

LONDON SOUNDINGS

London Creative Communities Towards Sustainability

RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

October 2019

www.londonsoundings.com

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER 

**The University of Westminster
School of Architecture and Cities**

Dr TCHAPI Mireille
Researcher - Sustainable communities
m.tchapi@westminster.ac.uk

Prof NEUMAN Michael
Professor of Sustainable urbanism
m.neuman@westminster.ac.uk

London, 21 October 2019

Front page photo: *Hackney Peace carnival mural*, painted by the artists Mike Jones & Anna Walker (original design by Ray Walker, based on the 1983 Hackney Peace Carnival), in Dalston Junction, Hackney, London.
Image © 2018 Mireille Tchapi. Some Rights Reserved.



www.londonsoundings.com

**UNIVERSITY OF
FORWARD
THINKING
WESTMINSTER** 

Contents

Introduction	3
Why this project?	4
The Twelve Neighbourhoods and Their <i>Greening Agendas</i>	6
The Case Studies	6
Sustainable Hackney	9
Deptford Neighbourhood Action (DNA)	11
Transition Town Brixton (TTB), a network story in Lambeth.....	13
Latin village- Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCCC)	15
St Ann’s Redevelopment Trust (StART)	17
Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG).....	18
Growing Communities (GC)	19
Walworth Society.....	20
Charlton Manor Primary School	21
South East London Community energy (SELCE).....	23
Churches getting green.....	24
Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Team.....	25
Potential Film Ideas.....	26
About the method.....	29
Appendix - Other cases of potential interest.....	33

Introduction

London Soundings is a new research project, which explores innovative and sustainable grassroots activities by listening to the “soundings” of selected place-based initiatives throughout the Greater London and by revealing their ambitions and challenges. It aims at using the power of media to disseminate the research to a wider audience, through museum exhibition, artistic documentary film and a book to catalogue the exhibition and research. It expresses the challenges addressed by the communities and their responses, fostering a necessary platform for different groups to learn from each other’s experiences in synergy. In resonance with current citizen unrest worldwide, it is fundamental to understand such aspirations, which contribute to question and nurture the debate on sustainability and its complexity, through bottom-up lenses, at various scales, from personal, collective, local, and institutional, to national and global levels.

The project identifies key social and ecological initiatives in different boroughs and then profiles the range of enterprises and social models they use in order to showcase London’s innovative capacity. Twelve community-driven initiatives have been selected, addressing separately or in a comprehensive approach, various themes such as local economy, food and greening, housing, local heritage and identity, energy and fuel poverty, sustainable education, liveability, social care, and safety aspects. More globally, it identifies the need for the transition to more fully sustainable local ways of living. From raising awareness on climate change and lobbying for environmental concerns to be operational at the local scale, battling to preserve a local identity asset or for more affordable housing, to simply planting trees and vegetable gardens, removing weapons from the public space or knocking on the door of the most affected by the cost of energy, local residents combine grassroots creativity with local sustainability through a tremendous amount of energy carried out by people, mostly on a volunteer basis. Such major commitment, however, can also be limited due to its specific social demography. This underscores the imperative to share learnings across London, as well as further afield, using a wide array of media to reach large audiences.

Community projects we have selected for study and dissemination are collective human adventures, encompassing all the complexity and states of human relationships. Given this, the researcher is systematically sought, embarked on and engaged in local action, and hardly neutral. They highlight collaborative partnerships with a wide range of actors from all sectors of society, and the necessity of strengthening the network to have an effective impact on the local community. The actions, among which are long term campaigns, constitute disruptions from the norm by challenging planning permissions, but mainly reflect the need for new processes and practices. Some collective enterprises are creative, and exhibit characteristics that enable their innovations to have broader impacts on society, by being scalable at local, London, and national levels. They also express the need for bottom-up approaches for sustainable place-making to be inspirational and duplicable, to balance private sector investments in London, and to be fairly addressed at the institutional level in order to have a greater and more efficient level of action.

Why this project?

The reason for this project is, for the first time, to critically investigate whether local grassroots initiatives all across London are improving local conditions across *all aspects* of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental. We take into account critical needs such as housing affordability, employment, immigration, social integration and inclusion, equity, air and water quality, travel, carbon footprint, the circular economy, health, and local food sources. Collectively, these items form a *Greening Agenda*. A critical consideration is to inform broader publics through a wide range of media, to divulge their successes and challenges, in order to inspire others and to bring more resources and knowledge to bear.

Specifically, this participant-observation research investigates a dozen grassroots initiatives across Greater London. We seek to understand what they do and why, how they work, what are the bridges and barriers to success. We are doing this by observing and analyzing factors that hinder and enable their performance over time. Importantly, we also address the degree to which these groups are able to continue sustainably over time, and potentially replicated.

Sustainability

While the fundamental precepts of sustainability are widely recognized as balancing environment with development by considering social, economic and ecological factors concurrently; while considering future generations. Specifically, for communities in greater London, we refer to sustainability as their ability to live in safe, productive and high quality local environments in which the all the processes through which all citizens live and work every day. To measure whether processes are sustainable, we must see if the flows of matter, energy, and capital are replenished both in quality and in quantity at levels in which the outputs are at least equal to the inputs. Also, sustainable processes lessen, with the ultimate aim of minimizing, if not eliminating, the equity gaps that exist in all societies and communities. That is, sustainability is a way of life, if practiced properly.

Soundings

The London Soundings project will conduct original research – in-depth “soundings” on a dozen communities in London where grassroots, place-based initiatives are currently being undertaken that significantly advance the sustainability of their place, their residents’ daily lives, and their businesses’ daily operations. The term sounding also refers to the fact that the project will disseminate these soundings by producing a linked Museum Exhibit — Film — Book, which themselves constitute a tripartite sounding board for the communities’ own efforts. These are also soundings in innovation that investigate creative and sustainable urbanisms in London’s neighbourhoods. Thus we have chosen the phrase ‘London Creative Communities Towards Sustainability’ as a subtitle of the project. Note that our use of the term creative is not to be identified with the traditional meaning of the term “creative industries” such as art, craft and technology, for example. We refer to the broad sense of ‘creative’, referring to creativity in any activity and process they undertake, in the struggles for meaning and existence in daily life.

London

As a global city, London embodies, and indeed is a driver of, many global trends and forces that underlie globalization as expressed in the global economy and global society. These forces affect the daily lives of millions in the capital city, and the neighbourhoods in which they live and work. While not dissecting the myriad debates surrounding globalization, we note herein issues of concern for the local population based on our research. In part, they derive from global and national trends, including government policy and programs as well as the private sector.

Our Findings and Their Relation to the New London Plan Draft and Other Initiatives

The preliminary findings presented herein reflect the state of the art in local grassroots efforts to make living in London more sustainable. Yet these efforts are not the province of individuals and local groups alone. Government, the private sector, not-for-profit entities, and philanthropic foundations have been active in these arenas for some time. These sectors contribute in important ways to the grassroots efforts, even as they create conditions that work against the local activities and sustainability generally. These complexities and contradictions form the backdrop against which the panoply of activist groups we report on act.

For example, the draft **New London Plan**, covering the next 25 years by the Mayor Sadiq Khan, shall have a profound impact on these efforts for local sustainability. Yet in the development of this Plan, especially through the ninety hearings for the Examination in Public of the draft, held from Jan to May 2019, most residents, community groups and NGOs believed that their voices were not adequately registered by GLA inspectors despite the suggestions of thousands of people in the process. Many expressed concerns were not covered in-depth enough.¹ A number of themes, such as housing, regeneration and heritage policies have been reviewed and various topics were addressed in the draft plan, among which the need of office space, land for industry, logistics and services, affordable workspace, green infrastructure, waste management, flood risk, water ways and water infrastructure, social infrastructure, public transport, town centres and retail, and the New London Plan funding, delivering and viability. Carbon neutral issues, local authority and community rights (reworking of the planning system), waterways, housing, health and equalities aspects (not all the inequalities were mentioned for vulnerable groups and neither their cumulative effects), would have benefited in receiving more evidence on their assessments, etc. The viability of the whole Plan and each policies were also questioned in terms of funding, assessment, equity for sustainable communities, etc. From an overall perspective, the process to access the hearings is not easy for average community groups, which is a limitation of people's voice. The definitive draft is expected for Oct-Nov 2019.

Various **philanthropic and corporate foundations** also operate in this space of community sustainability. They have been filling the gaps that have been left by the two related factors of austerity in all levels of government over that last decades on the one hand, and on the other, the focus of the private sector on their specific interests. Thus, foundations and the third sector generally (not-for-profits, NGOs, etc.) have been targeting groups, places, and services left behind or out of routine government and corporate agendas.

The myriad and often coupled efforts of the dozen grassroots initiatives that the London Soundings project reports on have in their own ways and places filled important gaps as well. In this regard, they can serve as inspiring and important examples of what has been and can be done to enhance sustainability in their daily lives.

Therefore, the complexities of making communities more sustainable, given the wide range of actors operating in this space, and their competing interests, along with the lack of voice in decision making that is perceived by the grassroots, taken together form an important motive for this project.

¹ This was the general feeling shared by 'Just space' participants of the hearings at the Workshop Just Space – "New London Plan: What has been achieved?" - 17 June 2019, UCL-Bartlett.

The Twelve Neighbourhoods and Their *Greening Agendas*

Below we preview the findings that are presented more detailed in the short summaries of each of the dozen selected examples in this Research Brief, using excerpts from them that exemplify their experiences.

The housing crisis, specifically genuine affordability, numbers and quality. On one hand, social housing has been in a long, steady decline in quantity and quality. In parallel, massive private redevelopment projects, along with small-scale gentrification threaten many communities by driving up prices, driving out long-term residents, altering the local housing market, and erasing local identity. Many community groups contest large projects and small renovations alike in boroughs such as Tottenham, Hackney, Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. One resident's comment is revealing: 'community not corporate' (Sustainable Hackney member).

Their initiatives address spatial justice, the loss of local identity, the preservation of urban history and local economy simultaneously by implementing local tactics to avoid demolition or inappropriate redevelopment of historical districts, blocks and buildings. Many groups keep a close eye on planning permissions (Walworth Society). Some establish a vision for their place and bring forward their demands to London Mayor (St Ann's Redevelopment Trust – StART). This involves several campaigns and the use of planning tools such as the declaration of community asset value, and submitting community plans to the local authority (Wards Corner – Save Latin village), and by engaging in a neighborhood plan (Deptford Neighbourhood Action).

Neighbourhoods are planning for their communities to regain power to make and influence decisions about their places of living. This increasing trend has spurred the citizen groups into action, or more properly, reaction, to make up for lost ground. London's local activism has mirrored a boom in community activism throughout the world and in Europe. This addresses the twin and interrelated concerns of spatial justice and the democratic sharing of urban space. We found that this correlates with privatizing public spaces and services. Some grassroots are working on alternative scheme to provide more community energy, while addressing fuel poverty issues (South East London Community Energy) and others are revitalizing their area, providing a sense of place and empowering the community locally (Loughborough Junction Action Group).

Food security and local food production cover multiple concerns – personal and public health, greening and carbon footprint reduction, community bonding, and environmental awareness. This addresses spatial justice by dealing with food deserts by adding high quality, local and organic produce into diets. These interventions strengthen local identity, economy and community ties through community gardens and collective allotments (Growing Communities).

