

# Earls Court Project

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea  
Application 1

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Community Engagement  
Appendix 7  
Earls Court Primary School Project

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## Appendix 7

### Earls Court Primary School Project The following gives a detailed outline and evaluation of the Primary School Project

Hammersmith and Fulham Urban Studies Centre were commissioned by The Applicant in 2010 to lead the primary school education project as part of the ongoing community engagement programme.

#### **HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM URBAN STUDIES CENTRE**

Hammersmith and Fulham Urban Studies Centre is a voluntary organisation which was established in 1983. The Centre has an educational role, offering opportunities to children and young people to learn about all aspects of the local urban environment. The aim is to help young people understand the process and impact of change and help them develop skills, knowledge and confidence to participate in the local environment.

The Centre's small team has extensive teaching experience with children, young people and adults. They are experienced in designing and developing learning materials relating to the local area for all age groups. Teacher training is also delivered to local teachers and environmental educators. Both formal and informal programmes are delivered for groups from 5 - 18 years. The projects they develop follow the National Curriculum with the local area as a focus, encompassing aspects of history, geography, science and citizenship. Their work supports a creative curriculum by offering memorable experiences out of the classroom and emphasise active learning grounded in young people's experience and perspective.

#### **PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

The Centre worked with two primary schools, St. Cuthbert with St Matthias in Kensington and Chelsea and Fulham Primary in Hammersmith and Fulham. Both schools are located close to the Earls Court site and most of the children involved in the projects live in the local area. Some have parents or other relatives who work in Earls Court also. Year 5 and Year 6 students from both schools were involved in the project.

## **AIMS and OBJECTIVES**

To involve children from both schools in:

- An engaging and enriching educational project;
- The community engagement programme for the regeneration of the Earls Court Area;
- Present the children's views for the future to other stakeholders; and
- Build a basis for future projects with younger children.
- An 8- 10 week series of educational sessions to include:
  - Exploring past, present and future of the area;
  - using maps, aerial photos and archive material;
  - community mapping- including feelings and soundscape;
  - meeting developers and planners to hear of the proposal and what is involved;
  - environmental quality survey of key positions in the area;
  - examination of traffic and transport issues;
  - surveying local residents to find their views;
  - visioning exercise- what would we like to see here?;
  - model making and art work, photography;
  - creating children's own vision for the future;
  - presentation to key stakeholders; and
  - exhibition of children's work.

## **PROCESS**

The Earls Court project team had already undertaken extensive research into the history of the area to ensure that the development reflects the rich heritage of Earls Court, West Kensington and North Fulham. This research was made available to the Urban Studies Centre to assist in developing the projects.

The project was an 8 - 10 week course during academic Year 2010 / 2011 where children were taught about the history of the area and how it has changed over the last 3 centuries.

They were also encouraged to create a realistic vision of the future of the area through model making, art work and photography

### **St. Cuthbert's; Year 5 and Year 6; Autumn term 2010**

**Year 5:** Produced community maps where they pinpointed their homes, and streets in the area that evoked happy memories or could do with improvements.

**Year 6:** Made future 'dioramas' of the Earls Court Project area in and created models, in only an hour, of their ideas of sustainable buildings that would offer multiple uses for all members of the community. These included very imaginative designs of houses, shops and buildings dedicated to culture and education.

Course outline:

- Week 1: Introduction to Earls Court Project - What is it all about?
- Week 2: Visit to Earls Court area for Environmental Survey Work - What is it like now?
- Week 3: Community Mapping - What do we think about this place?
- Week 4: Visioning Exercise - What would we like to see in the future?
- Week 5: Role Play - What will the people of Earls Court need?
- Week 6: Public Consultation - What do we think of the masterplan?
- Weeks 7 and 8: Designing and Creating a Sustainable Building for Earls Court - What sort of buildings will we need in the future? and
- Week 9: Meet the Professionals at the Urban Studies Centre - Discussion and Exhibition What do the professionals have to say and what do we want to say to them?

The project concluded on Thursday 9th December, both classes met with members of the Earls Court Project team, architects from Farrell's and John Putnam, former Vice President of the Fulham Society where they presented and explained their future dioramas, community maps and models of sustainable buildings.

Things that were liked about the area now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peaceful cemetery</li><li>• Earls Court 1 and 2 –“ mind blowing”</li><li>• Empress State Building</li><li>• Quiet places</li><li>• All the shops</li><li>• North End Market</li><li>• Ibis Hotel</li></ul>
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<p>Things that are not liked about Earls Court now</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rubbish in playground- Lillie Road</li> <li>• Too much noise</li> <li>• Not enough space</li> <li>• Car pollution</li> <li>• Litter</li> <li>• Thaxton road -very dirty</li> </ul>
<p>We wish..... Following visit to view the Masterplan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaner environment</li> <li>• More kids places</li> <li>• Children centre gets cleaned up</li> <li>• More bookshops</li> <li>• Ice skating- like in the old days</li> <li>• of Empress Hall</li> <li>• More schools</li> <li>• Market area could be tidier</li> <li>• More sweet shops</li> </ul>
<p>Questions for the project team.....</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long will it take to knock down Earls Court 1 and 2?</li> <li>• Will they be replaced with something fun?</li> <li>• Will the market be a part of the plans?</li> <li>• Will there be more cemeteries?</li> <li>• Will there be anything changing next to Fulham school?</li> <li>• Will the playground get cleaned up?</li> <li>• Where will the residents go if the houses are knocked down?</li> <li>• Why is the Lillie Road Children's Centre and playground closed?</li> </ul>

## Fulham Primary; Year 6 (The Lions and Rhinos); Spring Term 2011

Children's Parliament on the Environment Project.

