THE
BIG BLUE
FENCE
PROJECT
Final Evaluation Report

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1 Executive Summary
1 Executive Summary

– The Big Blue Fence project creatively engaged and inspired the diverse communities of Hackney, Waltham Forest and Newham to explore the changes in their rich and shared local heritage over the last 60 years.

– The project produced, documented and archived an extensive array of stories and reflections that will provide an invaluable record of the changing physical, natural, industrial and social heritage of the local area before it undergoes even more change as a result of the Olympics.

– The project successfully delivered a broad range of outputs across all three boroughs using a variety of creative methods of engagement. These outputs included:

  – Touring the innovative and interactive Big Blue Fence installation to 4 public venues across all three boroughs, drawing an estimated 72,000 visits.
  – Creatively engaging a total of 382 participants in a range of local heritage themes during a programme of 71 community and public workshops across all three boroughs.
  – 45 local residents recounted their personal lived experiences of the local area over the last 60 years. Of these 23 were recorded as oral histories.
  – Hosting a project finale event bringing together project participants from all three boroughs.
  – Ensuring a legacy of access to the project material through partnership with local archives, museums and other community groups.
The project advanced key learning outcomes through promoting participatory learning about the area’s local heritage and its local communities. These learning outcomes were achieved through:

- Creative participation
- Creating a legacy of interest
- Promoting local resources
- Fostering collaboration
- Intergenerational learning
- Building skills

The project process identified key recommendations to inform similar future projects. These include:

- Identifying and advancing the project’s unique selling point
- Being adaptable to feedback
- Building ownership

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## Introduction

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2.1 Project Background

2.1.1 In 2007 an 11 mile long blue fence, more than 10 feet high, appeared in East London around the Olympic site. The fence represented massive future change to the area and its communities. If someone stood within the Olympic Site with their ears and eyes to the fence, what would they see and hear? What would the people residing on the other side of the site have to say about their lives and the prospect of such change? This was the question Immediate Theatre, working in partnership with Sanctuary Housing, sought to ask by creatively engaging Hackney Wick residents to express their perspectives and tell their stories about life in the area.

2.1.2 In summer of 2008 the Big Blue Fence Installation was built: an interactive scale model of a portion of the blue fence containing 13 boxes of vivid miniature worlds reflecting the stories and perspectives captured from the Hackney Wick residents. It used photographs, objects, sound recordings and interactive elements and was exhibited at two local events. This work was funded by Sanctuary Housing.

2.1.3 Due to the success of the work undertaken with Hackney Wick residents, a decision was taken to extend the project to other communities residing around the perimeter of the fence, namely in Newham and Waltham Forest. It was also acknowledged that whilst the Olympic games represented significant change to the area, it was actually just a continuation of numerous changes in the physical, industrial and social make up of the area that had taken place over the last 60 years. The project aimed to extend its focus by looking back at all these other changes, in a bid to explore not only the rich historical heritage of the area, but also to understand how these changes could inform, educate and inspire contemporary perspectives on local life. The Big Blue Fence project in its current guise was thus born!
2.1.4 The Big Blue Fence project ran from May 2009 to August 2010. Throughout this period the project strove to engage the local communities of Hackney, Waltham Forest and Newham with their shared heritage in a unique way. Through a multitude of creative activities, the Big Blue Fence project enabled local people to share their own opinions, histories and stories whilst continually learning from each other. The project has produced a rich creative tapestry of local heritage which it is hoped will be both a source of inspiration and pride for local communities in the future.

2.2 Aims of this Report

2.2.1 This report’s primary objective is to evaluate the Big Blue Fence Project against its objectives as agreed with both funding bodies (HLF and Sanctuary Housing) and as per both their specified evaluation requirements.