Confronting the crisis of climate change through environmental action and awareness. Some groups are raising up the awareness on environmental aspects. They are working to bring more sustainability at various levels in the borough, by strengthening the network among other grassroots, communities, political groups, and by pushing the greening agenda of their local authority (Sustainable Hackney, Transition Town Brixton).

The declaration of London as a National park city encourages any actions to get greener under various forms, street trees, green parks and squares, community garden, green & blue connective "tissue" to form corridors of biodiversity for people, fauna and flora to roam the city. Such greening of London was already pursued by numerous communities, through planting trees, occupying vacant plots for community gardens, removing plastic from waterways, advocating for sustainable education in primary schools (Charlton Manor primary school, Education for Sustainability). Churches are also reducing their carbon footprint, divesting from fossil fuels companies, investing in solar panels, or encouraging community greening (St James's Piccadilly London).

Confronting austerity and its consequences – the vast cuts to public services. We found that neoliberalism, privatization, and commodification of the spaces, places, and processes of daily life are profoundly affecting citizens in London's communities. Some grassroots and churches are involved in keeping the community ties and work for social sustainability, the interrelated issues of immigration, social inclusion and integration, by taking care of vulnerable communities (St Paul's West Hackney Church, The Union Chapel), and safety issues while facing the increase of knife attacks (Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Team).

The Case Studies

Denoted by plain teardrops on the map on the next page.

Sustainable Hackney, Hackney

Umbrella group, comprehensive approach including various projects on specific themes such as sustainability, energy, divest, waste, education, environmental awareness, climate change, food, green infrastructure, transport and air quality.

Deptford Neighbourhood Action - DNA, Lewisham

Neighbourhood forum, comprehensive approach expressed through a neighbourhood plan developed by grassroots community involvement.

Transition Town Brixton - TTB, Lambeth

International “transition town” movement, comprehensive approach involving local initiatives such as Incredible Edible Lambeth (food and greening), Brixton Energy (local energy), Brixton Pound and REconomy (local economy), Impact Hub (community share and care, liveability), and Remakery Brixton (waste).

Latin Corner and Wards Corner Community Coalition - WCCC, Haringay

Local economy, market, community plan, ‘savelatinvillage’ campaign, ethnic minority, contesting CPO

St Ann’s Redevelopment Trust - StART, Haringay

Housing affordability and green space; community-led housing project

Loughborough Junction Action Group - LJAG, Lambeth

Place-making, sense of place, community empowering, employment & skills, local economy, cycling, transport, community garden, art revitalization

Growing Communities, Hackney, Dagenham and Barking

Local food farming, local employment and organic market Food farming, community empowering, local employment and organic markets

Walworth Society, Southwark

Local heritage, place identity, people’s memory, place history, planning permissions

South East London Community Energy - SELCE, Greenwich and Lewisham

Renewable energy, affordability, fuel poverty, energy education, parent power, Eco project, solar roller

Charlton Manor Primary School, Greenwich

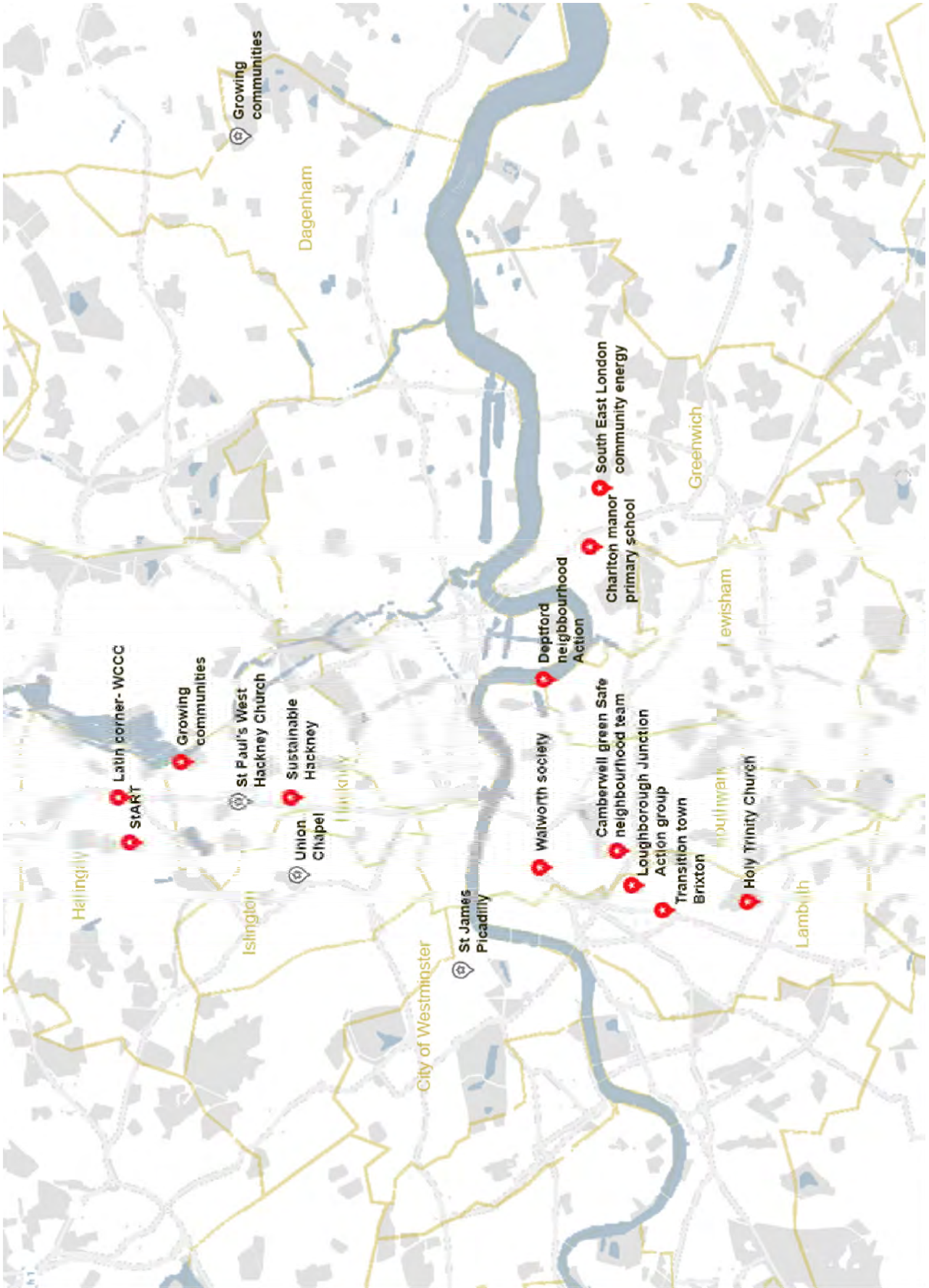
Sustainable education, eco-school, outdoor school, community garden, food school, healthy school

Churches getting green

Social care, green print, divest, straw-pale construction, community bonding, eco-church

Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Team, Southwark

Safety, Liveability, knife crime, police, community group outreach



Sustainable Hackney

Hackney

<http://sustainablehackney.org.uk/>

Comprehensive approach, umbrella group, sustainability, energy, waste, education, environmental awareness, climate change, food, green infrastructure, transport and air quality

Mission

Sustainable Hackney (SH) is a NPO, which combines the forces of Hackney Environment Forum, Hackney Environment Network and the EcoActive Yahoo groups (comprising, Tree musquetiers, EcoActive, Hackney marshes), since 2012. The roots of the organization are found in the work for the local authority agenda 21, in the late 1990s. At that time, the people involved, who are the core members of SH until now, used to work on the draft in close relationship with the council. Several conferences happened under the umbrella of EcoActive to capture the voices of the community, covering different aspects of sustainability and environmental issues around energy, biodiversity, local economy, waste and recycling, food, transport and air quality, diversity and social justice, built environment. This groundwork led to the new independent structure of SH, which gained more independence from the council.

Sustainable Hackney is an umbrella group that aims at stimulating projects of different local grassroots, in order to influence the council on environmental issues by helping in the drafts of different policies (consultation for air pollution and transport in Hackney) and be the voice of the community.

The group has been working on a range of projects (start year), such as: Hackney green drinks (2011) - Hackney energy project (2013) - Hackney Fixers (2013) - Hackney Food Partnership and Hackney food growers network (since 2012) - The consultation on transport and air quality to input the local authority draft on the question (2014) - Hackney Greenprint project (2015) - Hackney green maps (mapping local shops and organizations following the Greenprint project) - Education for sustainability (2017) - Film for Action and the newsletter (2018) - the green infrastructure project (2018) - the climate change plan (2019).

Most of the projects are related to the different themes, developed upstream. SH is also playing an important role in supporting different networks, causes and plans at London and national scales: protests against Climate change, demonstration with Stand-up to Racism and against Trump, support for the London National Park Initiative, support to Unions' campaigns, etc. The main members are attending various conferences ('climate refugees', 'creating sustainable cities, etc.), giving some talks, demonstrating and supporting other grassroots' campaigns through letters of support, meeting with local authority, giving input to plans and council's draft and lobbying for various causes. SH has organized multiple activities and collaborate with other groups, expanding the local network. The latest activities, which currently concern the group, are based on three main projects "Education for sustainability", "Film for action" (which boosted the organization), and "Hackney Fixers". A couple of projects have been initiated, such as "The Green Infrastructure" and the "The Climate change community plan", which gather multiple grassroots in Hackney, and was launched with the discussion on 31 July 2019, in order to propose a consistent agenda for Hackney following the declaration of Climate change emergency.

As a NPO, SH works on a voluntary basis, with a small membership fee. The small income generated by the Film events, are re-invested for the films or given to local charities. SH obtained grants in the past and some projects are financed independently (Hackney fixers is a project from SH, but also a separate organization). There are 1007 members. They include diverse grassroots organizations and individuals. The group benefits from a relatively high audience and is very well known by local environmental grassroots, Philip Glanville, the Mayor of Hackney and the Councillor Jon Burke (Cabinet Member for Energy, Waste, Transport and Public Realm), and connected to the Labour and Green parties through the activities of its core members (SH has given input to the Labour manifesto on sustainability matters). The members are invited to the AGM, receive the newsletter and can join the monthly open steering group meeting and other open meetings on specific issues to debate. Some member can use the website, which was conceived as an open platform to advertise local events and important news.

Sustainabel Hackney works “to protect and enhance the environment and create a sustainable community and to contribute to social, economic and environmental justice locally and globally”. The objectives are to create networks, promote green issues, influence policy, manage and support projects, develop diversity, organizational development, and communications.

Sustainabel Hackney is well-known among most of the local organizations and the council, and some networks external to Hackney borough. The members benefit from a good publicity, as being part of SH. As it is the case for many grassroots, there is no social impact assessment for the different projects. Hence, it is difficult to evaluate their real level of action and impact on the community groups and the wider communities, and to understand how their various activities and commitments constitute a real instrument to improve the local conditions towards sustainability and an effective incentive at the council level. Although their reputation is quite important in the borough and their name is well-known by words of mouth, most of the core members, who are long-term activists in the area, have a mixed-up and reserved feeling about their actions having tangible positive impacts on the community and influence over the council’s decision. Nonetheless, they carry on working for the cause, tackling the next agenda of the local authority around the climate emergency declaration, as they did for over 30 years. As the common denominators of many community groups, SH is challenged with internal logistic to operate, organizational issues, funding and would benefit from building in capacity to carry on actions and projects.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ A small group of motivated long-term activists for another type of bottom-up strategy: lobbying the local council over its green agenda and the climate change emergency.
- ❖ Climate emergency bringing together activists from different groups in Hackney, under SH’s initiative.
- ❖ Hackney, grassroots among local divide emerging from gentrification process.

