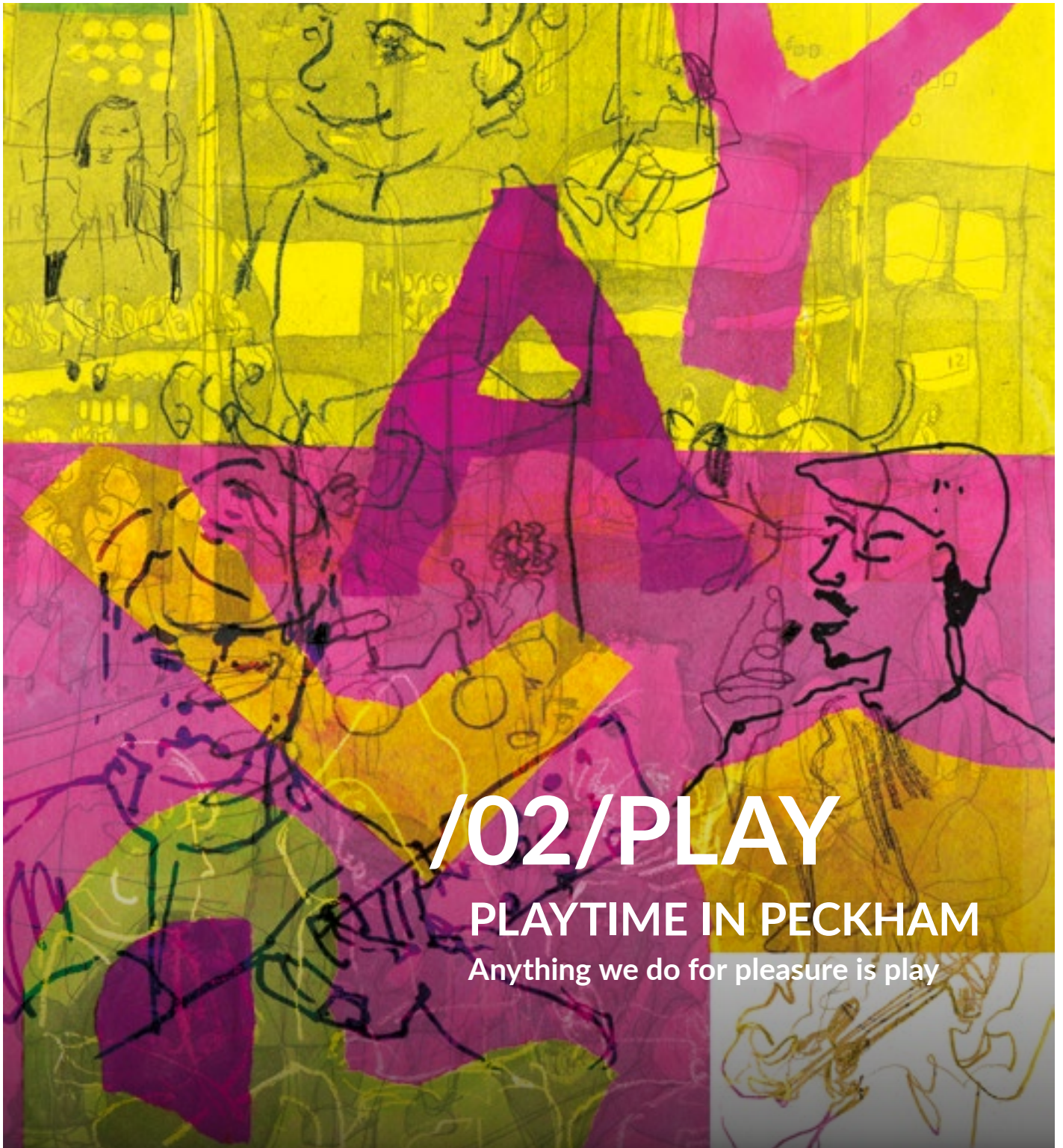


# PECKHAM CODESIGN WEEKLY

PECKHAMCODESIGN.ORG



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[www.peckhamcodesign.org](http://www.peckhamcodesign.org)  
September 2014

\*The drawings for this weekly's cover  
were made in an around the local  
area by Kirsty Jones as part of her  
MA in Illustration at the Camberwell  
College of Art.



# GET INVOLVED

## THIS IS THE SECOND PECKHAM CODESIGN WEEKLY

### The editorial process

The WEEKLY is a series of eight publications that summarise the outcomes of the Peckham CoDesign process week by week. The content is produced and edited by an evolving group of local contributors who meet on Tuesday evenings to discuss specific topics, findings and conflicting ideas. The Peckham CoDesign WEEKLY is a discussion piece. We would like to hear what you think. Do you feel your view is represented?

We are aiming to include a diverse range of voices and opinions in the WEEKLY and welcome new editors at any stage in the process. If you are interested to i.e. write a piece, take photographs, draw or contribute in other ways please join the **LOCAL EDITORS on Tuesday evening 7pm at the CoDesign SHOP**. We would particularly like to encourage young people to join our team.

*Ulrike Steven  
(Architect)*

### Editorial team:

The second Peckham CoDesign Weekly was produced by a team of local residents and other contributors:

Yelena Chernyakova (graphic designer), Charlotte Fereday (service designer), Michelle Male (architect), Amy Poulson (architect), Veronica Simpson (journalist), Ulrike Steven (architect), Dan Harder (graphic designer), Benjamin Vaughan (illustrator), Daisy Froud (cultural researcher, member of the Ash Sakula CoDesign team)

*Supported by:* Izzy Parker (designer), Kwame Afriyie (architect), Stephen Okuro (QS), Steven Fenwick, André Viljoen (architect), Ash Sakula team (architects)

### Themes for forthcoming issues:

No.1 / Culture

No.2 / Play

No.3 / History

No.4 / Nature

No.5 / Shopping

No.6 / Peckham in the Dark

No.7 / Public Space

No.8 / Made in Peckham

# WHAT IS CODESIGN?

CoDesign is about actively involving people who live and work in Peckham into the process of change. It's about observing and understanding how the centre of Peckham is used and what the needs of the diverse local population are. CoDesign means many voices, opposing ambitions and conflicting interests. The task of the CoDesign process is to identify the common ground.

Peckham CoDesign doesn't start with a blank slate. There are limitations to the changes this process can directly influence. While we are framing the aspirations for the centre of Peckham through many interviews, workshops and discussion,

Peckham CoDesign is focused on defining the design guidance for the new station forecourt. This new public space and the process in which it was developed can set the tone for future change in the centre of Peckham.

During the past weeks many questions, concerns and fears have been raised by local residents and stakeholders. Each WEEKLY contains a Q+A section where a selection of the most pressing queries are being answered. Please contact us or add your questions to the Commonplace map on [www.peckhamcodesign.org](http://www.peckhamcodesign.org).



# THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

## PECKHAM CODESIGNERS & PARTICIPATORS

Total number of people engaged in CoDesign to date

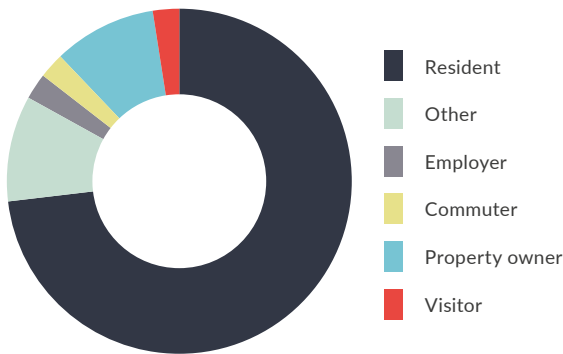
568

Commonplace app entries since launch 20.08.14

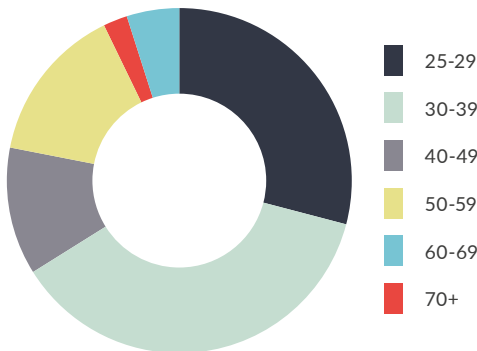
121



Relationship to Peckham of Commonplace commentators



Age of people commenting on Commonplace



People engaged Week 2

152



Participants in drop-in sessions Week 2 PLAY

79

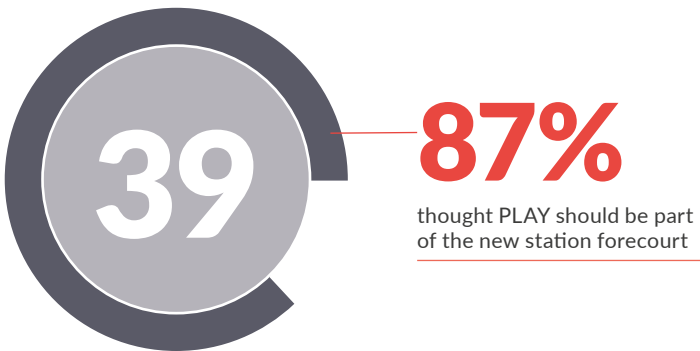


Team of WEEKLY editors (Culture, Play)

20



TREASURE HUNT participants 12.09.14



All icons are sourced from the Noun Project [www.thenounproject.com](http://www.thenounproject.com)

# PLAYTIME IN PECKHAM

## ANYTHING WE DO FOR PLEASURE IS PLAY

Last week we asked the people of Peckham about playtime, and you told us all the things you like to do for fun.

But what does play mean? For us, it means anything you want it to mean. It can be organised play - like team sports or outings - or spontaneous play, meeting up with friends and seeing what happens. Indoors or outdoors; with friends or on your own - play is anything you do that gives you pleasure.

We'd love to hear more stories, so if you can think of more ways you like to play please let us know.

So, how do people play in Peckham?

We spoke to a lot of people (of all ages) who like to do their playing outdoors. Peckham Rye is a favourite place to play for many, but there were other pockets of green space the people mentioned as well. We spoke to skaters, cyclists, footballers, and gardeners who all find outdoor places to play locally.

We also met people who love people. Their way to play is meeting other people - in the market, at Franks, at the park, on the streets, and at the hairdressers. We heard about how friendly the area is, but that there are few places for adults to meet and socialise without alcohol.

Art, theatre and dance were all popular ways to play too. Including organised groups and clubs for kids to more informal involvement from adults. When we asked people what would make playing in Peckham

better, a few people asked for more opportunities for people to be actively involved in creating art and culture, as well as more youth activities.

As well as finding out how you all like to play, we asked specifically about the station and if the area in front of it should be a place of play? The majority said yes. A few people said no. And lots of people had great ideas for how it could be a play place without getting in the way of people using the station.

Angus suggested it should have an informal performance space with a big rocking chair where people could rock together. Marta wants to see public art with involvement from local schools and maybe something like the graffiti fence at Franks. Abiola suggested outdoor gym equipment for kids and adults, and Albi and Fiachra wanted a water fountain to run through.

Not everyone wants the station square to be a full on playground though. People voiced concerns about safety if there are people running around in front of the station. Others were happy for it to be a place of quiet, relaxed play but would like it to be as calm as possible.

So what do you think? Would you rock in Angus's giant shared rocking chair? Or do you have your own ideas for how the station area could help the people of Peckham play.





# PLAY IS A STATE OF MIND

## IT'S ABOUT AN ENVIRONMENT THAT INVITES YOU TO EXPLORE

I grew up surrounded by Northumbrian and Scottish countryside, so raising children in Peckham was a leap into the unknown for me – though my kids soon showed me the way.

I learned that, in the right frame of mind, every street can provide opportunities for play. Counting games when they were little livened up boring journeys on foot. This time of year was rich with possibilities. Walking up the road to the shops, or to nursery, we would count the freckled brown spiders making webs in railings along our street, or between leaves and gateposts, and growing fat with babies. Each day in September brought more. And then, suddenly, they would be gone, offspring scattered to the winds (where the mums went, we never discussed). The metal drain covers we encountered along Lyndhurst Grove became a part of our counting game, when the kids started primary school – the first person to the next drain cover would get ten points (twenty if it was an unusual shape); you have to be resourceful to get the kids to walk half a mile every morning! Chestnut trees were always generous with their treasure, and we used to hoard the richly coloured conkers, newly cracked from their shells, comparing our totals year on year. The biggest prize was always finding one still wrapped in its prickly green casing, which we would split underfoot, then prise out their newly minted contents.

Later in the autumn, big, crispy drifts of leaves were just asking to be waded through. And on that rare winter day in Peckham when it snows, all the families on our street would rush out to have a snowball fight as soon as the first flakes settled. It took only a few centimeters of flakes to inspire a communal trip to Warwick Gardens to scrape together lumpy snowmen or even attempt sledging – tea trays and bin bags made great sledges for little ones.

Play is about being alert to what's around you.

Some would say a railway line is a grotty place to stick a park. Not to my train-mad son. As a toddler, the possibility of seeing a train roar past made a trip to Warwick Gardens that much more exciting, or the walk to school along McNeil Road even more so. As soon as we heard the sound of a train-engine approaching from Denmark Hill, we would rush to be on the railway bridge on Camberwell Grove to see the carriages burst through the tunnel underneath us, rattling towards Peckham Rye Station.

Interacting with friendly neighbourhood cats and dogs always livened up a journey. Our favourite was Mitzy, a friendly tortoiseshell female who seemed to live outdoors and was blind in one eye. My toddlers never tired of the thrill of her rubbing her furry back around their legs. Did you know there are cats living wild in the car park on Chadwick Road? Someone leaves food out for them every day. My daughter, when a little older, discovered new treasures in the parking meters around Rye Lane: if you can be bothered to stick your hand in the coin reject slot, sometimes you are rewarded with a golden pound.



Swinging from trees in Warwick Gardens  
Photo by Oliver Simpson (14)

Play is about an environment that invites you to explore – and to rest.

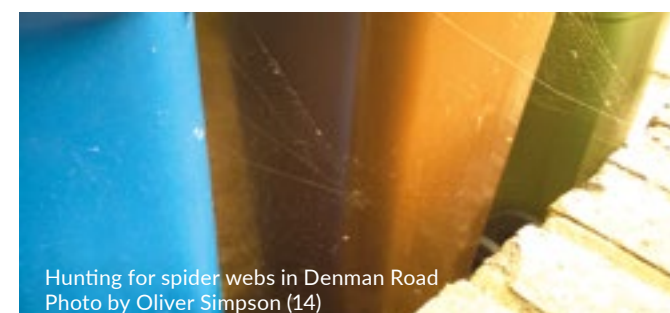
Antony Gormley's curvy brass bollards along Bellenden Road have long been popular for Leapfrog; a low wall becomes a balancing challenge to everyone from toddlers to teens; so is the Bell Bollard on Bellenden Road. Often it's not the obvious playground equipment that holds the most appeal – especially not as kids get older. As soon as her legs and arms were long enough, my daughter was more interested in climbing the lower trees in Warwick Gardens than she was in swings or slides. Rather than compete with the other kids queuing up at the Adventure Playground, our kids would prefer to spend hours on hide and seek in among the bushes and shrubs in the Rye's Sir John Sexby garden. We tired parents would sit, gratefully chatting on the benches someone was kind enough to put there. Or we'd settle on the rocks or grass in the formal gardens nearby while our kids conjured imaginary worlds around the streams, stepping stones and willow trees. Seats make a place instantly appealing for kids and their weary parents.