2.2.2 In pursuing this primary objective the report also aims to achieve several secondary objectives. These are:

- To document the ‘story’ of the project for the purposes of producing additional archive project content.
- To identify recommendations to inform HLF/Sanctuary regarding future funding decisions.
- To identify recommendations for Immediate Theatre regarding any similar future projects.
- To identify opportunities to extend the project in the future.
- To document the ‘story’ of the project to inform the development of future projects by other organisations.
2.3 Types of Evaluation

2.3.1 This report undertakes two types of evaluation which the structure of this report aims to follow:

- Summative Evaluation

  The first type of evaluation aims to assess the results of the project in terms of outputs produced and outcomes achieved for the individuals and groups involved. The report aims to do so by summarising the ‘story’ of the project from its initial objectives (Section 3) through to tangible project outputs (Section 4) through to the resulting outcomes (Section 5).

- Formative Evaluation

  This second type of evaluation aims to assess reflectively how the project process was implemented. It aims to identify within the project what worked well and what didn’t, so that recommendations can be made for similar future projects. The details of this evaluation are contained in Section 6: Project Review.

2.3.2 Evaluating the longer-term impacts of the project on the wider community and society are outside the scope of this report. This is because the project was funded only for 15 months and additional time, resource and cost had not been allocated to perform a longitudinal evaluation to gauge longer-term impact.

It is however suggested that any future projects that wish to evaluate the longer term impacts by engaging with similar themes and communities as this project, must ensure that sufficient time and resources for carrying out such an evaluation has been considered when applying for funding.
2.4 Methods of Evaluation

2.4.1 Several methods of evaluation and sources have been used to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. These include the following:

- Head counts
- Random sampling
- Evaluation questionnaires and emailed feedback
- Visitor comments books
- Creative workshop activities
- Feedback from project steering group meetings
- Feedback from project debrief meeting
- Photos.
# 3 Project Objectives

## 3.1 Summary

## 3.2 Initial Objectives

## 3.3 Additional Objectives
3.1 Summary

The project objectives were stated at its outset as informed by the project funding application and subsequent project planning. These were reviewed during the life of the project as informed by ongoing feedback from the participants, the project steering group and the project team. Through this ongoing review, additional objectives were added during the project’s life.

3.2 Initial Objectives

- To facilitate learning about local heritage with a wide range of people using a variety of stimuli: discussions, drama, audio materials, photograph gathering and guided visits to historical sites, archives and libraries.

- To provide workshop programmes in libraries, museums, schools and community settings.

- To create new displays for the Big Blue Fence installation containing collected heritage material.

- To display the Big Blue Fence installation in public spaces showcasing the gathered heritage work, in the Olympic boroughs of Hackney, Waltham Forest and Newham.

- To link gathered material to online facilities e.g. Hackney Archive.

- To sustain and extend the project’s reach by linking with other initiatives and invigorating existing archives with material gathered at grass root level.

- To increase inter cultural and intergenerational understanding by sharing experiences which contribute to a common heritage.

- To conserve the history of an altering area by gathering documentation about physical changes.
– To protect the history of diverse and shifting communities by engaging with those who rarely engage in cultural activities.

### 3.3 Additional Objectives

– To explore and reflect on local history and heritage in a fun, original and creative manner.

– To promote intergenerational communication and understanding through forging connections between the past and the present.

– To foster connections and collaborations between communities within and across all three boroughs.

– To provide an archivable and accessible record of the past.

– To increase knowledge of the local area and its resources.
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4.1 Summary

- The varied nature of the project, through taking a number of approaches and working across three boroughs, provided it with a challenging range of outputs. These form a large part of the project’s objectives as detailed in Section 4.

- The project successfully delivered its numerous intended outputs across all 3 boroughs within deadlines.

- The outputs focused on:
  - Touring the Big Blue Fence installation
  - Delivering a programme of community and public workshops
  - Organising visits to sites of heritage interest
  - Capturing oral histories of local residents
  - Promoting a review of the project through a project ‘storybook’ and finale event.
  - Ensuring continued access to the project content.

4.2 Installation

4.2.1 Venues

- The Big Blue Fence installation was on display in a public venue in each of the three boroughs of Hackney, Waltham Forest and Newham.