Deptford Neighbourhood Action (DNA)

Lewisham

<https://deptfordaction.org.uk/>

Comprehensive approach, neighbourhood plan, neighbourhood forum

Mission

Deptford Neighbourhood Action is a Neighbourhood Forum (NF), as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which was amended by the Localism Act 2011. The inaugural meeting of the Deptford Neighbourhood Action, held at Deptford Lounge on 18 July 2015, launched the start of the neighbourhood plan (NP) process. The NP area falls within the boundaries of two London boroughs, Lewisham and Greenwich. After six revisions, it follows natural and human physical boundaries of Deptford (The Thames, Deptford Creek, New Cross railway line, and the borough line between Lewisham and Southwark), the existing Evelyn and New Cross ward boundaries, and the Old Deptford boundary of 1965. DNA received funding from Lewisham council to hire consultants and commissioned AECOM for the Deptford heritage report, Imagine Places (planner) to align the neighborhood plan with the planning system, and Ar-Urbanism (architects) for the Design code guideline.

“The purpose of DNA is to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of its residents and businesses, to encourage, empower and enable the involvement of all communities living and working in the defined neighbourhood area in the preparation, production and implementation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan”². The draft of the NP is under finalization process and organized around three main directions, housing, local economy, and health and wellbeing (comprising, blue-green infrastructure, air pollution and transport issues). The group is preparing for the next step, which consist in submitting their proposal to the larger community for acceptance, through the process of consultation on Pre-Submission Plan (the regulation 14), before referendum, while building their relationship with the local authorities. The design code manual is about to be published.

The adventure started with fewer people, concerned by the acceleration of undesired redevelopment projects in their area, “with poor design, not enough affordable homes, employment and green spaces delivered through the planning system of their local Plan”, and the lack of consultation over important projects. There are twelve principal members. DNA is a non-political forum but most of the members are following the political agenda, with some attempts to become councillor. Deptford area is also famous for their organized grassroots with long-term activists, fighting for the community voices to be listened or against redevelopment projects, such as The Tidemill Wildlife Garden, cynically demolished on the day of passing the climate emergency motion at the Council meeting, 27 Feb 2019. Since the NP process started in 2015, 13 redevelopment projects have been approved, among which the very contested project of Convoys Wharf on the waterfront.

In London, only 4% of the NPs are on the most deprived areas, against 24% across UK. The challenge underlined is related to the high cost needed to complete a NP. Consultants and professional skills are required to back up proposals with evidences, and with poor access to funding, within the 5 years duration of the process. The commitment of the NF members is on a volunteer basis, which is crucial and a real issue for the NP to be achieved. Another main reported challenge lies in the fact that many councils have steering groups, established with members of the community, involved in "Liveable neighbourhood programme". Such groups are often competing with NF, instead of being supportive or collaborating, and conflicts can arise easily over contested projects. This has been identified as a problem of governance, in which a major change of culture is needed³. The local authorities have been positively obstructing grassroots, when 82% of them want the control of design and location of developments⁴. In many cases, the private developers are advising the councils over their design code. The equity of participation and the synergies between different grassroots and local authorities are questioned, as it is the case in Lewisham. The borough is among the poorest in London, with many of the most deprived estates being located in Deptford and among the highest rate of homelessness.

² DNA constitution, website consulted 17 May 2019, <https://deptfordaction.org.uk/about-us/final-draft-dna-constitution/>

³ From the presentation of Finn Williams, CEO Public practice, at the conference "Neighbourhood planning in London: What next!" hold in Coin street community centre on the 21st March 2019.

⁴ Parker, G., Lynn, T. and Wargent, M. (2014) User experience of neighbourhood planning in England. Report. Locality, London.

There is a great challenge of equity and identity of the public realm shared by all the different ethnic groups and social classes, when higher income new inhabitants are taking over such space.

Another important concern addresses the participation and bringing the voices of the locals in the NP. Starting by the group itself, DNA is relatively balanced in its representativeness, although there is a majority of women. The members are meeting in Pepys library; a community space project brought up and managed by two members, on a voluntary basis. Several meetings and workshops happened in this space, where posters and information on the NP and the Convoys Wharf contested redevelopment project are provided. This is an important platform to share with a larger public and get the necessary exposure to the local residents, in order to have more participation. DNA is putting a lot of effort to communicate about the NP and organized various workshops and meetings (with children, the Vietnamese community, other grassroots, and with the master students of UCL, Greenwich and the University of Westminster, etc.). The workshops on the Design Code brought mainly a public of connoisseurs, mostly in the landscape, planning and architecture fields. DNA is actively taking part to many events (Evelyn community garden) organized by other grassroots or part of the local life. They also interact with local shop owners, tenants associations, and the local authorities, etc.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ The adventure of building a Neighbourhood Plan in a place challenged by massive redevelopments' pressure.
- ❖ The forgotten stories of Deptford reanimated by local people's voice and determination, another bottom-up strategy.
- ❖ Deptford transformation, facing past and present challenges: an area historically very rich but unknown widely⁵, unlike its neighbour Greenwich; a borough with a long lasting deprivation status, embedded multiple socio-ethnic divisions and spatial injustice or closure; a place with a strong artist's community; an area challenged by the recent new redevelopments and adverse effects of gentrification; An area of long-term activism with groups fighting for Deptford community voices to exist.

⁵ For instance, Deptford has been an important international slavery trade centre. This important aspect, which belongs to London history, is almost completely hidden and unknown by the larger public.

Transition Town Brixton (TTB), a network story in Lambeth

Lambeth

<http://www.transitiontownbrixton.org/about-ttb/>

Comprehensive approach, transition town movement

Incredible Edible Lambeth (food and greening), Brixton energy (local energy), Brixton pound and REconomy (local economy), Impact Hub (community share and care, liveability), Remakery Brixton (waste)

Mission

In the early 2007, the Lambeth Climate Action Group started to share their concerns over the dependence on fossil fuels and the need for a change in paradigm (“rethink, reconnect and relocalise”⁶), to get gentler, brighter and greener future. In 2010 Transition Town Brixton (TTB) became a community interest. TTB has the mission to support different projects from active members (and organisations) of the community, addressing the challenges of climate change, locally and at different levels. The initiative aims as “raising awareness in the community, changing behaviour, engage the whole community; train and reskill members of the community raise and generate funds and other resources and pioneer new forms of community working”⁷.

Transition Town Brixton is involved in different areas and projects, some of which have been separated or completely carried out by the organization: Buildings & Energy including Brixton Energy - Community Draught-busters and the Electricity Monitor Loan Scheme - Business and Economy, including the Brixton Pound and REconomy project - Families, involving the recently formed TTB Family Group - Food & Growing involving Incredible Edible Lambeth - Heart & Soul (called ‘Inner Transition’) - Remade in Brixton, including the Brixton Remakery project.

Transition Town Brixton is less active than in the past, due to the capacity of the core members to carry and lead projects at the moment. The group has been intensely involved in the battle against the redevelopment of Brixton market and the railways arches at the climax of Brixton’s gentrification process, and helped to launch and encourage several community initiatives, which are continuing up to now. The core members played an important role, in advising the council un-officially, and to some extent are continuing to wear that hat, as they are aware of the activities of the community groups and their champions in Lambeth and the surrounding areas. TTB is still maintaining its role as a platform for different networks, strengthening linkages with other Transition Town movements around, such as TT Crystal palace and TT Tooting, and supporting larger initiatives such as Extension Rebellion (XR). The core members meet a few times per year in the Impact Hub (which they contributed to erect, as a place for the community members to meet and discuss their projects and ideas), and recently organized open meetings in 2018-2019, to discuss Divest, Brexit issues and the a climate emergency plan from the community, after Lambeth council’s declaration⁸ on the 23rd Jan 2019. They also hosted and supported organizations and events, where they could carry on the discussions for a climate change plan for Lambeth, such as the last Eco Village event in Lambeth (July 2019)⁹.

Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL), Lambeth, <https://www.incredibleediblelambeth.org/>

Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL) is a community Interest Company, established in 2012, which aims at galvanizing people and communities through growing and celebrating food locally. Through different events and projects, such as food growing projects, IEL supports old and young at schools to learn how to grow food in a borough, which has a food heritage (over 200 growing projects by a dozen of local champions), but also suffers from food poverty and related health issues. To access locally grown healthy affordable food, has also the

⁶ From TTB website, consulted on the 30 July 2019, <http://www.transitiontownbrixton.org/about-ttb/our-history/>

⁷ From TTB website, consulted 31 July 2019, <http://www.transitiontownbrixton.org/about-ttb/our-aims-and-structure/>

⁸ “A Green party motion calling on the Leader of Lambeth Council to declare a climate emergency and bring the borough’s carbon neutrality target forward to 2030 passed in a Full Council meeting this evening (Wednesday 23rd January)”. From Lambeth Green party website, consulted 31 July 2019, <https://lambeth.greenparty.org.uk/news/2019/01/23/greens-declare-a-climate-emergency-and-bring-borough%E2%80%99s-co2-emissions-target-forward-to-2030/>

⁹ “Transition Town Brixton is hosting an inspiring bunch of organisations in the Eco Village at the Lambeth Country Show this weekend. Sunday 21 July, event: What can we do in Lambeth to fight Climate Change?”, letter from Duncan Law, from newsletter email, 19 July 2019.

capacity to strengthen welfare and create connected communities. Hence, IEL aims to “transform our local food system, by amplifying, supporting and strengthening community food activity – growing, selling and eating”¹⁰. IEL has been funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and works with different organizations (Lambeth Food Partnership, South Lambeth Botanical Institute, Garden Museum, London Freedom Seed Bank, Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses, Transition Town Brixton, Myatt’s Fields Park, The Remakery, Brixton Pound, Sustain, Incredible Edible Network). The projects are carried out by different directors, following their personal commitments. Previous projects involved Edible Bus Route, a London based award winning Landscape Architecture and Design Consultancy, creating and exploring designs that create landmarks and the first London’s Edible bus route. Another project in partnership with MakeSoil.org, aims at creating soil-making hubs in Lambeth’s community gardens. Throughout 2019, various events were organized, such as the Blooming Lambeth Awards 2019, the ‘Seed Swap and a Tribute to Ediah Levy’ at Garden museum and the IEL Harvest in Sept. IEL regularly proposes walks in Lambeth (Chelsea Fringe festival with Myatt’s Field and Vauxhall walks, etc.) to show the diverse initiatives of growing food (community gardens, city farms, orchard, school, café-shop, Blooming awards) and mapped many of them¹¹.