The 10 and 11-year-olds (year 6) conducted environmental quality surveys of the Earls Court area, created a community map and a diorama of their vision of the future of the area. They also had a Q&A session with George Cochrane and Ciaran Quigley from the Earls Court Project team.

The research was their topic for presenting to the Children's Parliament on the Environment. This is an annual project involving Year 6 classes from 10 primary schools in Hammersmith and Fulham with presentations on topics ranging from recycling to fair trade and healthy living.

The Children's Parliament on the Environment was held on 23rd March. Two children from the class presented their project to approximately 100 children and adults in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall. The presenters engaged in brief debate for and against the regeneration of Earls Court, highlighting the complexity of the issues involved.

They won the Research Award, which was presented by Cabinet member for Children's Services Helen Binmore. The Mayor, Adronie Alford, presented the children with their prize.

Feedback on the Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Looks like an interesting plan!</li><li>• Earls Court Village looks really attractive</li><li>• Good that the market is still there</li><li>• Like the idea of all the trees and flower beds</li><li>• Good to see cycle paths and areas for pedestrians</li><li>• Glad play areas are within the plan</li><li>• There needs to be enough affordable houses for local families who live here already</li><li>• It looks safer with less traffic and more places to walk</li></ul>
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## Evaluation of The Primary School Project

### Did the project meet its original aims and objectives?

The project met all the original aims.

The Project largely met the objectives agreed at the beginning. The children engaged in a wide range of hands-on activities to discover the character of their neighbourhood, learnt about its heritage, and took time to appreciate its vibrancy and value to residents and visitors. They also discovered some of the pressures that a busy urban environment has to cope with in terms of traffic, pollution, noise, overcrowding and road safety.

They enjoyed the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process of a major regeneration project in their local area, and gained an appreciation that there are multiple factors to consider when planning for change in an area the size and complexity of Earls Court.

An objective that was not fully met was that of engaging face to face with local residents. At the planning stage it was proposed to conduct surveys of residents views of the area now; aspirations for the future and views of the project. However either through the complexities of group interviews or the practical reason of lack of interviewees on the days of the site visits these did not happen. It is proposed that this aspect be built into future projects.

### Project Outcomes

By the end of the project the children had::

- Learnt to identify a range of local landmarks
- Increased knowledge about the heritage of the area
- Improved map reading skills
- Increased awareness of their local environment, including its environmental problems
- Increased knowledge of the importance of sustainability in new developments
- Greater appreciation of the complex issues involved in a regeneration project
- Increased confidence in speaking in public

### What did the schools think?

The evaluation statistics and general feedback for both schools was very positive.

The most popular activities were:

- Model making of sustainable buildings (St. Cuthbert with St. Matthias),
- Meeting and talking with professionals about the issues involved
- Site Visits – being out and about in the local area.
- Creating their own visions in the form of a diorama
- The exhibition of artwork and photography 'Earls Court Old and New' (Fulham Primary)

### **What did the children think?**

#### **St. Cuthbert and St. Matthias**

“It was fun using all sorts of materials to build models to show what we would want in the place of Earl’s Court Exhibition Centre”

“It was interesting talking to the experts and the model making was fun”

“I got to experience what it would be like to be a builder”

“We got to put our ideas all together”

“We got to express ourselves”

It was interesting and creative”

“We worked together”

“It was fun working together”

“When we did the exploration trail you got to see around Earl’s Court”

#### **Fulham Primary**

“I didn’t know about Earl’s Court before and now I have experienced what it might feel like to live therein the future!”

“I enjoyed going to Brompton cemetery and taking pictures and doing lots of fun activities”

“I enjoyed learning new things like making the dioramas and visiting the cemetery and writing postcards”

“We learnt about what was happening in the future for the local area and we had good fun speaking to people who were involved”

“It’s been a pleasure working with the Urban Studies Centre” Mark Hopper, teacher An important dimension for the project was to build momentum and continuity into the project. This is not difficult when a project clearly has been successful for the children, the schools and the project. Consideration is currently being given to the next phase of activity, in particular:

- How to share the experience and outcomes from education programme more widely with teachers by displaying a selection of lesson plans used;
- Showcasing the project in order to share the experience and to celebrate the children’s work;
- Create a project specifically about the development of detailed future phases;
- Heritage and architecture project focusing on the development of the area;
- Developing an Urban Regeneration teaching resource for schools; and
- Extending the reach of the project to engage secondary schools in the Earls Court project.