So what kind of shopping list of qualities should we draw up for the new community square that has been proposed by Peckham Rye station? We want somewhere for balancing, learning, counting, exploring, hiding, sitting, climbing, chatting and sharing: not much to ask, then.

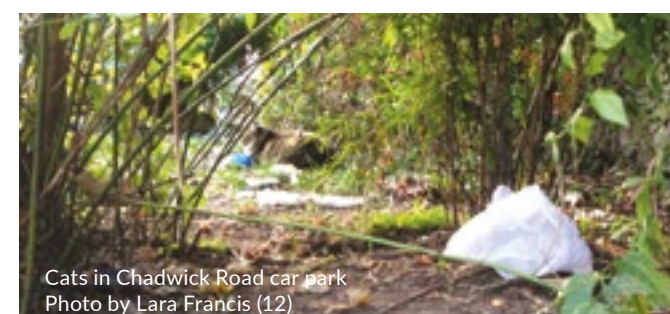
Veronica Simpson  
(Peckham resident, Architecture and Design writer,  
Environmental Psychologist)



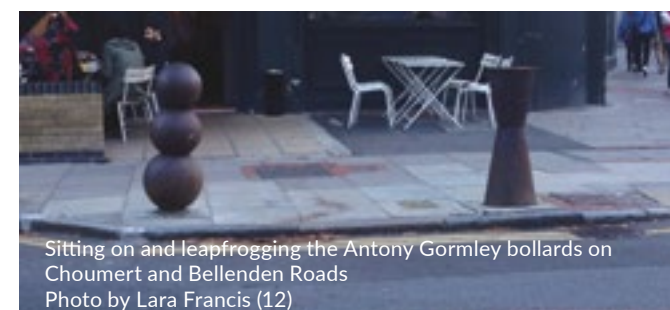
Chalk games on Denman Road  
Photo by Oliver Simpson (14)



Hunting for spider webs in Denman Road  
Photo by Oliver Simpson (14)



Cats in Chadwick Road car park  
Photo by Lara Francis (12)



Sitting on and leapfrogging the Antony Gormley bollards on  
Choumert and Bellenden Roads  
Photo by Lara Francis (12)



# VOICES OF PECKHAM

## SELECTED COMMENTS 20.08-18.09.14

People have different opinions, likes and dislikes. This is how they said it:

All comments can be found on Commonplace:  
[www.peckhamcodesign.org/commonplace](http://www.peckhamcodesign.org/commonplace)

**Wed 20 Aug 2014 13:42**

Strengths - the grade 2 listed station building and hustle and bustle of lively independent businesses and shops surrounding it.  
Weaknesses - gloomy arcade blocking view of station facade, poor paving, lack of trees. Needs good hard and soft landscaping, good treatment of station arches - NOT glass boxes appended to the front of them, but the arch shapes kept visible with old timber doors fronting them, housing small local businesses that can open out onto the station square.

**Tue 26 Aug 2014 15:29**

Canavans Pool Club, a great place to meet with friends and the wider community. A great

night-life economy over the weekend, being one of the only places in London to play vinyl only DJ Sets.

**Tue 26 Aug 2014 15:13**

This junction is very dangerous for pedestrians - particularly if you have kids with you. A zebra crossing?

**Sat 30 Aug 2014 10:01**

I think these markets [on Rye Lane] are the future.... but don't want anyone to realise that in case they all start popping up in them... so I suppose I mean celebrate but secretly. (PS the watch-mender is brilliant and a most interesting man) Couldn't some of these

spaces be let out to young people who want to experiment with starting business? I mean from local schools like Peckham Academy. (...) Perhaps school pop ups.. so that real local young people could be involved in growing a new Peckham

**Sat 30 Aug 2014 13:25**

Let's make sure the redesign of the area around the station fits with the adjacent places, and also fits with a clearer idea of how the town centre as a whole ticks.

**Wed 03 Sep 2014 10:20**

Clustering of fried hot food takeaways on the doorstep of local schools - Southwark has one of the highest levels of childhood obesity in the UK and evidence shows a link between obesity and prevalence of local takeaways within 400m of schools. The amount and clustering of hot food takeaways in this location should be restricted.

**Wed 03 Sep 2014 10:37**

If anything is to change it should be to bring the community together, not to divide. Peckham is still one of the few places with a strong community of people. Life can be affordable, people talk to each other. The area just needs a little clean and some money spent on lighting and making it cosmetically appealing.

**Wed 03 Sep 2014 10:39**

Love seeing the energy of this street [Blenheim Grove]. Old Victorian houses, Nigerian parties on a Saturday night. Hipsters sitting on the wall next to them. It is a good mix.

**Wed 03 Sep 2014 10:50**

Many people move to Peckham because they love how it is, not because they want to change it. One comment on here says "Africans hair shops are not managed at all"

One says "Children playing on the street" as a negative!? I thought Fruit and Vg shops were a middle class ideal as well as children playing on the street. Its as if some people want to see every African shop become a wine bar or a shop selling biodynamic eggs...

**Wed 10 Sep 2014 06:39**

Antony Gormley's Drain Hole Cover >> 'Secret' Public Art Work for Peckham was stolen last year! Antony had his studio in Peckham for decades hence all the phallic bollards on Bellenden Road. Perhaps we can lobby him to replace the drain cover? I'm sure he has the original cast somewhere!!

**Mon 15 Sep 2014 21:29**

I like the covered market as an entrance to the station. It would be a shame to lose this

**Tue 16 Sep 2014 21:40**

Shame the newly restored toilets cannot be used as \*shock horror\* public toilets. How much did this cost? How can they be useful except as public toilets? They could be part of a public/common space with info about local services etc. with a cafe element maybe for good measure...

LIDO



<http://peckhamcodesign.org/commonplace>  
Date of comment: Sat 06 Sep 2014 10:38  
Location: Peckham Rye Common



# YOUR FAVOURITE PLAY SPACE

## TREASURE HUNT

The centre of Peckham is a playful place and attracts many young adults with an interest in the arts and socializing. However 88% of those we spoke to choose green spaces as their place for play.

Holly Grove adjacent to Peckham Rye Station is the only green space on Rye Lane and the favourite play space for a group of local children who use it for hide and seek and running around. Asked what could be improved the kids modestly suggested a swing. Warwick Gardens, Peckham Rye and Burgess Park are the parks where most people choose to play in Peckham. They are described as big, clean open spaces where one can do many different things like meet new people, hang out with friends, wind down, study, play with their kids and do sports.

Peckham is London's latest artistic and creative 'hotspot' and many people come to Peckham to have fun, to be inspired and to socialize. Places hosting playful and creative programmes such as the Bussey

Building, the multi-storey car park, Bold Tendencies, the Copeland Park as well as the Sassoon Gallery, Peckham Springs, the Brick Brewery, Bar Storey, Sunday Painters and the Refreshment Room together attract large numbers of pleasure seeking visitors to the centre of Peckham.

### Frank's and Bold Tendencies in numbers:

500,000 visitors since it opened in 2007.