Incredible Edible Lambeth is not involved in community gardening as such, but has a network role, and aims at mapping and encouraging all the food and greening communities and individual initiatives in Lambeth through events, or by organizing open walks, etc. Without social impact assessment, there is a pending question on how effective such organization works, as Lambeth welcome a high number of green champions and activists, who are very active independently over decades.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ Retrospective on TTB, the first TT movement in London.
- ❖ A look into the past and present stories of successes and challenges of Transition Town initiatives network in London: with TT Brixton (Lambeth), TT Crystal Palace (Bromley) and TT Tooting (Wandsworth).
- ❖ A network story in Lambeth with TT Brixton and Incredible Edible Lambeth. Empowering the local community on the greening agenda and the climate change.
- ❖ Following green champions of Lambeth: Sue Sheehan, on edible green and food education, MamaD on food justice, and the gardeners of Myatt’s Fields Park and Brockwell Park community gardens, etc.

¹⁰ From IEL website, consulted 6 August 2019, <https://www.incredibleediblelambeth.org/about/vision-values-and-aims/>

¹¹ From IEL, consulted 6 August 2019, <https://www.incredibleediblelambeth.org/map/>

Latin village- Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCCC)

Haringay

<http://savelatinvillage.org.uk/>

<https://wardscornercommunityplan.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.wardscornerplan.org/the-plan>

Local economy, market, community plan, 'savelatinvillage' campaign, ethnic minority, contesting CPO

Mission

Latin village – Seven Sisters indoor market (also known as Pueblito Paisa of Tottenham) is one of the two important hubs with Latin Elephant (indoor market in Elephant & Castle shopping mall) for the Latin American community. Both markets are equally undergoing demolition threats, a phenomenon that is affecting numerous markets in London, such as Shepherd's Bush market in Hammersmith, Ridley Road market in Hackney more recently, etc. All of them are facing the pressure of new massive redevelopments initiated by the private sector, sometimes supported by the local authorities, in places facing strong regeneration, sharp gentrification and financialisation of the public realm. In a period of economic austerity, such markets represent a strong lung for the local economy in general, for diverse ethnic communities (Turkish, Latin American, Afro-Caribbean, etc.), a place for small businesses to develop and a place to shop for every budget. Most of them are engaged into battles to preserve their identity, in the face of financial crises as well as the way global markets operate. Small-scale markets (craft and street food) are becoming very successful attracting people with more income. Unlike traditional markets, private markets have higher value, lower logistic, and operate as market asset management. The private sector adjusts easily to the new demography and has the capacity to inject funds, where the local authority is left behind in the management task and often does not have sufficient resources to protect community assets such as traditional markets. The general demands lead toward the privatization of London markets.

More than just a market, Seven Sister market is a neighbourhood landmark and a community place, playing an important social role for the Latin American Diaspora, by weaving networks of solidarity for new and old immigrants. It is particularly responding to specific social needs for the women and the youth, being a safe place for children and empowering women in the local economy. The Latin and traders community in Seven Sisters is fighting against Grainger's redevelopment plan over TfL's land for 15 years. They started their campaign "Save Latin village" in 2012. It generated tremendous efforts to gather all the traders' and local community groups' intentions into a comprehensive document for the market's sustainable development with the surrounding neighbourhood outreach. In May of 2014, the Community Plan received a planning permission by Haringay Council, an unprecedented case in London for such a community market plan, against Grainger's redevelopment plan. The ground floor was listed as an asset of community value, and the Traders' Trust had a couple of years to officially start their project. With default on the implementation of their plan, Haringay Council pushed ahead plans with Grainger to demolish the local heritage building in Oct. 2016, which led to the second stage of campaigns in 2017.

This time, the founder triggered United Nations intervention to Save Latin Village, and met the United Nations in Geneva in February 2017 and April 2017. UN mandated a Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, on issues about minority, human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, who concluded positively on Latin village case, highlighting the vulnerability of the local minority and the damages that would cause the demolition of the market for Latin American community, and especially for women workers. Eventually, the Latin village won important concessions in a section 106 planning agreement between the local council, Haringay, and Grainger. That agreement is supposed to protect the market now, relocate it temporarily and give it a secure future in the new development. However, it is not being properly honoured and the Latin American traders are facing discrimination, harassment and intimidation tactics on a daily basis, perpetrated by the market facilitator hired by Grainger. The traders' group raised their concerns about the current market management with TfL, Haringay council and the Mayor. Latin village campaigners have been actively campaigning in 2018-2019, to raise funds mostly for the lawyers working at different levels, following the falling CPO order at the end of 2018.

While working on the re-submission of a community plan, they engaged politically with the Labour party and got on board councillors to pledge their causes and uncover publically matters such as mismanagement, abuse of authority and misconduct. The group also increased significantly their media coverage with diverse sources (several articles in different newspapers such as The Guardian, The Times, ITV news, Corporate watch, Metro news, BBC news night, Channel 4 news, The Independent, The New-York Times, etc.). The political and media aspects have been taking a lot of energy, at different levels, from internal point of view to external dissemination. There are layers of people involved in the battle, who do not specifically interact directly: The wards corner community coalition (WCCC)- Latin village campaigners, comprising some local traders of the market, the traders' trust, people from the neighbourhood and from other local community groups such as StArt, councillors and political personalities, diverse universities' students and researchers volunteering for the events, media-communication, and tasks in delivering the community plan. Additionally, diverse consultants (planners, architects, academics, business plan consultant, etc.) and lawyers are hired for the case.

Given the levels of implications and the consequences (personal and financial) for the traders involved in fighting the cause, and despite the uncertainties, and the psychological weight, facing Grainger, its market operator and the different legal procedures, the years 2018-2019 has shown a scrolling large numbers of actions, interlocutors, stakeholders, people interesting in their cause, students and diverse community groups. Finally, the community plan was submitted on 20 July 2019 and the public consultation is ongoing process.

Such case presents various challenges, which led to numerous obstacles as well as successes. The financial and governance aspects, the socio-economic factors (with some barriers as being an ethnic minority: language barrier, knowledge of the laws, institutions, and room for manoeuvre, etc.), the psychological distress and exhaustion over more than a decade of fight, the management required to involve different people at different levels, the council and political arguments, but also the first great success of delivering a community plan accepted by the planning authority, which is an unprecedented in London for a local market in such context, the incredible amount of positive energy and hope invested into the campaigns throughout the years, despite evident adversity and intimidations' tactics, not mentioning the recent courage to challenge legally and politically a CPO decision, which has been done only a few times in the planning history of London.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ A long battle against the demolition of the market, by a new redevelopment project. A community of long time activists and a virulent media campaign, which trespassed the local political arena, to reach London government and the UN.
- ❖ 15 years' war to keep Latin corner market: Adverse effects on the Latin American minority community over a long campaign. Intimidations, discriminations, organizations, psychological impacts.
- ❖ Activists in Columbia, activists in London, a figure of resistance.
- ❖ A community entrenched behind their market's walls, shaping a neighbourhood landmark.
- ❖ A market, which works as women empowerment instrument in a Latin American cultural context.

St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART)

Haringay

<http://www.startharingey.co.uk/>

Housing and green space; community-led housing project

Mission

St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART) is Community Land Trust, registered as a Community Benefit Society in 2016. It is a group of residents and workers, who initiated a community-led process for a housing development of realistic affordable households, controlled and led by the local communities in St Ann's Hospital site, unlike the private housing development, allowing 14% of the homes classified "affordable". The history started back in 2014 with the registration of the site as an asset of community value by Mary Ann Johnson Co-operative (MAJ) and the long campaign from Haringay Needs St Ann's Hospital (HaNSAH) against Barnet, Enfield and Haringay Mental Health Trust's proposal to sell off two-thirds of the St Ann's hospital site for housing. The decision processes and ways of working are community-led, which led to different campaigns (including crowdfunding events), nine consultations events, large –scale surveys (300 residents), to get the community feedback on initial plans prepared by architects.

The vision is "to build a physically and socially sustainable community integrated with the beautiful natural environment of the site"¹² and to enhance health and wellbeing with new integrated health services. The community plans propose to build on the historic capital of St Ann's buildings and landscaped gardens, with key public spaces (Peace Gardens) and sensitive new building interventions. It also aims at integrating the project with open and well-designed boundaries for accessibility and building heights, which are preventing overshadowing of neighbours and maintaining the visual connection from Chesnuts Park through to the railway woodland. The plans provide space for solar panels and roof gardens. The proposals include a variety of housing need (5-7 storey blocks apartments, 3-4 storey terraced family houses, 4 storey terraces communal living, 2 storey sheltered and supported housing) and aim at "100% genuinely affordable, secure, good quality homes for people who really need them"¹³, with 75% rented to 25% homes for sale at affordable prices (restricted resale prices, no Buy-to-Let or Buy-to-Leave investment purchasers). The local community is requested to discuss the allocations policy. The public green spaces shall benefit the local community, through a range of social outdoor facilities. The environmental aspect aims at preserving the existing rare trees and variety of wildlife, while developing in parallel a sustainability strategy to comply with multiple aspects (housing design, energy use, waste, healthy transport options, community involvement, protection of the natural environment), drawing on the Code for Sustainable Homes and the London Housing Design Guide. Retail and commercial units, community spaces and light industrial spaces are planned to promote local economy.

StART settled an open working process, organized through different sub-groups, for housing, environment, health, finance, inclusion, publicity, strategy, developer, and meet every week. Over 350 local people and 50 local organisations and businesses have become members. They have several partners (6a Architects, Maccreanor Lavington Architects, Bringelly Ltd., Confederation of Co-operative Housing, Devonshires Solicitors, CoHo Ltd). They received numerous financial support (Oak Foundation, HALA restaurant, Lush, Tudor Trust, etc), political support from diverse MPs and Deputy Mayor of London members at Haringay and London levels, and is now working with GLA, who purchased the site in 2018, and pushing for a community-led development. StART is also very well connected to other groups and supportive of local campaigns. Many members are involved in several battles (Our Tottenham, Latin corner, etc.), and the group received an important press and media coverage (The Guardian, Tottenham Independent, Time Out, 24Housing, New Economics Foundation, Architects Journal, The Daily Telegraph, Tottenham Community Press, etc.).

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ A community-led housing development to provide genuine affordable homes, and wellbeing.
- ❖ The voices of people in Haringay (Start, Lovelane TAG- Temporary Accommodation Group, WCCC- Latin Corner, Our Tottenham, etc.)

¹² From StART community masterplan "Our vision takes shape", Spring 2017, p17

¹³ Ibid, p12

Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG)

Lambeth

<http://www.loughboroughjunction.org/>

Place-making, sense of place, community empowering, employment & skills, local economy, cycling, transport, community garden, art revitalization

Mission

The area of Loughborough Junction (LJ) is a singular place. Aside from being home to large council estates, small parks and Victorian houses, the area is characterized by the many bridges and railways viaducts, slicing an urban landscape that makes any first mover feel like being in the middle of nowhere. With the overground station stop under suspended threat of closure, the area is somehow forgotten from London, and shadowed by Brixton, Camberwell, Herne Hill and Kennington well known neighbourhoods. However the arches welcome creative industries and many car repairs, drawn to the area by affordable rents and good transport links, and which strengthen the local economy. Therefore, the community is eager to transform their place into a greener, healthier area and reduce the isolation.

The Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) is a volunteer-led charity that works to improve the environment of LJ and the lives of the people in the area. Their mission is to improve the profile of LJ, by engaging public institutions, local businesses and community organizations. It was formed in 2008 following the suspected homophobic murder of a young man, Andrew Pratt, in Southwell Road. Local residents in the road and surrounding streets came together to do something positive for their neighbourhood, which they felt had been neglected for too long. LJAG has a mission to make LJ a great place to live and work through projects, which focus on community events, skill sharing, greening and place-making. LJAG works to build a strong civic society in LJ, involving many volunteers across a diverse neighbourhood, and working closely in partnership with other local organisations (neighbourhood forums, tenants and residents associations, youth centres, GP practices, local artists and businesses, etc.). It includes 'Loughborough Estate Tenants' and Residents' Association, Milkwood Estate Residents' Association, Thorlands Housing Management Society, Marcus Lipton Youth Centre, Lambeth College, Prince's Trust, Sunshine International Arts, Green Man Employment Centre, Whirled Cinema, St Gabriel's Academy, St Saviour's School, Jessop School, Michael Tippett School and many others'.¹⁴

Their projects tackle various themes that range from food growing, greening and gardening (Loughborough farm project), art and place-making (7 bridges project¹⁵), place enhancement and improvement, (Friends of Elam Street Open Space project, Rubbish Collection Services Campaign project to address the reduction of local service, greening/gardening the public space project to improve sense of ownership), local history and memory of the junction (LJWW1 Augmented reality App), and the local economy (Loughborough Junction Business Association project gather business owners to improve local products and services to the surrounding community). Other initiatives include urban planning issues (LJ master plan to improve the area with Lambeth council's collaboration), youth engagement and skills development (Youth engagement project, Made in LJ photographic project and cycle hub repairs skills learning), transport campaigns to keep LJ station as a stop from the overground service, and more recently implementing an anaerobic digestion pilot station, etc. LJAG organized several community events, street parties, art events, craft workshops, runs cycle maintenance classes, mapping project workshops, community festival, health events, etc. The Loughborough farm is a successful community food growing project, which allows social interactions with the community farm café and developed a community outreach programme on two council estates and at a local youth centre. LJAG received several funding grants to operate their projects and activities benefiting the local community. They attracted over £3 million of public investment in the area¹⁶.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ Place-making, sense of ownership and pride, in a railway junction area.
- ❖ Loughborough farm, a patchwork of community growing spaces.

¹⁴ From website, consulted 9 August 2019, <http://loughboroughjunction.org/our-partners>

¹⁵ 'an art led regeneration project focusing on improving the appearance of Loughborough Junction's many railway bridges', From LJAG website, consulted 8 August 2019, <http://loughboroughjunction.org/projects/7-bridges-project>.

¹⁶ From LJAG website, consulted 9 August 2019, <http://loughboroughjunction.org/about>

Growing Communities (GC)

Hackney, Dagenham and Barking

<https://www.growingcommunities.org/>

<https://betterfoodtraders.org/>

Food farming, community empowering, local employment and organic market

Mission

Community-led organization (not-for-profit Company with a constitution and a voluntary board) based in Hackney, since 1996, Growing Communities (GC) aims to create a more sustainable and resilient food system, based on local growing and the 'collective buying power' of communities, as a way to address climate change locally. In Hackney, they run an organic fruit and vegetable scheme while their Growing Communities Farmers' Market, the very first organic market in London (Soil Association certified) every Saturday at St Paul's West Hackney Church, provides small sustainable farmers with a fair and stable market. The group have pioneering and award-winning urban farms in Hackney and Dagenham and helped other groups in UK to settle similar veg schemes and a fair trade system with the farmers (Better Food Traders). The alliance has 12 members in London (Islington, Sutton, Kentish town, Brent, Haringay, Herne Hill, Enfield, Lewisham and Hackney founder) and beyond (Manchester, Margate, Hebden Bridge in West Yorkshire).

The producers come from different small-scale and biodynamic farms, closer to London: GC's Patchwork and Dagenham farms, and farms in Essex, Cambridgeshire, East Anglia and Kent. The farmers and growers supply the communities with a diversity of organic vegetables and fruits, fishes from the North Sea, livestock (grass-fed beef cattle and sheep, geese, chicken, poultry, pork, etc.), organic dairy (milk and cheese), organic oyster and diverse mushrooms, a variety of organic hemp products and oil, flowers, bread, fermented products (kimchi, kombucha, etc.), organic chocolate, organic lavender products, honey and beeswax from Hackney and surrounding boroughs.

The 'Grown in Dagenham' programme – funded by the Big Lottery – trains local residents, including children, in organic food growing and preparation with the aim, both of improving individual wellbeing and giving residents access to fresh local produce. GC has a strong social purpose and commitment, by trading fairly and being transparent throughout the food supply chain and by building a strong community in support of their work. They promote ecological food and farming, ways of eating and cooking, a low-impact and low-carbon food distribution system, and use the food zones as a framework to source food sustainably. GC is well known locally by environmental organizations and community groups in Hackney. They support each other's and campaign for a sustainable food system and the climate change agenda for Hackney, together with other groups, such as Sustainable Hackney, etc.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ The first organic market of London, empowering the communities and the aim to create a more sustainable and resilient food system in London and beyond.

Walworth Society

Southwark

<https://www.walworthsociety.co.uk/>

Local heritage, place identity, people's memory, place history, planning permissions

Mission

The Walworth Society was established in autumn 2011. The group aims at protecting the local architectural heritage, enhancing the local memory and stories told by people of Walworth, and preserving the green and open spaces for people. The group started their activities at the very beginning of 2012, with the project of designation of the Walworth Road as a conservation area, led by Diana Cochrane and Jeremy Leach, founders of the group. Walworth society is working on several projects over the local history of a popular area, which welcomed diversity throughout the time and the different waves of immigration. Southwark Council Conservation Area recognized the value of the buildings along Walworth road, which was designated as a Conservation Area in the early 2016. As the area is undergoing very important redevelopments, the group are campaigning to protect and show the everyday urban and architectural memory and people's place memory.

The community group is keeping a sharp eye on any new planning permissions and redevelopment projects¹⁷ of the ward (to comply with the Walworth conservation area criteria from the guidelines) and the borough, by supporting and working in synergy with other local groups, opposing planning permissions where needed¹⁸, following engagement and consultation plans¹⁹, and actively supporting different campaigns within Southwark area for people to have a say on the ongoing regeneration projects. The members keep themselves very much aware of all the major issues and elements of the public realm, endangering citizen' life and the local identity. They also take upon any opportunity, through diverse festivals, London and national historic celebrations, to highlight hidden past memories of the place and the contribution of the people to the History, for either World wars, the chartist rebellion, etc. The area welcomed the first five giraffes of UK, was famous for its tailors, for making scenery and costumes in theatrical productions, for the history of the Pullens, among others. Their actions emphasize the need to consider local identity and history, as an important component for a sustainable development, while facing sharp regeneration and gentrification.

Walworth Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) was officially designated, as the first Inner London Action zone in Feb 2018, by Historic England. Various partner organizations worked on the bid with Southwark council and it involves many local organizations over the 5 years spend, to work on several projects under the supervision and funding of the council and Historic England. Such projects aim at improving the fabric and historic buildings' appearance, learning more about the history of the area and communicating the outcomes to a wider audience, through various activities and festivals. Walworth History festival on 16-22 Sept 2018 was inaugurated, as a project on an annual basis, to show the hidden historical gems of the area, telling the history of people and their places. It took place in the Art Academy Newington (Walworth old library). Walworth Community Gardening Network WCGN (launched in Sept 2017, funded by the United St Saviour's Charity until 2019) aims at supporting community gardening across Walworth and Elephant & Castle.

The members are very well mobilized to organize activities with creative ideas to unlock hidden memories and archives that they put into great shape for the Walworth history festival of Sept 2018, and for other events in Walworth ward²⁰. Their level of engagement and organization is well noticing, as their monthly meetings regularly welcome a large group of people passionate about their area.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ Testimonies for a shared legacy of the public realm by the local residents. A group of motivated and creative citizen seeking subtle traces of the local memory and rich history of Walworth area, undergoing massive redevelopments from the private sector.

¹⁷ More recently, the group is following the Manor Place Terrace and Braganza St Workshops Redevelopment; Walworth Library & Southwark Heritage Centre and Walworth Town Hall Redevelopments;

¹⁸ Recently opposing the following applications in May 2019: Former NatWest Bank - 290 Walworth Rd and 2 & 6 Carter Place (19/AP/0442); The Leather Warehouse - Vinegar Yard, (19/AP/0404)

¹⁹ In July 2019, the concerns were raised over TfL Consultation - OKR & Traflagar Avenue Junction.

²⁰ In July 2019, Summer Walk - The Earl's Sluice Lost River; June 2019, the Pasley Park fete and history promenade with WCGN show; May 2019, WCGN Chelsea Fringe sound walk - Walworth Community Garden Sound Walk

Charlton Manor Primary School

Greenwich

<https://charltonmanorprimary.co.uk>

Sustainable education, eco-school, outdoor school, community garden, food school, healthy school

Mission

Charlton Manor Primary school was erected in Feb 1928 and is run by the motivated head teacher, Mr. Tim, whose activities involve engaging the schoolchildren with environmental issues as much as possible. He also helps create and support a network of schools and organizations with the same educational targets. The learning programme includes food education, outdoors learning with resources on different subjects to be taught outdoors ('math using outdoors', 'English using outdoors', 'worms', 'How does your garden grow?', etc.). Members of the staff includes a teaching chef and a school dinner chef, as well as a school gardener and a gardener for the community garden. A range of activities are proposed, attached to the school facilities and sustainable education engagement, such as the community garden, a plot of land within 89 acres of farm and woodland of Woodlands Farm in South London. The garden is available to other schools and organizations.

"The Community Garden has been created with the help of Woodlands Farm Trust, support from Olivier Blanc, creator of 'Henri Le Worm' App and Chris Collins the new head of Organic Horticulture for Garden Organic... Each child not only gains the experience of food growing and caring for the produce they grow whilst learning how and where food comes from they are also encouraged to work in small groups developing their team building and social skills. The children can also put their math, English and science skills to good use by linking their learning in the classroom to the real life experiences in the garden"²¹.

There is a secret garden, a teaching kitchen exclusively used to teach children how to cook all types of food, a restaurant with a chef providing healthy dishes, and the school welcomes bees and chicken, with many staff and children now trained in beekeeping. Where possible organic ingredients sourced locally, or grown in the school's allotment and school garden are incorporated in the meals prepared by the chef. The school has a partnership with the Woodlands Farm Trust, a charity run as an education project and offering education on diverse habitats (farm yare, ponds, woodland and hay meadows), and obtained an allotment, where children visit the animals and look after them.

Charlton Manor has a silver Eco-School award, won various distinctions related to environmental aspects and sustainable education, such as: the Green Flag award²², Healthy schools London gold award²³, Healthy Schools, FairAware award (the Fairtrade Schools understanding and using Fairtrade products), Artsmark gold award from the Arts Council England (which brings learning through culture and arts²⁴), and the RHS gardening school awards- 5 stars²⁵ (which involves the development of a gardening project, growing a range of plants and understanding environmental issues, harvest the produce professionally and fundraise the garden until passing on skills to others and engaging the local community). Charlton Manor has been awarded the British Council's International School Award in recognition of its work to bring the world into the classroom, with different programmes involving schools in India, Holland, Nepal, Germany, Gambia, France and Belgium. More specifically, Charlton Manor is working on joint projects – healthy schools with a school in Bavaria to create food garden and bee keeping. The skills taught to children range up to landscape design, which they practice while shaping the community garden.

