

Dalston Square Culture and Community Engagement Forum
6pm, Tuesday 4 November 2014
Education Room, Dalston CLR James Library
MINUTES

Present: Ellen Cosgrove, Dalston Square resident
 Ben Collins, Dalston Square resident
 Mark Loftus, Dalston Square resident
 Lucy McMenemy, Cultural Programme Officer, LBH
 Ted Rogers, Head of Libraries, Heritage and Culture, LBH

Apologies: Cllr Soraya Adejare
 Cory Defoe, Dalston Town Centre Manager, LBH
 Juliet Formby, Age UK
 Marie Murray, Dalston Eastern Curve Garden
 Monica Sever, Children and Young People, Library Service, LBH

Notes: Minutes by Lucy McMenemy (LBH)

Item		Action
1.	<u>Welcome/Introductions / Apologies</u>	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></p> <p>Plans for an 'Anorak Summer Fete' in Dalston Square didn't get developed due to other commitments that Anorak Magazine had this summer.</p> <p>Plans for the official launch of Dalston Square, as described in the minutes, were cancelled. If such an event takes place in the future, it will be developed by the Council's Regeneration Team.</p> <p>Other matters arising were covered in the agenda items below.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Dalston Christmas Market update</u></p> <p>City Showcase, the organisers of last year's Dalston Christmas Market, have decided to hold the market in St John's Churchyard in Hackney Central this year. This is because they need more space for more stalls. It has been re-branded the 'Hackney Winter Village'.</p> <p>This news has been disappointing for many people, including the retailers around the square, as the event last year was seen as a highlight of the square's cultural programme.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Review of recent events</u></p> <p><u>Tulin Dance School Annual Picnic and Students' End of Year Performances 22nd June 2014, 12noon-5pm</u></p> <p>The Tulin School of Ballet presented a showcase of the school's ballet pupils. It was free to all and suitable for all ages. There was a good audience turnout, which provided a good opportunity to promote the summer's forthcoming events.</p> <p>(Tulin School of Ballet has since moved to Haringey and it is very</p>	

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	<p>unlikely that they will propose to hold future events in Dalston Square.)</p> <p><u>The Square of Stories 12 July – 2 August, 1pm</u></p> <p>Organised by Hackney’s Cultural Development Team, these story-telling events celebrated the presence of the Dalston CLR James Library and Hackney Archives on the square. All events took place under the new pop-up tent and there were two performances per day.</p> <p><u>1) 12 July – A Hackney Motley – stories from the Hackney Archives.</u> This was a sharing of the stories discovered by artists who had just completed a six-month residency in the Archives. (The project was commissioned by the Art House Foundation - local artists’ studios on Laburnam Street – and is supported by Arts Council England.)</p> <p>The event comprised a series of performances and activities relating to research topics chosen by the artists. There was a minimal audience for this event.</p> <p><u>2) 19 July – Paul Rubinstein – musical stories.</u> Paul Rubinstein is a storyteller specialising in 'musical stories'. He weaves music, singing, sound-scapes and instrument playing into the fabric of the stories to make them come to life.</p> <p>These sessions were really successful. Over 50 people attended each session.</p> <p><u>3) Griot Chinyere – stories from Africa</u> Griot Chinyere tells children’s stories from Africa. She came with a team of story-tellers and a drummer, and attracted a specialist audience from all over the UK as well as local families and local story-tellers. Approx 50 people attended each performance.</p> <p><u>4) Olivia Armstrong – Foolish stories from around the world</u> Olivia Armstrong tells stories of "wise fools" and included the fools of villages in England, fools on errands, fools on journeys etc. The sessions were full of interaction and attracted an audience of approx 50 people per session.</p> <p><u>Watching the World Go By – intergenerational street theatre</u> <u>16 August, 1pm</u></p> <p>Watching the World Go By was an intergenerational, participatory show where 10 young people and two older residents took part alongside Mimbres’ professional acrobats to create characters and scenes inspired by the history and street-life of Dalston. These sketches were developed in workshops leading up to the event, and were incorporated into Mimbres’ highly-skilled acrobatic theatre performance.</p> <p>Approx 150 people attended this performance.</p> <p>Mimbres is based in Tyssen Street, Dalston and is supported by the Arts Council England.</p> <p><u>The Hackney Playbus – 9 and 23 August 1-3pm</u></p>	