Average of 60-70k visitors in the three months it is open from Jul-Sep

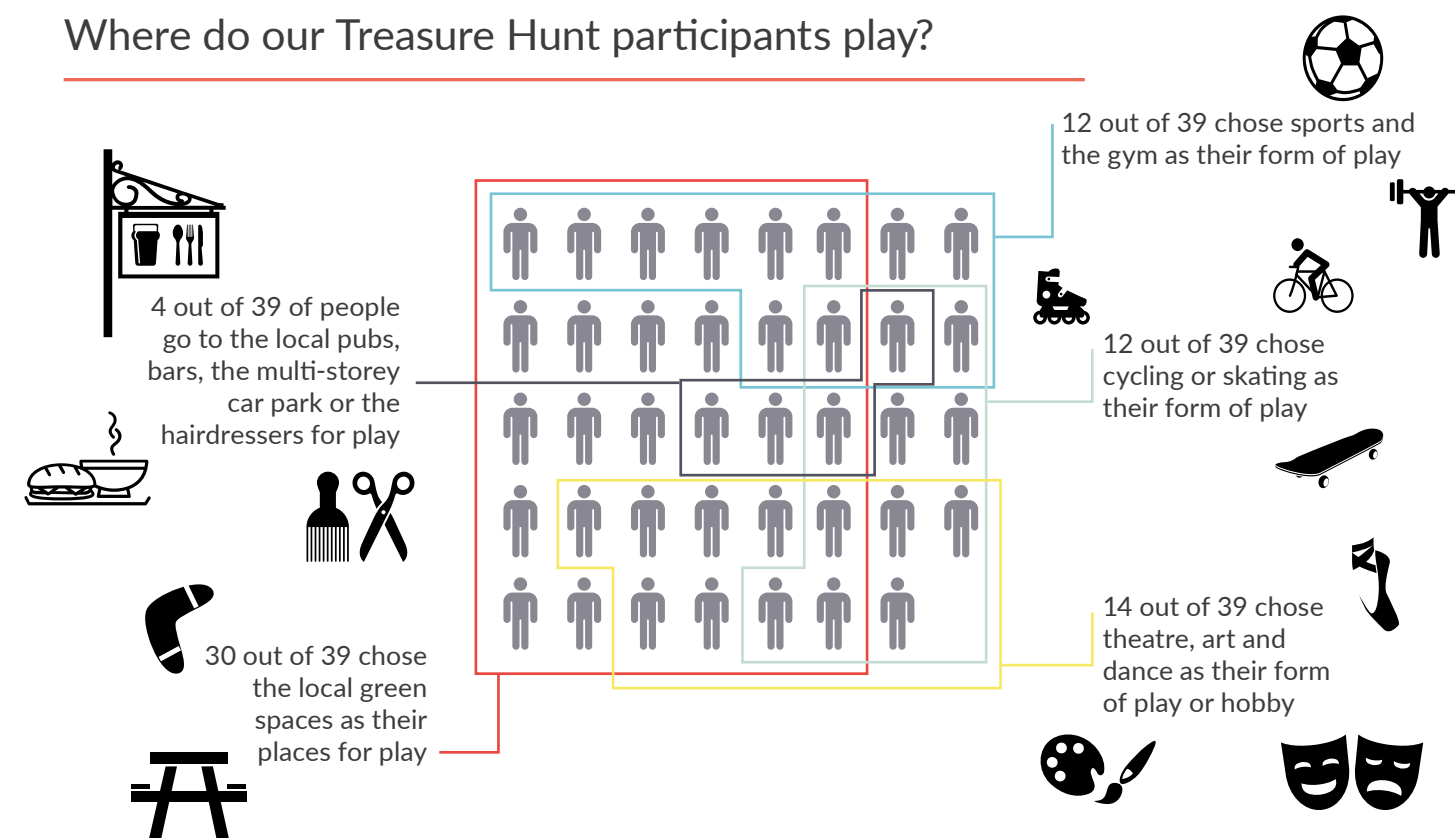
50% of visitors live in SE15

50% of visitors live in Greater London

5% are from out of London/international visitors

(based on survey, 2011)

## Where do our Treasure Hunt participants play?



As part of this week's Treasure Hunt both children and adults picked up red animals at the station and took them to their favourite play space in Peckham.

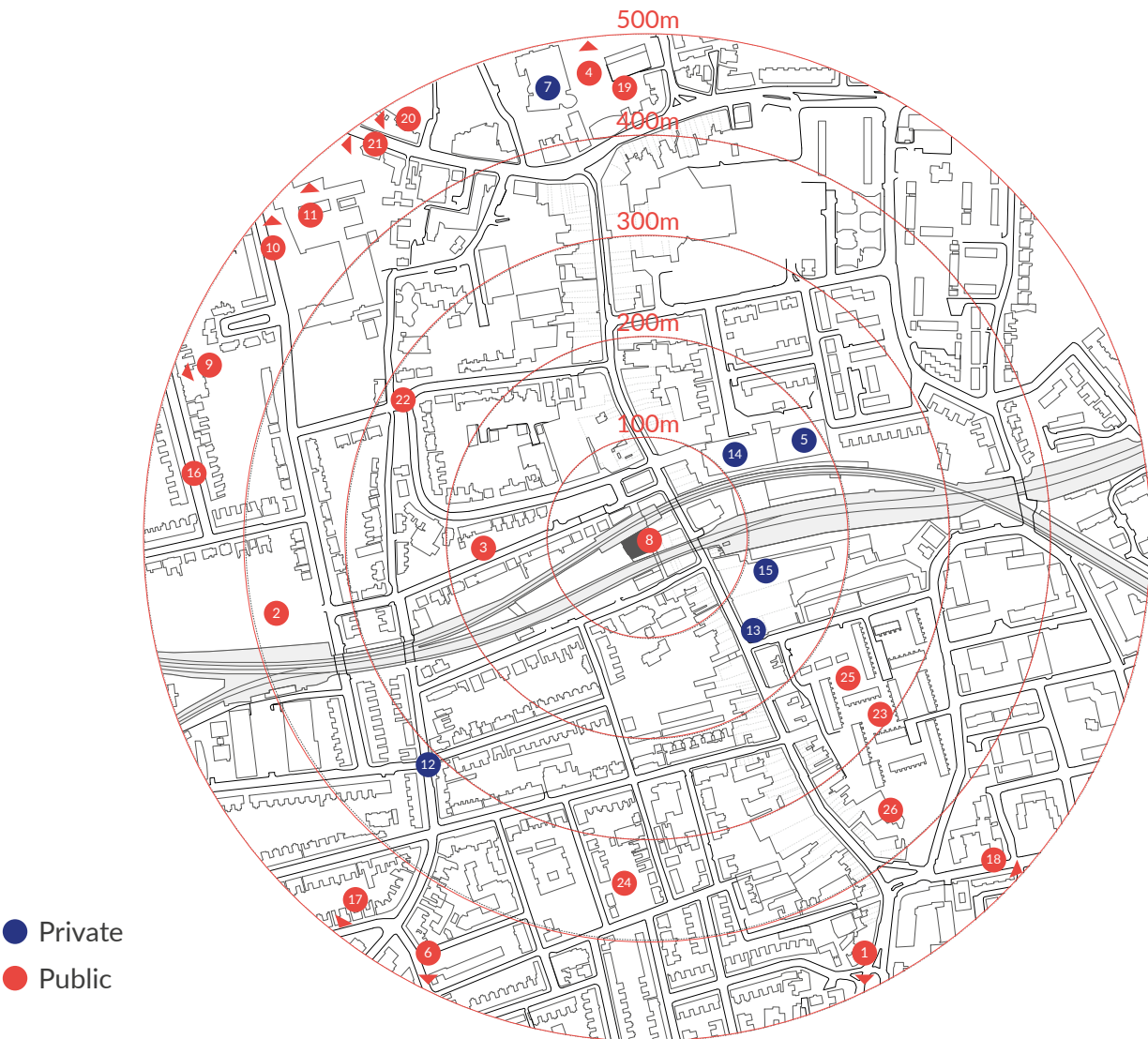


# PLACES FOR PLAY AND PLEASURE

## IN THE CENTRE OF PECKHAM

### Analysis of Treasure Hunt numbers

Place	Votes		
1 Peckham Rye Common	9	12 Bellenden Road	2
2 Warwick Gardens	8	13 Denise Destiny Rye Lane	1
3 Holly Grove Shrubbery	6	14 Peckhamplex	1
4 Burgess Park	5	15 Bussey Building (Yogarise)	1
5 Frank's	4	16 Denman Road	1
6 Goose Green	4	17 Dulwich Park	1
7 Peckham Pulse	2	18 Nunhead Cemetery	1
8 Station	2	19 Library	1
9 Lettsom Gardens	2	20 South London Gallery	1
10 Central Venture Park	2	21 'Blue Park' Southampton Way	1
11 Kelly Avenue	2		
		22 William Griggs' Garden On Bellenden Road	1
		Other public play spaces	
		23 Birch Close	
		24 McDermott Grove Garden	
		25 Parkstone Road	
		26 Atwell Estate Basketball	