²¹ From Charlton Manor website, consulted 7 August 2019, <https://charltonmanorprimary.co.uk/showcase/community-garden>

²² <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/award-winners/>

²³ Charlton Manor is supported by Healthy Schools to improve wellbeing for pupils. <https://www.healthyschools.org.uk/pages/about-us>

²⁴ <https://www.artsmark.org.uk/>

²⁵ <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/school-gardening-awards>

Looking at broader considerations, the Government Office for London (GOL) established in 2007, the London Sustainable Schools Forum (LSSF)²⁶ in 2007. Its aim was to support London schools in meeting the sustainable schools framework and to become sustainable by 2020. Apart from the LSSF, various organizations (on a voluntary basis or subsidized) are helping schools to achieve a sustainable education and the Eco-School award. In Hackney borough, EcoActive (Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)), Green Schools projects (business), Education for Sustainability (community group members of Sustainable Hackney), etc. The Eco-Schools programme is currently the largest sustainable schools programme. Different levels can be awarded to primary and secondary schools, green (highest award), silver and bronze²⁷ and represent the excellence in the field of environmental activities. Schools should follow seven steps pathway and address multiple environmental themes (ten topics ranging from litter, waste, school grounds and biodiversity to healthy living, transport, global citizenship, energy, and marine).

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ A truly bright model of education for sustainability

²⁶ LSSF is now run solely by volunteers with support from a wide range of organisations, and is less active.

²⁷ Some Eco-Schools in London received the Green Flag, highest award: Valence Primary School – Green Flag since 2014, Barking & Dagenham; St Ursula's Junior School – Green Flag since 2014, Havering; St Helen's RC Primary School – Green Flag since 2013, Newham; St Luke's CofE VA Primary School – Green Flag since 2009, Newham; Vicarage Primary School – Green Flag since 2015, Newham; etc.. The eco-schools map with green-silver-bronze awards. <http://lssm.lgfl.org.uk/>

South East London Community Energy (SELCE)

Lewisham, Greenwich

<http://selce.org.uk/>

Renewable energy, affordability, fuel poverty, energy education, parent power, Eco project, solar roller

Mission

South East London Community energy (SELCE) is a not-for-profit co-operative that is helping to bring more renewable energy to Greenwich and Lewisham. Their projects aim to combat climate change and develop cleaner, fairer ways of producing electricity, by generating renewable energy that is owned and run by the people who use it. SELCE is also addressing fuel poverty alleviation, by providing advice and support with the pop-up energy advice cafes. SELCE team has raised £360,000 to install solar arrays on seven local primary schools. The community projects on solar panels involve schools, leisure centres, churches and libraries.

The idea to tackle fuel poverty started with a research program about 'people power café', led by Dr Giovanna Speciale (SELCE CEO and community development expert), in partnership with the Centre for Innovation in Energy Demand at the University of Sussex. It gave insights on the best way to give energy advice to those who are most at risk from fuel poverty. SELCE developed a sustainable business model 'virtuous circle' to operate. They raise funds from investors (Community Share Offer) used to purchase solar panels, which are put on the roofs of schools or community venues and generate low costs electricity for them (the surplus being exported to the national grid). The Feed in Tariff (government subsidy) is paid to SELCE for every unit of electricity generated with an additional payment made to every unit exported to the grid. All this is used to repay investors with a small return for maintenance and to create a fund for tackling fuel poverty in SE London²⁸. Through the café, SELCE is advising people how to lower their energy expenses.

SELCE developed several projects: Warm homes for less (help for energy bills and keeping homes warmer, through training for community groups, workers, and parents in Woolwich, ECO project on low-cost home insulation, DIY energy action online advice, energy café in Lewisham); Turning SE London solar (bringing solar panels to the community venues and schools and investing on solar panels²⁹); Future Fit Homes (encourage people to improve the energy efficiency of homes in SE London); the solar roller (portable solar-powered sound system for your community event, music festivals or outdoor party); The Hive (business support programme from Co-operatives UK and The Co-operative Bank, for people wanting to start or grow a co-operative or community enterprise).

SELCE has been supporting 2589 households with energy saving advice from their pop-up energy cafes and training sessions. They raised £370,000 from two community share offers involving 188 investors, powered 7 primary schools with solar arrays (£42,000 energy savings), saved £142,163 in energy costs over the winter of 2018/2019, avoided 200 tonnes of carbon, and got 91 household diverted from fuel poverty³⁰.

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ With over 20000 households in fuel poverty in Greenwich and Lewisham, SELCE has been doing pioneering work to combat fuel poverty by supporting over 2000 individuals and households, reducing their CO2 emissions by over a ton. The story of a group committed to help communities in southeast London to bring solar energy to their homes, their schools, their events and their pockets.

²⁸ From SELCE website, consulted 9 August 2019, <https://selce.org.uk/se-solar/our-solar-sites/selces-story/>

²⁹ Primary schools: Mulgrave, Charlton Park Academy, Bannockburn, Deansfield, Alderwood, Ashmead, Horniman.

³⁰ From SELCE website, consulted 9 August 2019, <https://selce.org.uk/se-solar/>

Churches getting green

Lambeth, City of Westminster, Hackney

Social care, green print, divest, straw-pale construction, community bonding, eco-church

Mission

In 2006, the Church of England joined the protest to fight climate change by reducing their carbon footprint. Shrinking the Footprint campaign aims the 42 dioceses and 16,000 churches to honour Christian values of protect “God’s creation”³¹. The Church is committing to cut its carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050 and many churches have already divested from funds holding fossil fuels, some are installing solar panels (Gloucester Cathedral), challenging energy-efficient materials (Holy Trinity Parish in London), or address social sustainability and greening issues. The Ecochurch Award is meant to push forward environmental values and focuses on different aspects of sustainability, such as worship and teaching, management of church buildings and church land, community and global engagement, and lifestyle³².

Holy Trinity Tulse Hill Church, Lambeth, <http://www.htth.org.uk/>

Holy Trinity Tulse Hill church is an ecochurch and received in 2017 the green church award for its project of a straw-bale building, planned and under construction by the community as a neighbourhood hub and led by Vicar Richard Dormandy (architect as well). It will be the first straw-bale church building in Europe and the largest straw-bale building in London³³. Following their slogan “Building community by building a community hall”³⁴, the action enable people from the area, qualified as vulnerable, “deprived” and known for gangs’ involvements, to shape a sense of community and belonging.

St James’s Piccadilly London, City of Westminster, <https://www.sjp.org.uk/ecochurch.html>

St James Piccadilly received the eco Church Gold Award. It is the fourth recipient in the country of a gold Eco Church Award, a recompense for attempting “to use renewable energy, reduce their carbon footprint, create wildlife-friendly areas such as a pond and wetland habitat on their land, and encourage outdoor worship and teaching”³⁵. The church has an eco-library, and is exploring eco-funerals.

St Paul’s West Hackney church, Hackney, <https://www.stpaulswesthackney.org/community>

St Paul’s West Hackney church, led by Reverend Niall Weir, envisages social sustainability by looking after the more vulnerable and those on the edges of society, such as homeless, people involved in the sex trade, people with addictions, unemployed and the young. The church is involved with other environmental networks and welcomes Growing communities’ organic market every Saturday, Film for Action events from Sustainable Hackney, or get involved with the London National Park initiative by planting trees. The church has a silver ecochurch label, and is working to achieve the green church award.

The Union Chapel, Islington, <https://www.unionchapel.org.uk/>

Community social care, equity, social inclusion

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ “Building community by building a community hall”, Holy Trinity Tulse Hill in Lambeth.
- ❖ Churches in London are putting the climate change agenda into practice: a straw-pale community hall with Holy Trinity Tulse Hill, building social sustainability with Union Chapel, supporting vulnerable people and environmental organizations with St Pauls West Hackney, reducing carbon footprint and enhancing urban biodiversity with St James’s Piccadilly London.

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pi8YVmKaEHM&feature=youtu.be>

³² From ecochurch website, consulted 1 Aug 2019, <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

³³ From the website, consulted 1 Aug 2019, <http://wecanbuildourchurch.org.uk/>

³⁴ From the trailer of Holy Trinity Tulse Hill church, consulted 1 Aug 2019,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM3gHDUvhEs&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1nsMWa-dla4mjb1oTK_wswt_Sj8tQH-blZV0wjbpx4OJDUu-sj16PILmwA

³⁵ From St James Piccadilly website, consulted 1 Aug 2019, <https://www.sjp.org.uk/ecochurch.html>

Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Team

Southwark

<https://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/southwark/camberwell-green/Safety, Liveability, knife crime, police, community group outreach>

Mission

Since 2015, a group of motivated community volunteers, led by an anti-knife campaigner (Mark Webb, nominated in May 2018 for the Met Citizen of the Year Award in recognition of all his hard work, and president of Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Ward panel), are helping the police team to fight knife crime in their neighbourhood. Like treasure hunters they look at every corner of the public space, solicited Lambeth council on the importance of safety issues, and raised money for equipment (including metal detectors and telescopic inspection mirrors, etc.), which supported the partnership between the Co-op, the police and the community.

The Camberwell police station closure announced for 15 March 2019 threatened the community team working with the police for safer neighbourhood, against the rise of youth crime and knife attacks.

“The government demands on the Met to save money is having a devastating effect on local community policing. “The loss of police stations in Southwark, such as Tower Bridge, Rotherhithe, Dulwich, and now Camberwell, has made it more difficult for locally-based Safer Neighbourhood police teams to find bases in their communities. No station, no base. “The police do not want to sell their stations, but the government are not giving them a choice. The impending closure of Camberwell police station in March, a station which has served the community for over 100 years – since 1898 – is sad. The building will probably end up being converted into posh apartments... Safer Neighbourhood Teams who currently work in the Camberwell wards will be relocated to Peckham police station but this will remove them from the communities they serve.”³⁶

Storyboard ideas

- ❖ A group of community volunteers, led by Mark Webb, an anti-knife campaigner, helping the police team to fight knife crime in their neighbourhood.
- ❖ How the community reacts to the closure of the neighbourhood police station, and organize themselves to keep a safe living environment.

