

**Dalston Square Culture and Community Engagement Forum**  
**6pm, Wednesday 12 March 2014**  
**Education Room, Dalston CLR James Library**  
**MINUTES**

**Present:** Carolina Caicedo, The Decorators  
Tahlia Coombs, Heritage Manager, LBH  
Fiona Dufellen, Dalston Square resident  
Melek Erdal, Café Route  
Lucy McMenemy, Cultural Programme Officer, LBH  
Marie Murray, Dalston Eastern Curve Garden  
Suzanne O’Connell, The Decorators  
Tulin Ozsoy, Tulin Dance School of Ballett  
Nanette Rigg, City Showcase  
Monica Sever, Children and Young People, Library Service, LBH

**Apologies:** Ellen Cosgrove, Dalston Square resident  
Cory Defoe, Dalston Town Centre Manager, LBH  
Dominic Ellison, Managing Director, HCD  
Juliet Formby, Age UK  
Cllr Michele Gregory, LBH  
Tina Jadav, Regeneration Team, GLA  
Cllr Sophie Linden, LBH  
Ted Rogers, Head of Libraries, Heritage and Culture, LBH

**Notes:** Minutes by Lucy McMenemy (LBH)

Item		Action
1.	<b><u>Welcome/Introductions / Apologies</u></b>	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></b>  The minutes were approved.	
3.	<b><u>Update on premises license application for the square / new PA system</u></b>  The Premises License for Dalston Square is still pending confirmation from the licensing team.	LM to follow up
4.	<b><u>New pop-up tent for the square</u></b>  A new pop-up tent is being purchased for the square. The tent will be easy to erect and take down when events take place and will serve two purposes: it will create shelter from the weather and will create a focal point for small events.  At the end of March / early April, Hackney’s Street Scene contractors will embed anchor points in the square for the tent to attach to. Apologies in advance for a day or two of disruption whilst the installation takes place.	
5.	<b><u>Review of recent events in the square</u></b>  <b><u>City Showcase: Dalston Christmas Market</u></b> City Showcase presented the Dalston Christmas Market on Sunday 1	

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	<p>December 2013. The Market filled the square with 36 stalls selling the work of emerging designer-makers and also four street food stalls. The aim of the event was to create a platform for emerging designers to display and sell their works.</p> <p>Products on sale included t-shirts, ceramics, artists' prints, children's clothes and toys, bags, knitwear, home-wares etc.</p> <p>The stall holders were selected by a panel of representatives from City Showcase, local businesses and Hackney Council.</p> <p>It is estimated that over 3,000 people came to the market from all over London, other parts of the UK and even other countries, thanks to the PR generated about the event commissioned by City Showcase.</p> <p>All stall holders reported good sales – many sold out, including all of the food stalls. Surrounding businesses (Café Route and the Library Café) reported that the event created the best custom for them since they opened.</p> <p>A programmed stage presented a range of local performers including four primary school choirs, Vox Voices (a female choir led by local musician Tara Franks); a new, ad hoc community choir formed for one day as part of the event led by singer Iris Ederer; and a selection of singer-song writers. There were issues with the PA system – sound levels were not fantastic. All school choirs were delighted to have opportunity to perform and the event was perceived by them to be child-friendly.</p> <p>Decorations in the square included a christmas tree decorated by local designer Louise Gray; and a display of hand-made lanterns produced through community workshops at the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, as part of their Festival of Light.</p> <p>The market stalls were provided and set up at 6am on the Sunday by Ray Linge. There were no complaints about noise from any residents.</p> <p>The entire market was covered by a large marquee to mitigate against bad weather, which was set up the previous evening. In the event the weather was good.</p> <p>Hackney Winter Night Shelter was invited to take a stall and they reported that they made more money at the market than at any previous fundraising event.</p> <p>Coinciding with the market, the Chocolate Factory N16 artists' studios in Farleigh Place held their annual Open Studios Days on Saturday and Sunday. City Showcase promoted both events together and the Chocolate Factory reported a great turnout.</p> <p>Whilst the market took place, the library presented a range of free 'Make your own Christmas Present' workshops, led by local artists. The workshops invited visitors to make pop-up Christmas cards, paper beads, milagros, spinning tops and Christmas decorations. The workshops were very popular and the library reported 1,500 visitors to the library that day</p>	