“ Young people do crime because there is nothing for them to do around here. ”

The **Atwell Estate** has one of the only multi-purpose games areas for playing basketball or football in the centre of Peckham. Residents of the Atwell Estate want more play opportunities for their children.



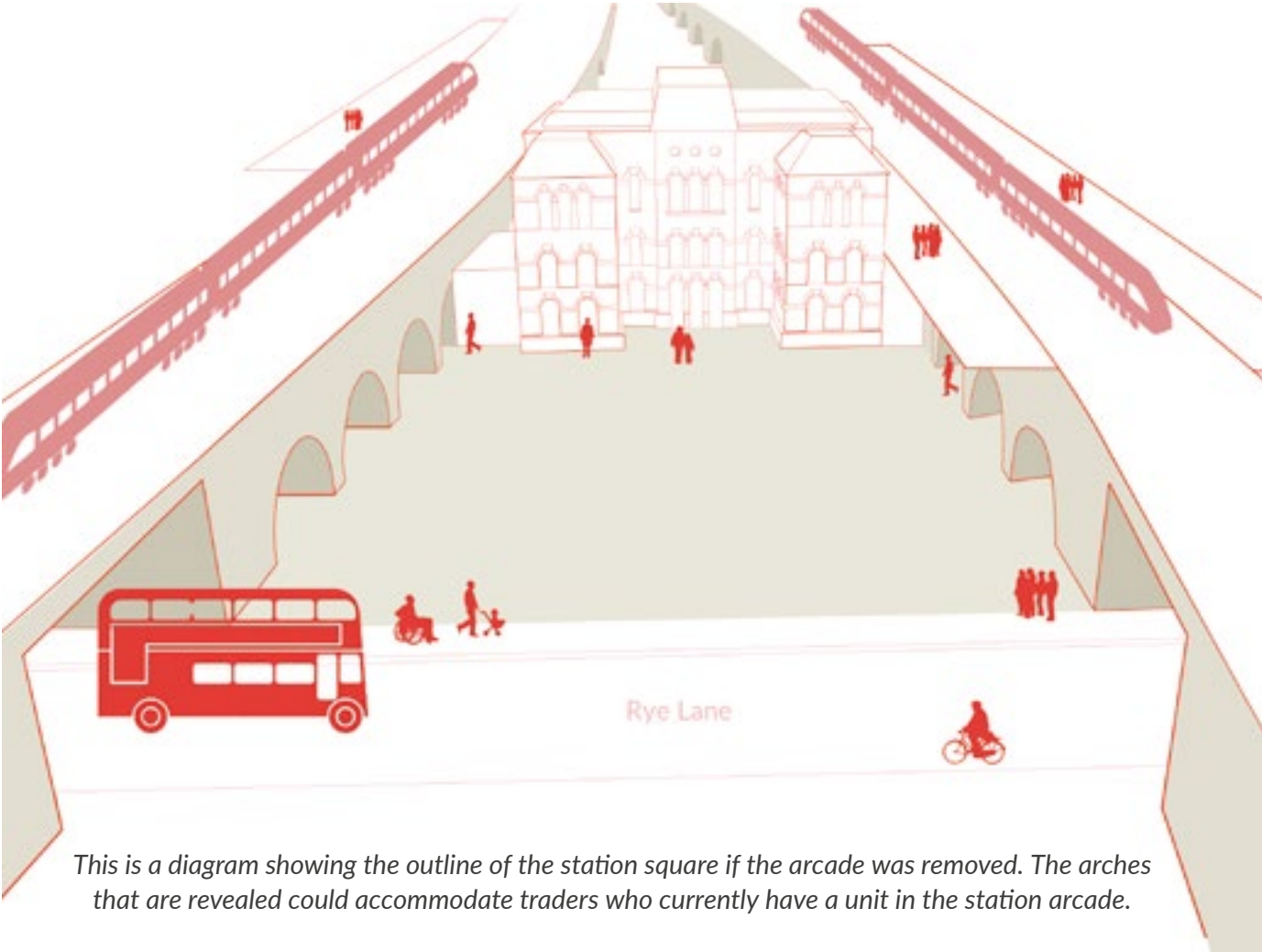
**Holly Grove Shrubbery** has been named as a favorite play space by local children. Most people don't walk through the green space but prefer to walk on the narrow paving instead. It has been suggested to remove the fence along Holly Grove.