³⁶ From the website consulted 20 August 2019, <https://www.londonnewsonline.co.uk/closure-of-camberwell-and-kennington-police-stations-is-weeks-away/>

Potential Film Ideas

Case selection	Main idea / storyboard	Other possibilities – key words
Sustainable Hackney, Hackney	A small group of motivated long-term activists for another type of bottom-up strategy: lobbying the local council over its greening agenda and the climate change emergency.	>> Climate emergency bringing together activists from different groups in Hackney, under SH's initiative. >> Hackney, grassroots among local divide emerging from gentrification process. Comprehensive approach, umbrella group, sustainability, energy, waste, education, environmental awareness, climate change, food, green infrastructure, transport and air quality
Deptford Neighbourhood Action (DNA), Lewisham	>>The adventure of building a Neighbourhood Plan in a place challenged by massive redevelopments' pressure. >>The forgotten stories of Deptford reanimated by local people's voice and determination, another bottom-up strategy.	>> Deptford transformation, facing past and present challenges: an area historically very rich but un-known widely , unlike its neighbour Greenwich; a borough with a long lasting deprivation status, embedded multiple socio-ethnic divisions and spatial injustice or closure; a place with a strong artist's community; an area challenged by the recent new redevelopments and adverse effects of gentrification; An area of long-term activism with groups fighting for Deptford community voices to exist. Comprehensive approach, neighbourhood plan, neighbourhood forum
Transition Town Brixton (TTB), a network story in Lambeth Lambeth	A look into the past and present stories of successes and challenges of Transition Town initiatives network in London. Focus on TTB, the first TT in London, TT Crystal Palace (Bromley) and TT Tooting (Wandsworth).	>> Retrospective on TTB, the first TT movement in London. >>A network story in Lambeth with TT Brixton and Incredible Edible Lambeth. Empowering the local community on the greening agenda and the climate change. >>Following green champions of Lambeth: Sue Sheehan, on edible green and food education, Mama D. on food justice, and the gardeners of Myatts Fields Park and Brockwell Park community gardens, etc. Comprehensive approach, transition town movement , Incredible Edible Lambeth (food and greening), Brixton energy (local energy), Brixton pound and REconomy (local economy), Impact Hub (community share and care, liveability), Remakery, Brixton (waste)
Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) Lambeth	Place-making and sense of ownership and pride, in a railway junction area.	>>Following motivated green champion in Lambeth, focusing in Loughborough farm, a patchwork of community growing spaces, with a diversity of committed locals. Place-making, sense of place, community empowering, employment and skills, local economy, cycling, transport, community garden, art revitalization
Growing Communities (GC) Hackney, Dagenham, and Barking	The first organic market of London, soil association certified, and the aim to create a more sustainable and resilient food system, based on local growing farms, while empowering the communities and providing support to farmers for a fair trade.	Food farming, community empowering, local employment and organic market

<p>Latin corner – Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCCC) Haringay</p>	<p>>>15 years campaign to keep Latin corner market: Adverse effects on the Latin American minority community over a long campaign. Intimidations, discriminations, organizations, psychological impacts. >>A long battle against the demolition of the market, by a new redevelopment project. A community of long time activists and a virulent media campaign, which trespassed the local political arena, to reach London government and the UN.</p>	<p>>>Activists in Columbia, activists in London, a figure of resistance. >>A community entrenched behind their markets walls, shaping a neighbourhood landmark. >>A market, which works as women empowerment instrument in a Latin American cultural context. Local economy, market, community plan, 'save latin village' campaign, ethnic minority, contesting CPO</p>
<p>Walworth Society Southwark</p>	<p>Testimonies for a shared legacy of the public realm by the local residents. A group of motivated and creative citizen seeking subtle traces of the local memory and rich history of Walworth area, undergoing massive redevelopments from the private sector. Sustainability is also about history and memory of the place. Digging into the local archives and portraying the voices and stories shared by local residents.</p>	<p>Local heritage, place identity, people's memory, place history, planning permissions</p>
<p>St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART) Haringay</p>	<p>Story of a community-led and transparent process for a housing development over NHS site of St Ann's hospital, to provide genuine affordable homes, and promote wellbeing in a green environment.</p>	<p>The voices of people in Tottenham (Start, Lovelane TAG, Latin Corner, Our Tottenham) Housing and green space; community-led housing project</p>
<p>South East London Community energy (SELCE) Lewisham, Greenwich</p>	<p>With over 20000 households in fuel poverty in Greenwich and Lewisham, SELCE has been doing pioneering work to combat fuel poverty by supporting over 2000 individuals and households, reducing their CO2 emissions by over a ton. The story of a group committed to help communities in southeast London to bring solar energy to their homes, their schools, their events and their pockets.</p>	<p>Renewable energy, affordability, fuel poverty, energy education, parent power, Eco project, solar roller</p>
<p>Holy Trinity Tulse Hill Church, churches getting green Lambeth, City of Westminster, Hackney</p>	<p>Holy Trinity Tulse Hill in Lambeth: "Building community by building a community hall", the first straw-bale church in Europe, for a common bond project.</p>	<p>Starting with the exploration of the green church Holy Trinity Tulse Hill in Lambeth (building the first straw-bale church in Europe), the documentary will explore how churches in London are putting the climate change agenda into practice, by building social sustainability for the most vulnerable people, supporting environmental organizations (St Paul's West Hackney), divesting funds and further actions to reduce their carbon footprint and enhancing urban biodiversity and wildlife among other actions (St James's, Piccadilly, London). Social care, green print, divest, straw-pale construction, community bonding, eco-church</p>
<p>Charlton Manor Primary School Greenwich</p>	<p>A truly bright model of education for sustainability: outdoors learning, food education with a chef, a secret garden with bees, a community garden, activities involving landscape design, international exchanges on bees and food growing, growing and harvesting organic food, while watching wildlife's biodiversity, etc.</p>	<p>Sustainable education, eco-school</p>

<p>Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Team Southwark</p>	<p>Since 2015, a group of motivated community volunteers are helping the police team to fight knife crime in their neighbourhood. They are led by an anti-knife campaigner, Mark Webb, nominated in May 2018 for the Met Citizen of the Year Award in recognition of all his hard work, and president of Camberwell Green Safe Neighbourhood Ward panel. Like treasure hunters they look at every corner of the public space, solicited Lambeth council, and raised funds for equipment with a partnership between the Co-op, the police and the community.</p>	<p>How the community reacts to the closure of the neighbourhood police station, and organize themselves to keep a safe living environment. Safety, Liveability, knife crime, police, community group outreach</p>
<p>Other cases</p>		
<p>Peckham Vision, Southwark, + all groups</p>	<p>“Things don’t just happen”: title and theme, suggested by Eileen Conn, activist for decades and leader of Peckham Vision community group. The documentary proposes to underline the hard work and commitment over years, behind community groups, to gather volunteers and engage people on difficult battles.</p>	<p>Local heritage, place identity and urban history, planning permissions and people’s voice</p>
<p>Other ideas</p>		
<p>All groups</p>	<p>Trust and confidence: relationship between academics and community groups. Gaining trust and confidence.</p>	<p>Trust and confidence building, partnerships</p>
<p>All groups</p>	<p>The personal and its interplay with the dynamics of the group: community groups are a human adventure, where each individual, their interactions with others and their background interplay in the successes and failure of the enterprise.</p>	<p>Group and individuals’ relationships</p>

About the method

The research aims to understand how London's neighbourhoods are making the transition to sustainability.

Here, local sustainability refers to the social, economic, environmental and energy concerns, including their interactions. The key themes for the transition to a much more sustainable future are defined in concert with the local communities. The first step of the research was to canvas grassroots initiatives across greater London that encompassed a comprehensive approach to local sustainability. Our initial inquiries revealed that most if not all groups were tackling their problems by focusing on specific aspects of environmental concerns, such as liveability, or ongoing issues that address place-making processes in their neighborhoods and beyond.

Research conditions to approach the initiatives

The choices of the case studies among the numerous grassroots organizations that we identified followed various considerations, mainly derived from extensive fieldwork and discussions with local champions

leading the grassroots efforts. Although the community business, charities and voluntary sector share common interests and interact with grassroots, the selection focussed first on the community groups, with the specificity of their modus operandi and challenges. The research favored the status of community-led initiatives working with groups on a voluntary basis from one side, and highlighted as well specific programs or institutions working with the community (church, police, and school) mostly on a voluntary basis, as such structures may propose innovative model for the community livability. From over a score of grassroots initiatives across greater London, a concentration was observed in Lambeth (nesting the first Transition Town movement in London), Southwark, Hackney, Lewisham (one of the most deprived areas), and Haringay. All of them are now undergoing sharp redevelopments, regeneration and gentrification processes.

The case studies that we observed are addressing different themes.

Some encompass sustainability using a comprehensive approach, such as transition town movements or the neighbourhood plan. Others focus on developing community projects for diverse themes (energy, biodiversity, recycling, education, etc.). Still others address regeneration and spatial justice issues that result from the massive redevelopments undertaken by the private sector, and tackling housing and affordability; local and circular economy; local heritage and identity; energy and fuel poverty; food production; greening public spaces; social care (wellbeing, health, employment and skills, vulnerable people, homeless, youth and elderly people, etc.); sustainable education; arts; and ecology, environmental and climate change related concerns such as biodiversity, energy, divesting from fossil fuel, sustainable fashion, plastic consumption and waste.

The first step was based on information provided by internet websites and social media. The level of activity in social media helped to understand the ongoing commitment of the groups. The current state (degree) of activity of the grassroots initiative played a role in the initial selection. Some groups benefited from earlier success and activity, but were not so influential anymore, as they stopped working or changed their status and nature of intervention. This could have been by being integrated into larger project, or the initiatives being supported by their local council, or by turning to community interest companies. To some extent, some famous models, which already have been researched and have received strong publicity, were put aside (for example Bed ZED is now internationally known) to favour and promote ongoing local and small-scale efforts.

The impact and nature of the projects and groups were also considered. On one hand, some initiatives are small and only locally implemented, but carry a strong potential to inspire others to innovate. On the other hand, some groups are challenging the planning system and the relationship with the local and London authorities for more inclusive and bottom-up place-making processes. This can occur through planning permissions' observation and battles, embarking on making a neighborhood plan, or through lobbying and activism. The significance of their actions can be extended to the rest of the community and beyond for the message they develop (Peckham Vision, Transition Town, etc.) or the institutional tool they reinforced (a neighborhood forum, for example).

Such initial selection was also conditioned by the accessibility of the community groups. Most of them functions on a voluntary basis and struggle to find enough people and time to operate, and more particularly to

manage external interests, new members and the communication-media aspects. Accessibility is crucial, as it gave the main conditions and information on active community groups. Given, the scale of the research project across the Greater London Authority, it also helped researchers to narrow down the choices, by comparing information from one group to another, and to find interesting community groups through the strength of their network. Additionally, the great number and variety of community groups and NPOs we studied makes it difficult to characterize the general scene, and to evaluate their state of activity. Most of the groups were approached face to face by tracking events advertised in social media and their websites. The selection was made from fieldwork observations (meetings, events, Annual General Meetings) and from words of mouth with different groups' interlocutors, in order to refine the first assessments.

This last characteristic raises the issue of socio-demographical bias of representativeness of the groups and the people they reach. At first approximation, most of their representatives are women, white, aged, middle-class, and educated (among which are many retired academics in human and environmental sciences, architects, planners and landscape designers). Lower income people, the upper class, and ethnic community groups that are working on sustainability are less visible and harder to reach, when the question of effective community participation and consensus is raised. The segregated nature of some communities (mostly ethnic and class divisions) interfere in the level of action and the impact of community projects, which became evident in many of the cases because they have not conducted any social impact assessment. Community groups are often challenged by a lack of representativeness and difficulties to address the question of diversity and participation. Sometimes, the community voices represent mostly a few activists' voices and their close networks. Such aspect can be sharpened in boroughs, where the recent gentrification brought a new local prosperity but also strong visible divides, over the last decade.

Community groups are like human 'factories', where each endeavour is shaped by its members' personal character, ambition and willingness. Some groups exhibit singularities in their internal *modus operandi*, which reflect, amongst other things, their members' actions, the expression of deep concerns and anxiety over long battles, the ambiguous status of hierarchy or the democratic ways in the decision process within the group, the socio-demographic factors, and their economic capacity to operate, create and capture social benefit. The viability of the groups and their projects often seems to rely on a delicate measure of personal vs group relationships and the capacity to encompass strategic thinking over members' recruitment, logistic, funding and projects.