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	<p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>LM noted that the market was the biggest event to have taken place in Dalston Square so far and asked forum members, particularly those who are residents of Dalston Square, for their feedback on the way that the market 'took over' the square – were there any concerns about the scale of the event or were there any other issues?</p> <p>Fiona Duffellen and Melek Erdal – both residents of Dalston Square – reported that they had not heard any complaints or issues subsequently being raised at the Dalston Square Resident Association meetings. It was noted that they were both involved in the event themselves.</p> <p>Melek Erdal said the event was the first time that the community had really effectively been brought together in the square and that it had had a very positive impact on developing a meaningful role for the square. Others agreed that it was a good use of the square and helped to define its purpose as a community space.</p> <p><b><u>Landsky: From to Page to Screen</u></b></p> <p>Monica Sever outlined the work that Landsky undertook with young library users leading up to world book day on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Landsky organised a film-making project which invited young library readers to make trailers of books being promoted on World Book Day. Their completed trailers are now being shown at the Rio and Hackney Picture House.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Proposals for forthcoming events</u></b></p> <p><b><u>The Decorators: Hackney Hall, 12 May – end of June 2014</u></b></p> <p>Suzanne and Carolina from the Decorators outlined the background of the project and its main purpose – to better connect older residents to the cultural life of Dalston, in particular Dalston Square.</p> <p>The project's trajectory has changed since the Decorators last updated the forum. It has moved away from trying to find ways to make the outdoor space of the square more comfortable for older residents and has instead become focused on how the commercial, cultural and community spaces located on or near the square could become involved in supporting older residents to access and enjoy what they have to offer on an everyday basis.</p> <p>A trial visit to Café Route has already taken place with some residents of Keswick Lodge and some referrals through Age UK. The participating residents really enjoyed the food and the experience as a whole.</p> <p>A pilot phase to the project will aim to introduce older residents to more of the new (and also established) businesses and cultural spaces in the area. This will be done through a series of weekly special events, taster sessions, opportunities and special offers throughout May and June 2014.</p> <p>The first launch event will be at the library on 12<sup>th</sup> May and will involve a</p>	

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	<p>discussion about growing older, possibly involving the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age.</p> <p>The Decorators are currently discussing the project with a range of potential project partners locally. Collectively, these partners will be called the 'Hackney Hall'.</p> <p>The Hackney Hall communications strategy will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hackney Hall signage / billboard in Dalston Square</li> <li>• Posters in Hackney Hall venues / spaces</li> <li>• Bespoke upholstered Hackney Hall seating in all venues / spaces</li> <li>• Invitations to attend events</li> <li>• Hackney Hall window stickers in participating venues / spaces - a kind of standard mark to indicate that the space is older-people friendly</li> </ul> <p>The communication strategy will not rely heavily on on-line marketing – this media is not the most accessible format for older residents.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>The proposal was welcomed by all and its potential to make an important contribution to the wellbeing of older residents at risk of social exclusion was noted. The earlier change in direction by the Decorators, that switched the focus of the project to the partnership approach, was commended.</p> <p>Existing barriers to enjoying everyday civic life in Dalston amongst older residents were discussed. The Decorators' research has identified the following barriers amongst residents of Keswick Lodge and Parton Lodge, two Supported Housing schemes located on Rhodes Estate run by Hanover Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitual isolation, staying at home</li> <li>• Not having someone to go out with</li> <li>• Funding being cut for regular meeting groups</li> <li>• Fear of going out after dark</li> <li>• Lap tops being open on café tables</li> <li>• Café prices</li> <li>• Unsuitable furniture, not comfortable</li> <li>• Noise</li> </ul> <p>The point was made that not all older people experience the same barriers and that social class may also be a factor on whether people feel comfortable going into a given business / space. The involvement of the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age at the project's launch event was queried.</p> <p>The numbers of older people anticipated to take part from Keswick and Parton Lodges and Age UK are relatively small – perhaps 10 per event. However, the project is open to everyone over the age of 60 and will be promoted widely to develop a strong up-take.</p>	

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	<p>The Archives could become active partners in this project. Lots of potential for regular volunteering.</p> <p>The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden is also keen to be part of the project.</p> <p>The Dalston Darlings were mentioned as possible partners.</p> <p>The skills that the older residents have could be recognised through this project.</p> <p>The legacy of the project was discussed – there is a risk in starting something useful and then not being able to continue when the funding runs out.</p> <p>LM suggested that in order to secure longer term funding, a pilot project is required to demonstrate the value of the idea. The pilot phase will identify the project’s strengths and weaknesses and will also help to identify what it will take to enable the project to continue i.e. on-going coordination requirements – and how much that will cost.</p> <p>Opportunities for future funding are to be explored, e.g NESTA, ACE etc. (Melek mentioned Dalston Bridge and the possibility of the fund’s future interest in this project as it develops.)</p> <p><b><u>Anorak Village Fete – possibly May half term 2014 – date to be confirmed</u></b></p> <p>Following the great success of the Anorak Summer Fete in Dalston Square in August 2013, which attracted over 500 people to enjoy a day of creativity and fun in the square, Anorak is proposing to hold a Village Fete in 2014, promoting the simplicity, inclusivity and fun of a village event atmosphere against an urban backdrop.</p> <p>The fete will be targeted at local families and will involve a number of Anorak illustrators leading creative activities and workshops dotted around the square that encourage imagination and creativity.</p> <p>Each activity will be accompanied by an Anorak volunteer who will explain what to do.</p> <p>The pop-up tent will be used for this event as well as the PA system.</p> <p><b><u>Tulin Ozsoy: Tulin Dance School Annual Picnic and Students’ End of Year Performances 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2014, 12noon-5pm</u></b></p> <p>The Tulin Dance School of Ballet is based at the Elise centre on Dalston Lane. This event will be the second time the school has held an end of year showcase performance for its students outdoors. The first event took place in London Fields last summer and was managed by a small team of volunteers. Last year’s event attracted 150 people. The event in Dalston Square will be bigger and will involve more people.</p> <p>A stage will be hired for the event and the square’s PA system will be used. Other activities will also take place throughout the day such as a</p>	