- The installation was on display in:
  - Hackney Museum from 30 May to 6 September 2009
  - Walthamstow Library from 1 October 2009 to 17 January 2010
  - Stratford Library from 6 March to 17 June 2010.

- In addition it was on display for one day only for the project finale event at the Grassroots Community Centre in West Ham, Newham on 18 June 2010.
4.2.2 Visits

- It is estimated that the installation drew approximately 72,000 visits across all three main venues (per the following split: Hackney Museum = 7,000, Walthamstow Library = 20,000, Stratford Library = 45,000).

- These figures were estimated by each venue using a combination of data drawn from estimates of total numbers of visits to each venue over the specified time period and sample counts of visitors to the installation at different periods of the day at various stages throughout each ‘residency’. It should be noted that no allowance has been made for repeat visits by the same individuals and so these figures represent an estimate of overall visits.

4.2.3 Display boxes

- The installation contained 13 display boxes at any given time. These presented either interactive representations of the series of community workshops undertaken, representations of various local individual’s stories or references to the Olympic development.

- Each box used a range of interactive displays including audio, digital images, archive image collages, models and real objects. Professional theatre designer Pip Nash designed the majority of the boxes, working with the ideas of local community groups.

- Since the first day of display in Hackney Museum, 10 boxes were redesigned for new displays to reflect ongoing engagement with community groups and individuals in each borough (four from Hackney, three from Waltham Forest and three from Newham). In addition in Waltham Forest, a film produced in conjunction with George Mitchell Primary School about the contrast between urban Leyton and Epping Forest called ‘The Trees are Still Standing’ was screened at regular intervals between mid December 2009 and mid January 2010. This was shown on the BBC public screen next to the
installation’s location in Walthamstow Library and represented an external ‘14th display box’.

- During the ‘residencies’ of the Big Blue Fence installation at Hackney Museum and Walthamstow Library, the displays contained in the installation were supplemented by a display of photos taken by Chris Preston of the actual Big Blue Fence that surrounded the Olympic development.

### 4.2.4 Events

- Launch events to celebrate the installation’s arrival in Hackney Museum and Walthamstow Library were held on 10 June 2009 and 22 October 2009 which drew a range of invitees including local residents, councilors, other local authority representatives, museum and library staff.
### 4.3 Community & Public Workshops

#### 4.3.1 Venues and Participants

- Across all three boroughs, 11 community groups were engaged through a series of workshops, which aimed to creatively explore various local heritage themes over the last 60 years. There were a total of 249 participants engaged in 62 workshops.

- A variety of community groups were engaged with, including school children, homeless groups, sheltered housing residents, youth clubs, parents groups and housing estate residents.

- The majority of the workshops took place at the home venues of each group, with some workshops also being hosted in the three public venues hosting the installation.

- A further nine public workshops were hosted, which were free for the public to attend. These also sought to creatively explore local themes of heritage but on a one off basis.

- Six workshops took place at Hackney Museum and three workshops in Walthamstow Library. A total of 133 public participants attended these workshops.

- In Newham, an additional three workshops were facilitated at Stratford Library for targeted and invited groups.

#### 4.3.2 Themes

- A variety of heritage themes were explored across all community/public workshops including:
  - Physical heritage (e.g. old cinema buildings/old school buildings(changes to built environment in Hackney Wick).
  - Social heritage (e.g. 1948 tea parties/cinema going/sports clubs/life on an estate/history of recent immigration).
– Industrial heritage (e.g. changing professions/industrial protests/history of Walthamstow Market).
– Educational heritage (e.g. school punishment books/education methods/teaching practices).
– Natural heritage (e.g. urban and natural environments in Waltham Forest/Hackney waterways).

4.3.3 Resources

– Several methods of creative engagement were employed across all workshops to engage participants. These included drama, song, poetry, dance and film.

– Several methods and information sources were also used to engage participants in specific local heritage and historical themes. These included archive visits, talks, object handling, guided walks and oral history gathering.

– A wide range of professional and volunteers contributed to arranging and running these workshops. These included heritage professionals, creative professionals and local residents.

