currently more of a promising plan for the future, and we are part of a wider group within the Southwark Council area who are trying to get this scheme sorted."

Debbie added: "Whilst we recognise the importance of patients having access to community gardens, our gardeners and volunteers need some extra training that will allow them to help them efficiently and effectively." ●



London College of Communication's Business and Innovation team applies the imagination and resourcefulness of our students and graduates to the challenges faced by today's society.

Our students and the College collectively have a commitment to social justice, collaborating with a variety of academic, corporate, non-profit, and government organisations, creating bespoke partnerships to help solve societies' big challenges by creating innovative concepts, services and experiences.

If after reading these stories, you want to find out more or work with our talented students and staff contact:

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