# NEW STATION FORECOURT

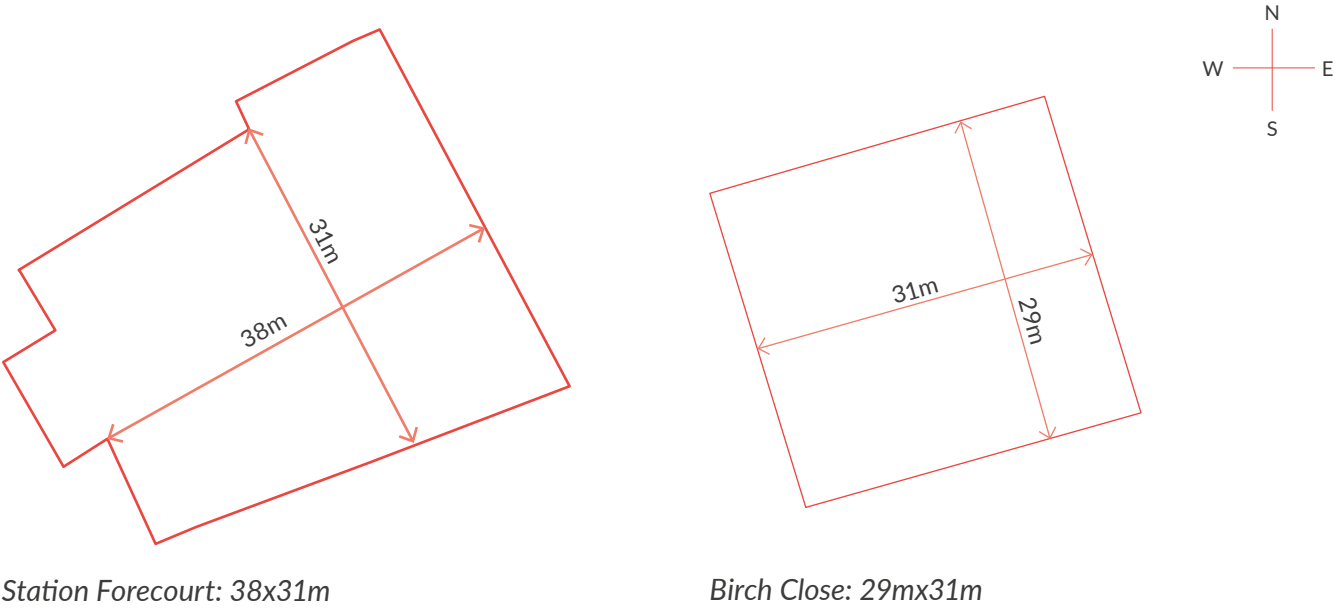
## SPACE FOR PLAY



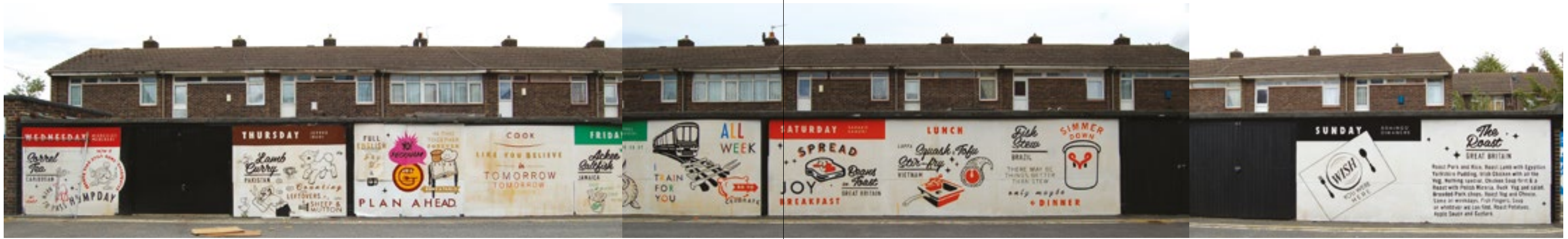
87% of people we spoke to thought that play should be part of the new station forecourt. Here are some of their suggestions:

- Space for sitting and chilling out.
- Adults should be able to sit and children to run around.
- Space should be as calm as possible.
- Area for drinks and sitting down to watch kids
- Use of space should be transient and changing – key element of Peckham life – constant reinvention.
- It should be family friendly.
- Rocking chair where people rock together.
- Performance space, space to play music (i.e. basking spot).
- Art gallery or public art place, where people can do art or special events.
- Educational activities. Schools could come and do stuff too.
- Space for interaction.
- Wild play to help encourage adults and children to become more in tune with being outside.
- Games, game centre.
- Play space where kids and adults can play together
- Yoga
- Ball pit (indoor) and other indoor play;
- Youth activities like dancing and acting classes, sports and board games. Space for young people to i.e. sit out and play board games and area for kids to play
- Area where parents can leave their kids and pick them up later.
- Playground; coffee place, computer centre
- Swings.
- Area for boule playing.
- Area for climbing, jumping – low blocks or large rocks that could be seats but also for kids to walk along and jump off, colours and lights on the ground for children to play around
- Area good for skating and skateboarding
- Climbing wall (good when parents are waiting) climbing grips on walls for low, sideways climbing/challenges.
- Water fountain to run through,
- Puppet theatre i.e. on rubber strings

If you have trouble imagining the size of the new station forecourt, visit Birch Close, located 300m from Rye Lane Station. The dimensions of this residential square are similar to the new station forecourt.









# I LOVE IT BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE

## CODESIGN INTERVIEWS EDUARDO TELLO

Eduardo Tello is the Peruvian owner of Italian restaurant Il Giardino, on Blenheim Grove. He has worked there for 27 years, owning the restaurant for the last 17. He lives with his family in Leigh.

[www.ilgiardinopeckham.co.uk](http://www.ilgiardinopeckham.co.uk)

### What first brought you to Peckham; how did you come to buy Il Giardino?

I came here from Lima in 1987 to study English and lived with family on Nutbrook Street - they worked at the Peruvian Embassy. I washed up at Il Giardinos for the Italian owner, Alex. After six months Alex taught me the recipes and offered me a job as a sous-chef. Originally I wanted to be an engineer but my father was a chef in Peru, so perhaps it is in the blood. After ten years Alex retired and sold me the lease. Later I bought the building from the Greek owner.

### What changes have you noticed since you started here; have the type of customers changed and why do you think so?

In the last ten years old customers moved away and new people came. Now they are younger in their twenties more than forties but also because the original customers started having families, they come less. There are a lot more students in the last 4-5 years, I think the youth come now after the bars. There are more tourists since the last two years; Spanish, French, Italians. Groups of Germans (staying at Peckham Lodge), were recommended by word of mouth, but now it's too busy for them.

### Has your custom increased?

In the last five years there's been an increase in custom and staff because Peckham has become very popular. The difference is that the service has to be quicker and the laid-back feeling has gone. It used to be more relaxed, with people taking more time to enjoy their food but now it's much faster.

### Why do you think it has got busier?

Peckham didn't used to have a good reputation but I loved it because of the people, I never thought it was dangerous, even 27 years ago. People had a lot



of respect for each other. It had a good community and people liked the diversity. Now is a little bit different, newer and wider. There's more adverts and good press about Peckham. The new overground and having culture like Frank's, the cinema and Bussey theatre pushes up custom too. I am happy with the current amount of customers and if we get more we will cope but I don't want to lose the quality of the service. To keep the quality I use Billingsgate and Smithfield markets - I go very early at 4am so I can choose the best wholesale myself.

### Are you aware of the previous proposals for the station and what do you think of them?

The square should be more like a family space for the community, perhaps with a Sunday market. Green areas are very important. Update the buildings a bit but only three/four stories, not six which is too high.



I would like there to be public toilets and more rubbish controls - I don't like it when I see people peeing in the street and the hair blowing into the restaurant is horrible. Shops should be more responsible for their rubbish but some of them ignore the Council controls.

It's hard to accept change but it's gonna happen. Gentrification is not fair and we have to keep a balance of everything, including shop types.

### Do you intend to stay here, what might make you want to move away?

That's a big thing. Let's see how it's going for the next couple of years. Sometimes there are bad times, like the recession, when I could have left but I stayed for my love of the customers - I feel so rewarded - it gives great job satisfaction but I'm worried that the

big mix will change and not be as friendly, with less community spirit, which keeps you here.

For me, it's easier to sell it but it's hard to leave the regulars and people that I love here - if they move away I might move away.

### What makes you smile about Peckham?

It feels like your place.

### You feel like you belong?

Exactly. Diversity as well. Peckham's got something... everyone has to like it, even new people.

*Photos and Interview by Michelle Male Shaw on 18.09.14*



# FINGER ON THE PULSE

## BRINGING CODESIGN TO THE PECKHAM PULSE GYM

*The Peckham Pulse is one of seven Fusion Lifestyle leisure centres run in partnership with Southwark Council. It is a well used hub of the community; with gyms, pools and classes for all ages and abilities.*

As a local resident and regular Pulse-goer I realised other users hadn't heard of any plans for Peckham Rye station, or about CoDesign. I was concerned that people north of Peckham High Street were less likely to pass by the CoDesign shop at the station to give their views; so after checking with Matthew of Ash Sakula and Alex, the manager of the Peckham Pulse, we set up a couple of tables in the Pulse reception area on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>. My husband and I managed to hijack lots of unsuspecting gym clients, including parents waiting around whilst their children took swimming lessons. We told them about CoDesign, how it came about and asked them for their feedback. A lot of people were local residents who weren't aware of previous proposals for the station area. Hence they were happy to complete about 40 opinion cards and 13 CoDesign work packs, including diagrams of what they might want to see if the station forecourt became opened up into a square.

After reading all of the feedback from Saturday there appeared to be some consistencies occurring. Quite a few people who have lived here for a long time, twenty-thirty years or more, or who were brought up in Peckham, seemed to want high street chains like Marks & Spencer's brought back. But people who have lived here for a relatively shorter period, less than ten years, tend to like the current mix of shops in Peckham, including the hair shops, together with the influx of new independent restaurants and bars that have popped up. Perhaps that is why they moved here in the first place, because they liked Peckhamness.