4.4 Visits

– Various visits to sites of local interest were organised for community groups that had not previously visited these sites.

– In total seven visits were organized for a total of 140 people. These included:

  – One visit to Walthamstow Library,
  – One visit to Walthamstow High Street Market and BBC Public Screen,
  – One visit to Epping Forest,
  – One visit to Vestry House Archives,
– Two visits to Stratford Library,
– One visit to Upton Cross Old Victorian School Building.

4.5 Oral Histories

4.5.1 Recordings

– A total of 45 local residents agreed to recount their own personal memories of particular elements of local heritage.

– These were recorded and used in a variety of ways:

  – As source material for community and public workshops (e.g. for young people to learn about the past);
  – Edited into audio packages delivered via mp3 players to the public via the Big Blue Fence Installation;
  – Left intact as documented oral histories.

– Of this material, 23 stories were recorded as oral histories.

– As part of the project’s legacy, oral histories have been edited into topic form and are now permanently available to the public via the Big Blue Fence section of the Immediate Theatre website.

– Longer oral histories with written summaries will be stored at local archives.

4.5.2 Volunteer training

– Oral History training was organised by Hackney Museum for a total of seven volunteers. The training was split into two sessions over one week and incorporated theoretical and practical instruction.

– Unfortunately, none of the volunteers were able to record any subsequent oral histories for the project due to time commitments. Penny Cliff consequently recorded all oral histories captured for the project.
4.6 ‘Storybook’ and Finale Event

4.6.1 Response to Feedback

– The Project Steering Group fed back that it would be very useful for previous project participants to see what else the project had engaged with throughout its ‘journey’.

– In addition as the project had been focused on one borough at a time, it was felt that it would be useful to incorporate methods of summarising the project to reflect the shared heritage across boroughs.

– In response to this feedback the project produced a ‘storybook’ and staged a finale event to engage everyone that was involved in the project as well as the wider public.

4.6.2 Storybook

– The ‘storybook’ sought to summarise in a creative and succinct manner the work undertaken on the project throughout its ‘journey’.

– COG Design were commissioned and they came up with an idea of an map detailing the various participants, locations and heritage themes explored as part of the Big Blue Fence project ‘story’.

– 2,000 copies were produced in total. These were distributed to the public at the finale event, posted to previous participants and made available to Sanctuary Housing residents at their general meeting.
4.6.3 Finale Event

- A project finale event took place on Friday 18 June to celebrate the end of the project but also to bring together project participants from across all three boroughs to share their engagement with the project.

- The public event was hosted at the Grassroots Community Centre in West Ham. There were an estimated 70 attendees from all three boroughs.

- The event incorporated:
  - The Big Blue Fence installation
  - An exhibition of digital and printed images taken throughout the project
  - Copies of the Big Blue Fence storybook for all attendees
  - A screening of ‘The Trees are Still Standing’ short film
– Drama performances from two community groups
– A 1950s/1960s dance and music workshop
– Attendees were encouraged to talk to each other and share their experiences of the project over food and refreshments.

4.7 Legacy

4.7.1 Continuing Access
– As one of the key aims of the Big Blue Fence project was to inspire future interest from people within the local communities worked with to explore their heritage, the resulting legacy outputs are very important.

– The primary way that the legacy of the project has been supported is through continuing access to the heritage content produced throughout the project. Such access is for the wider public and has been made possible through a range of collaborations as detailed further below.

4.7.2 Website
– The Big Blue Fence section of the Immediate Theatre website contains eight creatively edited oral history audio clips that have been ‘curated’ according to specific themes: Work; Cinema; Olympics; Pleasures; Housing; children; 1948 (post war period); Education, making them more accessible to members of the public.

– In addition the website contains the ‘Trees are Still Standing’ film plus a variety of images taken throughout the project.

4.7.3 Oral history archives
– 23 oral history recordings captured in their original unedited formats have been archived and made accessible to the public at appropriate local archives as follows:
– Nine oral histories relating to Newham residents have been archived with Eastside Community Heritage in their East London People’s Archive, which can be accessed at the University of East London, Docklands Campus.

