

Future London Leaders 28 – Public Space The Proposals in brief



Vicki Baker – Blue Space: Controlling the effects of climate change

Climate and infrastructure experts have been warning for years that London isn't ready for the impacts of climate change. Large parts of the city are built on a flood plain and our Victorian drainage system is unable to withstand extreme rain. Recent downpours have led to widespread flooding and these weather events will only become more frequent as a result of climate change. My Proposal for London is to incorporate water features into public realm areas in the city to ease the pressure on our sewage infrastructure which will also bring opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and creating valuable play and relaxation environments.

Lizzie Bird – Hackney's Young Place Advisors

Never has the importance of public space in shaping the lives of young people been clearer, but what are the formal or statutory routes for young people to engage in shaping the public spaces designed for them? This proposal recognises that the planning system can and should do more to engage young people in the design of public spaces and in shaping the built environment. There is the opportunity for the planning process to lead the way by setting the bar higher. My Proposal for London suggests establishing a group of young people to shape the built environment and for Hackney's Young Place Advisors to be a key part of Hackney moving towards becoming a fully [child-friendly borough](#).

Bhavna Brooker – From railway arches to vibrant public spaces

London has many railway arches and viaducts running through the city, many are inaccessible, underused spaces, and on several occasions sever communities and create hostile urban environments. Those that are in use are often for car based uses such as roads or car washes, MOT centres, car showrooms and where they are open to the public, they are often unwelcoming spaces where people do not want to spend any time. My proposal looks at the opportunity to open these spaces in a coordinated way for public uses, public parks, walking and cycling routes, with places for the local community to use and enjoy.

Sarah Butler – London's coolest places

London is getting hotter, with heatwaves now a regular feature of summers in our city. Whilst some may welcome increased temperatures, the most vulnerable and those living in the densest urban areas will find it increasingly difficult to deal with rising summer temperatures and find respite from the heat. A recent government report estimated 7,000 heat-related deaths every year in the UK by 2050. Designing cities to deal with hot summers is a familiar concept to our European cousins. My proposal will look at how London could revamp areas of the city, using greening and water to create cool zones using the city's landscapes to help citizens adapt to climate change.

Ayanda Collins – DIY streets: Airbnb for underused parking spaces in London

London's on-street parking takes up as much space as 10 Hyde Parks. Given that the average car is parked 95% of the time, this space could be put to better use to serve whole communities in exciting ways. My Proposal for London seeks to deliver an app-based system to open up parking spaces for pop-events, on street marketing, art shows, restaurant seating, cycle parking, the options are endless! The app would be easy to use for consumers, lower the administrative burden of bespoke applications to councils and provide a new source of income for a greener future with less private car use.

Tiffany Hepher – The third space designed for young people

There has always been a shortage of youth facilities for teenagers to use when not in school. The majority of facilities now delivered are outdoor playgrounds or gyms, which are challenged by British weather. Recent reports suggest there are even fewer facilities for teenage girls. Throughout the pandemic many major city-based companies such as banks and insurers closed their smaller satellite offices. I propose using the courtyard and reception areas for community use. This would include yoga or boxing classes run by United to Change and Inspire, gym equipment run by Steel Warriors and tutoring sessions with the Girls Network or explore learning. Such activities will provide a space that young people feel is designed for them.

James Hughes – Surveillance, facial recognition and public space

Public authorities and communities may be unaware of new techniques in the surveillance of public space in London. The use of facial recognition technology by developers may seek to strike a balance between security and privacy, but is this balance correct and what role should local residents and communities play? Is regulation of this new technology appropriately addressed through the planning process? I propose a Public Security Charter for London that would guide stakeholders in the development process and compel the regulation of IT surveillance technology through Section 106 agreements in new public and semi-public spaces. The Charter would provide a framework for regulation.

Carol Jones – Affordable housing, public spaces and the wider community

The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us the importance of caring about each other as a society as well as the importance of outdoor space, recognising how it can help build community. Affordable housing is stigmatised in the UK where the emphasis is on home ownership. My proposal is to integrate communities using outdoor spaces, to help remove this stigma and encourage people from different backgrounds to live well together. My presentation will look at the pros, cons and possibilities.

Halima Kanyike – Complex trauma in women

During the Covid-19 pandemic reports have shown that complex trauma has noticeably intensified among women of all ages and backgrounds. This includes domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, care responsibilities, loss of income due to redundancies, exposure to substance misuse and mental health issues. As the pandemic continues, essential services, such as domestic violence shelters and helplines, are reaching capacity. I am proposing to create a hub in an open space offering the opportunity for women to socialise and freely access support on issues affecting them in a safe and secure environment.

Julietta Kene – Concrete Canvas

Regeneration, in most cases, means knocking down and starting again. Whilst this is a great option for some, what it doesn't solve is antisocial behaviour. This is solved through community involvement which is usually achieved by building on existing foundations and bringing people together. My proposal applies the same logic to buildings that are structurally sound but lack warmth and amenities. With correct engagement and some creative implementation, current estate public spaces can be transformed into more community focused and welcoming places, as well as facilitating interaction between neighbours thus creating stronger communities.

Tom Mukherjee-Neale – Rethinking delivery of public space through partnership working

The need for and the value of open space has been highlighted through the pandemic in ways that have not been experienced since the industrial revolution when toxic air quality was experienced in the major industrial cities. Public space has the potential to enhance the lives of the those that use it for physical and mental health benefits, socialising, educationally, to inspire the love of nature and to provide a sense of ownership. This will help reduce vandalism, other anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

Stephanie Robson – Community super-hubs for every London neighbourhood

Post-pandemic, people are likely to continue to value and visit their local area more often than central London. This provides an opportunity to reinvigorate our outer London neighbourhoods. I propose using existing, unappreciated public space to create a community 'super-hub' in every London neighbourhood. These would be welcoming, multi-functional centres, reflecting the unique character and diversity of the local area. Each should fulfil key needs: food, shelter, social interaction, access to nature, space for learning, working and physical activity. A super-hub would provide the space for people to be solitary or social, and to spend time being creative, productive and happy.

Ben Tomlinson – Fear & missing out: empowering social housing residents to make better use of public space

London ranks highly for its quantity and quality of public space. However, in many areas such as housing estates, people struggle to enjoy it because they feel unsafe, especially after dark, or feel unwelcome, due to strict rules or even segregation of land. This has been made worse by the isolation of communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. I will explore these concerns; reference specific examples; and discuss novel ways of mitigating them such as through arts, culture and leisure. Through this I suggest an approach and key principles for encouraging the use of public space on housing estates, to build greater confidence and a sense of community.