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	<p>bouncy castle, clown show, outdoor games, face painting, arts&amp; crafts etc.</p> <p>The aims of this annual event for the school are: 1) to encourage more children to get involved in dancing 2) to provide current students with opportunities for performing 3) to invite other schools to get involved and socialize with like-minded people locally 4) to establish this event as an annual local dance festival.</p> <p>Volunteers are welcome to attend the Tulin Committee Meetings. Contact details are provided.</p> <p><b><u>Dalston Beach</u></b>, regularly through the summer, dates to be confirmed</p> <p>Hackney's Cultural Development Team is proposing to organise a series of regular informal events for local children and families that takes advantage of the fountains in the square - by suggesting a 'beach' environment.</p> <p>This will be a very simple format, comprising fountains, sandpits, deckchairs, pop up tent, and water-play toys such as mini watering cans etc.</p> <p>The PA system may be used.</p> <p>Volunteers are very welcome to assist!</p> <p><b><u>The Square of Stories</u></b>, date/s to be confirmed</p> <p>Hackney's Cultural Development Team plans to organise one or more story-based events that celebrate the presence of the Dalston CLR James Library and Archives on the square. All events will take place under the pop-up tent and will accommodate approx 70 people.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story-telling by children's authors – in partnership with the library</li> <li>• Illustration workshops – in partnership with the library</li> <li>• Children's comedy / funny stories – in partnership with Arcola Theatre</li> <li>• Local stories – in partnership with Hackney Archives</li> </ul> <p><b><u>City Showcase: Dalston Christmas Market 2014</u></b>  <b><u>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> 5pm – 9pm, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> 11am – 7pm, Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> 11am-7pm</u></b></p> <p>Following the big success of the Dalston Christmas Market in 2013 (see above for the report), City Showcase are proposing to return in 2014 with a three-day pop-up, high profile Christmas market in Dalston Square.</p> <p>Good design will be the focus of the market. It will celebrate the wealth of creativity in Hackney and throughout the UK, creating a platform for goods made by talented designers and food suppliers. Stallholders will be specially curated from an open call out, on the basis of the design</p>	

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	<p>and quality of their product. The selected traders will be given advice and support to make their stall a success. Stalls will cost £70 each +10% of takings. It is expensive, but the cost has been benchmarked with other markets and is realistic.</p> <p>The market will be accompanied by a live stage featuring music, comedy and performances by local school choirs.</p> <p>As in 2013, creative free workshops in the library will be organised and will be better marketed – clearly identifying what age group the workshop is for.</p> <p>City Showcase will be partnering with The Chocolate Factory ‘Open Studios’ as it did in 2013 and hoping to partner with the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden again as well.</p> <p>The event will expand on the market set up in 2013 – there will be more stalls, located over a larger proportion of the square. Different traders will be booked for each day.</p> <p>More Christmas lights will be installed around the square to create an overtly Christmas atmosphere.</p> <p>Due to the location of the children’s play area, it will be necessary to relocate the stage, which was based there in 2013.</p> <p>Hackney Winter Night Shelter will be invited to take part again.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>Due to the longer duration of the proposed market, Fiona Duffellen offered to discuss this proposal with the Dalston Square Resident Association to see if anyone has any objections.</p> <p>Nanette Rigg, City Showcase, emphasised that it would not be possible to confirm in advance that 50% of the market traders will be from Hackney, as was the case last year. She explained that she would like to have a good proportion of Hackney-based traders, but that it would also be important to have traders from other parts of the UK in order to raise national media interest in the event. Quality of the goods will be the main selection criteria.</p>	<p>Fiona to contact DSRA about this and feedback</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>6pm, Wednesday 11 June 2014 at Dalston CLR James Library, in the Education Room (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)</p>	