– Four oral histories relating to Waltham Forest residents have been archived with the Vestry House Museum Archives through collaboration with the Waltham Forest Oral History Workshop.

– 11 oral histories relating to Hackney residents have been given to the Hackney Archives. This material has also been donated to the Museum Library and Archives Council’s (MLA) People’s Record Project, an online national oral history archive.

### 4.7.4 Display boxes

– The Big Blue Fence installation display box that related to the exploration of the disappearance of cinemas in Waltham Forest, has been donated to Vestry House Museum for permanent public access.

– A further display box relating to the lives of a family residing in a Waltham Forest street has been donated to the remaining members of the family. This includes an oral history recording from one of the family members who unfortunately passed away during the project.

– Another display box which features The Good Companions, an over 50’s group based on the Kingsmead Estate and who were one of the first groups to be involved with the project, is on display in their community centre on the estate called The Kabin.

– Community Links, a charity that runs a series of community projects and services across Newham borrowed two installation display boxes that related to Newham for exhibition the Forest Gate Festival on Saturday 10 July 2010.
– Community Links also borrowed various digital and hard copy images of the Big Blue Fence project for display at the Newham Refugee Festival on Saturday 19 June 2010.

4.7.5 Other

– The project ‘storybook’ contains useful information about the project and can accessed in hard copy format at Walthamstow Library, Stratford Library, Hackney Museum and Vestry House Museum.

– Images of the Big Blue Fence installation were also used to promote the Museum Library and Archives Council’s (MLA) People’s Record Project. This project is one of their key contributions towards the Cultural Olympiad and showcases people’s engagement with London 2012 to form part of a comprehensive archival, material and digital record of the Games. Images of the installation features prominently in the People’s Record project brochure.
5 Project Outcomes

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5.1 Summary

– Whilst a number of the project objectives (as detailed in Section 4) relate to various project outputs, the remainder can be viewed as relating to one important project outcome: to promote learning through participation.

– As the project engaged local communities to explore their changing local heritage, this learning outcome can be said to focus on two key areas: local communities and local heritage.

– Local heritage learning was promoted through encouraging creative participation, creating a legacy of interest and promoting local learning resources.

– Learning about local communities was promoted through fostering collaboration, encouraging intergenerational learning and developing skills.

5.2 Learning about Local Heritage.

5.2.1 The need to learn

– The 2012 Olympics will reshape perception of Hackney, Newham and Waltham Forest, defined as some of the poorest areas in the UK. During this transition it is vital to learn about the rich local heritage of these boroughs over the last 60 years before it is lost forever.

5.2.2 Learning through creative participation

– The project promoted learning about the history of the local area through creative participation in a variety of forms as described in Section 5. It encouraged participants to engage with local heritage through an alternative lens and explore it in a fun, creative and unique way.
Participatory creative learning about heritage predominately took place during the workshop programme:

‘What I liked most about the workshops was the fact that history can be made really interesting, with restraints on the daily curriculum we don’t have time to engage the children in this way. The freedom to be creative, there was something for everyone’ (Bal Jheeta, Teacher of Upton Cross Primary School Class, Newham)

The unique appearance and interactivity of the installation also enabled people to creatively engage with local heritage through it.

This is demonstrated by a range of comments from the local public captured in comments books attached to the installation:

‘Our history, our past...it’s like a living history...well done’

‘I’ve spent a good hour soaking up memories. It’s a wonderful and moving experience’

‘I think it’s helping kids learn’

‘Very interesting and informative’

‘brilliant...loved it’

‘really good to look at’

‘I thought it was moving and exciting because of the Olympics, and I like how you can interact with things’

‘nice place to put it. I think it will get viewed a lot and like the idea of listening to people talking about the war and the Olympics. PS nice little models’

‘Really fascinating, some amazing images and anecdotes...’
‘Fantastic, interesting, memorable, congratulations’

– Also per comments from the various venues of the installation:

‘The installation was enjoyed by a wide range of visitors from toddlers to elders. The groups that have enjoyed it most are families... The exhibition is user friendly, it attracts people and of course, you can’t not notice it!’ (Sue McAlpine, Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Hackney Museum).