With the CoDesign packs you can see at a glance whether people live in Peckham or are visitors and what their activities are. From evaluating them it seemed that people who live in Peckham but work elsewhere, such as the city centre, either like the

[www.fusion-lifestyle.com/centres/Peckham\\_Pulse\\_Healthy\\_Living\\_Centre](http://www.fusion-lifestyle.com/centres/Peckham_Pulse_Healthy_Living_Centre)

current mix of retail in both Rye Lane and Bellenden Road, or would like more independent shops and cafés – perhaps to keep Peckham a special place, with a unique identity, away from the multi-nationals in the city. People who live in Peckham but don't work outside of it (from school age to older) seemed to want more chain stores and branded restaurants. Is it because they don't want to have to travel outside of Peckham to visit well known chains?

Or are these varieties of opinion due to different viewpoints of what establishes a town as being successful, or a good place to live? Some think Peckham is seen as cool and upcoming if it maintains its diverse culture, hair shops and colourful, bold, independent character. Whilst others think Peckham has gone downhill from what it used to be in its heyday, when Jones & Higgins was the grandest department store in south London, or that Peckham would have much more respect in their eyes if it had a Sainsbury's, M&S and less hairdressers. Some people don't like the recent influx of 'trendies' and feel invaded by hipsters moving into Peckham. Is it a matter of taste, where class or cultural differences affect the perception of what is good?

The comments cards demonstrate a diversity of opinions, where one man's heaven can be another man's hell. Yet amongst the polar opposites there seems to be a majority in favour of opening up a square in front of the station, as long as the design encompasses a low rise, safe, green and tidy community environment - both within the station area and along Rye Lane.

For extended content please visit [www.peckhamcodesign.org/finger-on-the-pulse/](http://www.peckhamcodesign.org/finger-on-the-pulse/)

*Michelle Male Shaw (Architect, Peckham Resident)*

### What do you think about a new community square by the station?

**Ann** - as long as it is designed well and not another space for vagrants and alcoholics.

**Sarah** - open air café, newsagents, small shops near station - would be great to pick up milk/newspapers on my way in/home.

**Rolando** - wants space for artists selling their art, make the place happy with light colours and lighting, live singers, trees.

**David** - needs it to feel more open, less like a poorly designed 70's shopping centre.

**Jennifer** - Use a public square for family-type events in the day. Try to feature events for a 'safe' night life!

### What do you think about tower blocks/high rise as part of the station development?

**Ann** - born Peckham 1945 - the proposal for high rise blocks is against everything I believe in; keep Morrisons.

**Philippe** - keep the height of any new buildings to within existing height of current ones.

**Sarah** - I love the mix and the vibe so no massive new expensive housing development unless it's affordable - but not high rise.

**Tim** - retain a sense of scale and proportion in terms of height and massing.

**Christopher** - Peckham has always had a great community, don't tarnish it with an influx of transient residents in new build flats - keep it interesting, individual, unexpected.

**Jennifer** - please keep the gems! I.e. Pre 1920's original features of the area as a working, integrated part of public daily life

### Do you feel safe at night?

**Tim** - lose dingey and dangerous approach to station, poorly maintained and pointless retail.

**Leo** - at night the square outside the Library is a dodgy place to go...more 'life' opening onto public squares would help.

### Should there be more greenery or green space?

**Lesley** - I love the square outside the Library but it needs trees!

### Your thoughts on gentrification

**Natalie** - I love Peckham... but gentrification seen in eg. Brixton seems to exclude a lot of residents. Can Peckham bring everyone along?

**Lisa** - I don't want to see it made bland by having chain stores eg. Starbucks, Oliver Bonas moving in driving

up rents and gentrifying the area, let's keep the shops independent and varied so it remains a diverse community.

### Your thoughts on the diversity of shops

**Lucy** - really wants a mixture - not all scruffy but not all posh - also keep cheap grocers/shops.

**Melissa** - wants more independent boutiques, Nordic bakeries, Danish retro furniture shops and high street chains like Leon and Waitrose, n.b. she loves the vibrant multicultural aspects of Peckham.

**Dawn** - a mixture of food and design shops that reflect the local community and arts.

**Lesley** - stop being hassled by people asking to sign me up to eg. Broadband at the Aylesham Centre.

### Thoughts about the Peckham Plex cinema and the multi storey car park

**Philippe** - if have to redevelop the car park and cinema, keep as an arts centre - keep Frank's and cinema.

**Sarah** - I love the cinema - brilliant to have it locally, great prices. Keep it cheap!

**Jonathan** - Peckham feels an exciting and happening place to live.





# PLAYING NICELY

## SOME PECKHAM-ITES REFLECT ON THE CHALLENGES (AND DELIGHTS) OF MAKING PUBLIC SPACE

One evening, as it was getting dark, we headed to Peckham Square with the CoDesign bike. It was early in the process, and we wanted to have some conversations about what good 'public space' might be in the context of central Peckham. Local people have stressed many times in the past months that the 'station square' should be not only welcoming to all, but also *useful* to the community, so we were keen to get a sense of what that might mean from a broader range of voices.

The points below were all made that evening by two or more of the eight people we spoke with, all but one of whom were new to the CoDesign process. (We asked a number of questions about what public space meant to them, what spaces they felt worked well and less well in Peckham, and what they would like to see the Co-design achieve.) These points, and the accompanying headline quotes, offer some valuable insights into how public space in Peckham is perceived and used, and what some Peckhamites would like it to be. They articulate some ideas, questions and also – importantly! – challenges that we hope will inform thinking about the future look, feel and use of the 'station square'. Because making space that is truly public, while a vital endeavor, is not by any means easy.



- **"Public space should be for EVERYBODY."** Of course, we all – architects, communities, society – say this ALL the time. But once we start to think about what we mean, things get more complicated. Not everyone feels welcome everywhere – even if theoretically free to enter – or that some spaces offer them anything useful. As one participant pithily put it: "Middle classes going on trains [use the station]. Lower classes use the Rye Lane shops." Some people may feel uncomfortable in the presence of others – beggars, the homeless, those who have been drinking, groups of young people etc – and therefore either avoid spaces, or seek to have those others moved elsewhere through policing or policy. The people we spoke with, while some had experiences themselves of feeling less welcome in places, had not abandoned the ideal of everyone feeling welcome, and of communities coming together.
- **"Public space can be a location for change. For new life to start to happen."** These beautiful words were shared with us by a Ghanaian preacher. He stressed the need for public space to be truly welcoming – and the importance of being both welcome in public and publicly welcomed – to those who have lost hope or fallen out of society's support structures. This was not a religious discussion, but one about the power of community. His hope for the new square – with its ideal situation so close to points of arrival by bus or train – was that there might be some space for public or charitable services from food banks to advice. Then the square would feel truly welcoming to everyone.
- **"It's not important how public space looks. It's about how it's run and what happens there: the people and the activities."** More than one person made this point. It can be easy to become focused on issues of the character, materials or height of buildings and spaces. And indeed, these are important, but perhaps not as important as



the way in which buildings, management and use work together to shape the experience of being in a place, and the opportunities it offers. The theme came through time and time again that it was the act of being outside and in public – whether that was quietly sitting and watching, or taking part in some activity such as a festival, a market or a table tennis game – that really mattered to people.