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	<p>The Hackney Playbus visited the square for two Saturdays. The converted double-decker bus contains a host of playful things to do for the under 5s, that can spill out onto the square. It was well-received by local families and is easy to organise - suitable for return visits.</p> <p><u>The Hackney Circle launch, 17 September 2014</u></p> <p>The main purpose of this pilot project is to better-connect older residents to the cultural life of Dalston, in particular Dalston Square.</p> <p>The launch event in Dalston Square comprised stalls, refreshments, two performances by the brass band Brassroots and speeches by project partners under the pop-up tent. Approx 90 people attended, many of whom have not been to the square before.</p> <p>Since the event, the project has continued until 12 November and has introduced older residents to many of the new (and also established) businesses and cultural spaces in the area through weekly special events, taster sessions, opportunities and special offers.</p> <p>The pilot project will be evaluated before any future plans are made.</p> <p><u>The Expert View: Light-box Exhibition 24 October – 16 December 2014</u></p> <p>Daily Life Ltd is an arts and mental health charity, funded by Arts Council England and led by artist Bobby Baker. Daily Life Ltd aims to investigate and celebrate daily life and its limitations, promoting the abilities of people with lived experience of mental distress through the arts, collaborative research and diverse participation.</p> <p><i>The Expert View</i> is an all-weather installation of ten 4' x 8' illuminated light-boxes, displaying an exhibition of artworks by artist Bobby Baker alongside selected artworks produced by others who attended drawing workshops over the summer. Workshop participants were drawn from the organisation's local network of arts and mental health groups and mental health professionals in Hackney and beyond.</p> <p>Workshop participants developed drawings reflecting on the theme of 'expertise' around mental health. The viewer does not know which workshop drawings are by people with professional expertise, and which by people with personal experience of mental health services.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Forthcoming events</u></p> <p><u>Christmas Carols with Age UK East London, Saturday 20 Dec, 4.30-6pm</u></p> <p>A free Christmas Carol event for all under the pop-up tent. The event will include performances by a number of local choirs, stalls by local services linked to Age UK and sales of mince pies and various beverages. Some of the performances will be supported by backing tracks on the square's calibrated PA system.</p> <p>Everyone is welcome to join in!</p>	

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	<p>All income raised through sales will cover event costs and profits will go towards the charitable work of Age UK East London.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Future plans for cultural programming in Dalston Square</u></p> <p>Ted Rogers, Head of Libraries, Heritage and Culture explained that the cultural programme in Dalston Square has been developed over the last three years using a finite pot of funding. The Council's Cultural Development has been responsible for overseeing the management of the funds and the delivery of the cultural programme. Thanks to the input of many local organisations and the members of the Dalston Square Culture and Community Forum, the programme has been successful in animating the square and in benefiting many different groups of people in Dalston, who have become audiences and participants in the programme.</p> <p>This funding has now been spent and, effectively, the role of the council's Cultural Development Team is now complete.</p> <p>However, the council recognises the value of the Dalston Square Culture and Community Forum, and proposes to continue to hold quarterly meetings with the community to assist in overseeing any future programming in the square.</p> <p>The way the programme is planned will change, as the Cultural Development team will no longer be in a position to commission events, as it has done in the past. From now on, the cultural programme will comprise events and projects proposed by organisations that have identified their own sources of funding and are in a position to coordinate the delivery of the events themselves – an approach demonstrated by the current proposal by Age UK.</p> <p>The Cultural Development Team (Lucy McMenemy and Petra Roberts) will be available to give advice on proposals and to perform a brokering role between event organisers and the local community. As they do across the whole of Hackney, they will be able to give advice on funding applications, particularly to Arts Council England.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>Ben Collins observed that the cultural programme requires coordination as well as funding to run smoothly.</p> <p>Whilst the Cultural Development team will be involved in sustaining the forum, the organisations proposing events will need to be able to manage all aspects of the delivery of their events, as well as fund-raise.</p> <p>It was suggested that more could be done to involve local organisations in the programme, such as the clowns associated with Holy Trinity Church.</p> <p>Other ideas for suitable events for the square in the future included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers markets / markets by local estate growing projects • A growing project in the square, possibly with a temporary 	

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	<p>raised bed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local bee keepers' event • Library and archive projects, regularly bringing their activities out into the square • Plays by the Arcola • Outreach activities by the local heritage sector, such as the Geffrye Museum 	
7.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>6pm, Tuesday 10 February 2015, at Dalston CLR James Library, in the Education Room (2nd Floor)</p>	