On a recent note, many **community groups are challenged by and / or encouraged by the rise of Extension Rebellion (XR)**, whom contribution could be complementary to some long lasting environmental activists groups. Unlike many grassroots, XR has the strong capacity to mobilize hundreds of members regularly for their different activities throughout the different branches in London, while addressing similar issues with different tactics.

Primary factors that we researched in the case studies

The case studies reflect different aspects of sustainability, tackled by different groups. While some grassroots groups tend to specialize and address one issue, such as energy, or sustainable education; others cover various aspects of sustainability. The selected cases highlight grassroots working on a neighbourhood plan, transition town group, and individual approaches (community energy and fuel poverty issues, sustainable education, neighbourhood safety, greening and food, local heritage and identity, local economy, and liveability). To study the cases required getting information relevant for each case as follows. Such primary factors can be trimmed down, as they follow the specificity of the selected case, the local context and actions undertaken, the research conditions and involvement, the community interest, and the potential ideas for a film.

The methods for analyzing the case studies include semi-structured interviews with active and key members of the community groups, volunteers, campaigners and consultants working for them. Publications on websites and social networks, specific reports, London Plan, local plans and planning documents (for some groups), notes from conferences, meetings, events and workshops, are also considered. Each case study is structured according to the following list:

- ❖ **ABOUT:** Name, borough, contact info | Location | Local context (specific need, socio-cultural or economic factors, etc.) | History / main chronology | Community structure (potential changes of status, etc.) | Funding (volunteers, crowd funding, charities and trust, local public subsidies, etc.)
- ❖ **PEOPLE:** Members | representativeness of the group (socio-demographical aspects) | Main network (partners, such as the council, private sector, academic, other groups) | Participation (steering members, volunteers, strategy to get people involved, etc.) | Political involvement
- ❖ **GOALS:** Themes / sustainability aspects | Missions / objectives | Associated missions | Strategy (current and future steps) | Projects and Activities (events, campaigns, meetings, etc.)
- ❖ **RESULTS:** Level of action and accomplishments | Projects' impact (social and economic benefit, values or potentialities, development of the project itself, replicability and/or scalable impacts from the neighborhood, to the borough, London and beyond) | Challenges and obstacles
- ❖ **RESEARCH CONDITIONS:** Author involvement | Research method (specificity according to the group) | Notes on the field's observations
- ❖ **INTEREST:** Distinctiveness | Storyboard - film ideas (political, battles, archives, intrigue, art, psychological aspects...)

Researcher participation

The overall research method is exploratory, conducted by participant observation and action. In many cases, the researcher is member of the steering group committee and/or is helping the logistics of different events, by attending or participating in events, meetings, workshops, helping with the editing of the draft Neighbourhood Plan (DNA), and organizing exchanges between the master students of the University of Westminster (modules "Public Realm" for DNA, "Place and experience" for Latin village case study) and local groups. In some cases, the researcher was soon asked to contribute, not only through volunteering for different events, but by taking charge of a project, and by sharing academic expertise, such as funding application, evaluation of the level of activities, social impact assessments, or community plan for a planning permission, etc.



Left- 4 Sept. 2018, SELCE AGM, Mycenae House, Greenwich /



Right- 1 March 2019, Sustainable Hackney, Film event- "The chocolate case", St Paul's West Hackney Church



Left- 23 March 2019, DNA meeting with planner Angela Koch on the neighbourhood plan draft, Pepys resource center /



Right- 16-22 Sept 2018, Walworth history festival, Art Academy Newington (Walworth Society).



Left- 28 Sept 2018, London schools food conference, Conference with Charlton Manor, London City Hall /
Right- 6 Dec 2018, Transition Town Brixton 10 year anniversary, Impact Hub, Pop Brixton



Left- 30 March 2019, Growing Communities Saturday market, St Paul's West Hackney Church /
Right- 29 Sept 2018, Start AGM



Left- 1 Nov 2018, Demonstration Latin corner on the day of a private meeting from Grainger developer over their case
Right- 12 May 2018, Latin village, view inside and outside the market.

Considerations and limitations of the method

In many cases, building trust and gaining confidence of the members became necessary, over a long period of participation in the activities of the group, in order to access data, meetings, and interview protagonists. This aspect is the most important condition of the research, and a crucial factor for a many groups.

The observational capacity of the researcher is challenged on the ground, by the immediate needs and community groups' interests. Such aspect questions the research agenda upstream and more fundamentally the relationship between academics, Universities and community groups. While for some cases, the observation is facilitated by the group; for most of the cases, a certain degree of commitment, well-balanced exchanges or sometimes partnership is sought. The nature of commitments, sometimes irregular from one group to another, and the partial access to information for some community groups could represent another limitation to the research method. It is, however, a potential way to orientate and comprehend the study of the case toward specific aspects, relevant for a film storyboard.

The method to be employed in filming will build on each cases' context and specificity, in order to obtain different perspectives and narratives, with either a common or several distinct photographic features.

Appendix - Other cases of potential interest

Other potential cases (list is not exhaustive)	location	Themes, singularities, storytelling aspects
Incredible Edible IEL	Lambeth	Edible food. Greening.
Peckham vision	Southwark	"Things don't just happen" (from Eileen Conn, activist for more than 20 years in Peckham and Southwark) – long term efforts
St Thomas & St Stephen, Southwark diocese	Lambeth	Church involved in sustainability (comprehensive) in deprived areas.
Artists' community in Deptford	Lewisham	Local economy, identity and skills. Artists' studios: Creekside, Second floor studios, Enclave
Wenlock barn Tenant Management Organisation	Hackney	Shoreditch deprived estate with great involvement of the community. Tenant management organization is a model for social care, livability aspects and greening.
Local energy adventure partnership	Camden-Tower Hamlets	Organic waste. Small-scale pilot system for Anaerobic digestive station. Advising LJAG and planning a 2 nd pilot system. Innovative for the scale and ongoing process (logistic, fertilizer and soil, economically viable, etc.). Collaboration with UCL researcher.
EcoActive	Hackney	Sustainable education. Company working with many schools. Interesting work and future project on deprived estate in Hackney.
Women's environmental network	Tower Hamlets	Greening. Social care. Food. Many ethnical groups such as community garden for Bangladeshi women, etc. Interesting.
Transition town Crystal Palace	Lambeth	Sustainability, comprehensive. Very active.
Transition town Tooting	Lambeth	Sustainability, comprehensive. Very active.
The Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum	Camden	Local economy
Ridley market	Hackney	Local economy. Started a campaign in Dec. 2018, against a redevelopment project. London Afro-Jamaican market which represents a cultural asset. Early stage of the battle (unlike Latin corner).
Meanwhile Space CIC	Lambeth	Local economy. Company somehow helping small businesses by occupying meanwhile spaces for a cheap rent. Having co-working spaces in various borough (Lewisham, PLACE — Ladywell, a famous project in Lewisham)
Elephant and Castle –Latin elephant	Southwark	Local economy. Latin American community market threatened by Delancey developers. They lost the battle, as the shopping mall will be demolished, but are negotiating replacement of units in the new plan...to be followed
Coin street community builders	Southwark	Local economy.
PEACH -- People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House	Newham	Housing, community-led project
Brixton green	Lambeth	Community led housing at a major scale, which includes social and affordable housing. They started a campaign in Dec 2018 for Lambeth council to respect their agreement. GOOD STORY and very interesting plan but very difficult to access.
RUSS -- Rural Urban Synthesis Society	Lewisham	Community led housing at a small scale, which includes social and affordable housing. They are successful and developed models for the planning and architectural sides. GOOD STORY and very interesting case, but not very open for collaboration. Hard to access.
Save Cressingham Gardens	Lambeth	Housing.
London Community Land Trust	Lambeth	Housing. Supported by the council. They implemented a model for community -led project, which appears to be quite rigid (according to other groups' opinions).
Museum Freecycle	Kensington	Memory and history of the community
London national park city	London wide	Interesting project from London, which find echoes in all small community groups with festival and events.

Nye Beval – Clapton Park and Millfields Estates Tenant Management Organisation	<u>Hackney</u>	Greening. TMO struggling to bring the inhabitants into greening, but trying diverse small strategies to get more participation among diverse, rather poor and ethnic communities.
Camden Highline	<u>Camden</u>	Greening
Guerrilla gardening - Richard Reynolds	<u>Southwark</u>	Greening. Individual greening local champion in Elephant and Castle
Green Gym in London	<u>Many boroughs</u>	Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Newham, Waltham Forest
Sutton – community farm	<u>Sutton</u>	Food. Business-community. Successful model developed for farming and delivering organic and local vegetables.
Sustainable food cities	<u>Many boroughs</u>	Food. Large-scale initiative. Greenwich, Lewisham, Hackney, Croydon, Lambeth, Islington, Nottingham, Merton, Wandsworth, Sutton.
Foodcycle	<u>Diverse boroughs</u>	Food. Bloomsbury, Hackney, Islington, Lewisham, LSE, Marylebone and Peckham
Global Garden, Global Kitchen	<u>Haringay</u>	Food.
Community food growers network	<u>Various boroughs</u>	Food
The Bromley by Bow Centre	<u>Bromley</u>	Social care, skills and employment
Safer London	<u>Southwark</u>	Social care. Actions against crime and knife prevention through education.
Lambeth, more in common	<u>Lambeth</u>	Social care. Addressing ethnical segregation and Brexit issues. Working on cohesive community. Very small groups of locals, involving the Church in their activities.
Warren Road Primary School	<u>Bromley</u>	Sustainable education. Received diverse labels, from London Sustainable schools forum.
Cheam Fields junior School	<u>Sutton</u>	Sustainable education. Received diverse labels, from London Sustainable schools forum. (Infant and primary as well).
Glebe School- secondary special	<u>Bromley</u>	Sustainable education. Received diverse labels, from London Sustainable schools forum.
London Sustainable Schools Forum	<u>Many boroughs</u>	less active than before apparently
Brixton energy + Repowering London	<u>Lambeth</u>	Energy. Became pilot project with Brixton energy for solar panels installation.
Community renewable energy Wandsworth	<u>Wandsworth, Merton,</u>	Energy. Solar panels. Interesting and motivated team (mostly men; exception) in a borough, which is not very much active in sustainable initiatives. Contrasting example.
Hackney Energy	<u>Hackney</u>	Solar panels in public facilities; negotiating with council to divest from fossil fuel and withdraw the pension fund from fossil fuel.
Se24 sustainable energy	<u>Lambeth, Southwark</u>	Energy.
EN10ERGY	<u>Haringay</u>	Energy.
Power up North London	<u>Camden-Islington</u>	Energy.
Frack off London	<u>South-East (Surrey, Sussex)</u>	Energy. Fossil fuel divesting. Activists group, organizing sitting to stop fracking in GLA. Were arrested, under trial and released.
XR Extension Rebellion	<u>Many boroughs</u>	Climate emergency radical actions. Activism to raise awareness on the climate. Asking for a change from the government
Reclaim power Divest power		

In blue/grey, community groups which have been approached.

In black, those which could be interesting to approach, based on research, discussions and fieldwork.



www.londonsoundings.com

 LondonSoundings @UrbMimi