- **"Public space offers somewhere to go outside your home, and facilities that are not in your home."** Different people said this in different ways. For some who live alone, public space can offer a sense of company and community. But if you live in a small house or flat, with a large family or many housemates, public space may be somewhere to you go – paradoxically

– to find privacy, peace, or some space of your own. "Sometimes I come here to sit and make a phone call" said one younger man. The Ghanaian preacher stressed how Britain's cold, wet climate kept people inside much of the time, often in homes without gardens, and that therefore it was even more important to offer the facility of somewhere to sit in fresh air and sunshine at those points when the weather is more clement. He would like to see "small shed structures where people – especially older people – can relax in the sunshine" in the station square.

- **"It's really important just to be able to sit."** Almost everyone made this point. It was clear that many of those we spoke to, or those they knew, just found a real straightforward pleasure in being able to simply, "sit and look", "sit and



chill” or “just sit and relax”. Indeed, this is what some people we spoke with were doing. (Until we disturbed them, that is!) Although sometimes this was just about pausing on your unhurried way somewhere, for others sitting was a proper ‘leisure’ activity, and for others still, a way of encountering friends, as if you sit in a popular place for long enough someone you know will sooner or later pass by.

- **Sometimes I just would like to sit and drink a beer.”** Throw alcohol into the mix, and things get controversial. Why is it appropriate for example, to buy a glass of beer and sit at a pavement café, but not to buy a can of beer and sit on a bench? Expressing disapproval of the rowdy street drinkers in Peckham Square, one young man felt annoyed that the knock-on effect was that he can’t have a beer there in the evening without being moved on by police. He has a fair point, especially if people in Peckham do want and need to make use of some public spaces as extensions of their domestic sphere, and cannot always afford to be consumers.
- **“It’s really important that something is happening in a public space otherwise there’s no reason to be there.”** Well absolutely. This statement was partly about the need for space to be attractive as a community gathering point – to have some ‘pull’ to it. But also related to the fact that it is quieter spaces that tend to attract ‘undesirable’ behavior. So how does one keep a space activated? “Safety is a big thing round here”, someone said. While the young man in Peckham Square pointed out that, annoying as the “layabouts” were, they kept the space feeling occupied. “Even at night no-one has ever robbed me here.”
- **“Any public space should be stuffed with CCTV.”** While not everyone would agree with this statement, it does flag up concern about the safety and management of the new station square, and public space in general. “There are loads of places in Peckham that are messy and could do with a clean up, if they were cleaned up and kept clean people would respect them more,” we were told. One man stressed: if there is a poor long-term management, it won’t be a public space. So again, people we spoke to were not so concerned with the ‘ta-dah!’ moment of a newly-designed space appearing and looking beautiful. They were concerned about how it would play out over time.

- **“Those outdoor gyms are great”.** Clearly, station square is an unlikely location for an outside gym. But I’ve included this point as the gyms were named more than once as a positive example. (I have heard this many times recently in London, especially from groups who tend to be under-represented at core consultation events.) They bring people of all ages – from toddlers to the elderly - and backgrounds together for free and positive activity, that they do in each other’s company (but without being forced to interact). They also attract people who just want to sit and watch, and are seen as welcoming to young people, while promoting health and physical activity. This makes them an interesting symbol or possible metaphor for ‘good public space’.
- **“Peckham Square is alright actually”.** That’s me! In previous stages of this project, I have often been told that Peckham Square is an example of poor public space: big, open and not as well used as it might be. But everybody we spoke to this time thought it pretty good, sometimes for those very same qualities: you can sit there, with space around you, with good long views, and just watch the world. Its situation close to residential areas, and its distinctive architecture, made it a place that was valued (i) as an extension of home, (ii) for bumping into people you knew, and (iii) for meeting people. “It’s a place with a clear location where you can tell someone you will be, or to come and meet you, especially if they don’t know the area”. The landscaping gets children and skateboarders playing, there are plenty of places to sit, and the table-tennis tables are usually in use. Kids gather there after school. “You can be coming from anywhere and you can sit down and look and relax. Not everyone can go to a shop to eat or relax.” In contrast, Holly Grove Shrubbery, which I am used to hearing people praise, was twice named as somewhere that felt dark, unsafe, unwelcoming and that offered little of interest to sit and look at.

I’ll end on another quote from the lovely Ghanaian preacher, that moves beyond the topic of the evening’s discussions, and onto the theme of the project as a whole: “Co-design needs to be for the whole community. To benefit even those who are not wanted. To draw people in and make them welcome.”

*Daisy Froud (cultural researcher and member of the Ash Sakula CoDesign team)*





# QUESTIONS / ANSWERS

## THESE QUESTIONS WERE RAISED ON THE CODESIGN BLOG

These answers were provided by London  
Borough of Southwark:

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### Who says we want a square? Who made that decision and when?

The Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan was extensively and widely consulted upon over a ten year period with thousands of people involved. This has gone through public inquiry and examination in public. This is the document we are working to and it is about to be formally adopted by full council assembly in November as it has full member support.

### Are tall buildings inevitable?

If you mean towers then there is a case made for tall buildings in the area action plan. If you mean 7 - 8 storey buildings next to the station then no it is not inevitable. In any case any proposed development will need to go through the statutory planning process including public consultation.

### What particular public qualities will the proposed new square have? (Who will 'own' it? Who will decide who can do an event, set up a market stall, spill out on the pavement or park a bike?)

It will be an open space with retail of some description (yet to be determined) in the arches. Materials, seating, trees etc. are all as yet undecided as it is the intention that the CoDesign process feed into the design brief for the scheme. This will then be tendered to design consultants and as part of their brief will include consultation on the detail design of the proposed square and any development. At present it is the intention that Southwark take over the long lease and manage the space. With regards to use by market stalls, events and spilling out onto the pavement, all this will be covered by the normal licensing arrangements of the council.

### How will the conflicts between Regeneration and Gentrification be handled?

We would argue that one of the key aspects of the CoDesign process is that it reaches all members of the community and not just those with a gentrification agenda. For this reason we are keen that we make every effort to retain the existing businesses rather than attracting the "coffee chains" etc.

### In as much as Peckham is sometimes described as an emerging creative 'cluster', how robust is it really, and is this something the Gateway Project can identify with?

Peckham is important as an employment area with both the "creatives" and all the people employed in the high streets. There is an incredible vibrancy to the area and one suggestion put forward is the creation of "incubator" units to help support this.

Sat 06 Sep 2014 05:17  
(Commonplace App)

"What does the basic infrastructure of the railway look like without the 1960's (or is it earlier?) shopping arcade that now fills what was once an open plaza between Peckham Rye Station and Peckham Rye Lane. **Can we see visual representations of this?**"

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### Building structures earmarked for redevelopment

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- Ⓐ Removal of arcade to create a new square
- Ⓑ Potential redevelopment of corner building on Blenheim Grove. Southwark Council have commissioned Weston Williamson Architects to prepare a capacity study for the site.
- Ⓒ A proposal for the Iceland and Hannah Barry Gallery site is being developed by the leaseholder of the site Bywater Properties and in negotiation with Network Rail who are the freeholder.
- Ⓓ Proposal for an upgrade of the station building to include a lift is being developed by Network Rail.





# DIARY: WEEK 2

## OVERVIEW

### Friday 12.09.

CoDesign SHOP DROP IN  
4-7:30 pm Treasure Hunt, theme 'play' with What if:  
projects and 30 red animals.

### Saturday 13.09.

CoDesign SHOP DROP IN  
9am-1pm Finger on the Pulse.  
12-6pm Doodling from Above

### Sunday 14.09.

CoDesign visit  
10am-1pm CoDesign team presents to  
congregation of All Saints Church. (200 people)

### Tuesday 16.09.

7-9pm Second EDITORIAL MEETING for the  
Peckham CoDesign WEEKLY.

### Wednesday 17.09.

CoDesign SHOP DROP IN  
4-7:30 pm Treasure Hunt, theme 'history' with  
What if: projects and Donna Walker of Traces  
London.







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