‘Customers seemed to enjoy it and there always seemed to be somebody at it, looking in the boxes. Many customers expressed how much they liked it’ (Caroline Rae, Library Supervisor, Walthamstow Library)

‘People coming to our library were keen on discovering the new installation project and its contents. Learning how the heritage of their borough is changing and changed over the years offered very interesting, close glance at people’s lives within their local neighbourhood. I think that members of public were definitely surprised seeing this installation and curious about its purpose in the library. That same curiosity allowed most of them to explore the stories behind the Big Blue Fence via its pictures, stories and other objects. I also think that they appreciated listening to the stories, looking at pictures on the screens – it was a very interactive and effective way of displaying information’ (Marcela Popovicova, Front Office Programme Facilitator, Stratford Library).
5.2.3 Learning through creating a legacy of interest

- The project promoted a legacy of interest in learning about local heritage through enabling the content acquired and generated throughout the project to continue to be accessed by future generations in a variety of ways (as detailed in Section 4.7). This is particularly important when older generations pass away and the link to their memories would normally disappear:

  ‘Sadly, Rose Bennett (one of the project participants) died on 9 January 2010, but her family was very happy to have taken part in the project. They have been given the recordings of Rose talking about the past. The recordings are not only of value to the family, but also provide a unique record for present and future generations, giving a glimpse into a way of life — and memories of how the borough was — that is past and in danger of being forgotten’ (Penny Cliff, facilitator of workshops exploring the history of a particular family in Waltham Forest).

5.2.4 Learning through promoting local resources

- Future learning about heritage has also been inspired by this project through widening knowledge of the various local resources available in exploring heritage.

- For example taking project participants to museums, libraries and archives, often for the first time to learn about the resources available to them.

  - A visit to Vestry House Museum Archives
  - Facilitating visits of school groups to Stratford Library:

  ‘The most moving highlight of the week for me was Ola saying ‘I’ve never been to a library before. Can I look at some books?’; and then
The project also tried to increase knowledge of the various local museums and libraries by attracting people to the Big Blue Fence Installation:

‘Hackney Museum has appreciated the installation of the Big Blue Fence and feels that it has been a very positive experience both for the reputation of the museum and for the enjoyment and appreciation of its visitors’ (Sue McAlpine, Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Hackney Museum).

‘I didn’t know that the Museum had improved so much’ (visitor to the installation at Hackney Museum).

‘We bought and displayed a collection of new books related to local history, sports, biographies alongside the installation and they were performing very well and increased our general issue figures’ (Marcela Popovicova, Front Office Programme Facilitator, Stratford Library).

The project also promoted future learning in local heritage by promoting the heritage research and profile of other local organisations and individuals through collaboration.

‘I’m so pleased I had the chance to link up my own research into local history with the work being done on the Big Blue Fence project!’ (Dr Michelle Johansson, Freelance Facilitator, Hackney Public Workshop).

Also the project ‘storybook’ detailed information about organizations e.g. Eastside Community Heritage where future heritage learning could be engaged in.
5.3 Learning about Local People and Communities

5.3.1 The need to learn

Hackney, Newham and Waltham Forest comprise a huge diversity of communities reflected in a range of ages, cultures and backgrounds. This diversity provides a rich source of learning material but also necessitates a need to foster greater connection between communities through the promotion of mutual learning and the development of specific skills.

5.3.2 Learning through collaboration

- The project promoted learning about people and their communities by fostering connections and collaborations between communities both within and across all 3 boroughs.

‘Big Blue Fence had a wonderfully buzzy feel about it and really got people chatting and interacting with each other. So important given time and place – neighbourhoods cut off from each other suddenly being linked together in this brave new post-2012 community’ (Alan Piggott, Vicar of St Mary’s Church, Hackney Wick).

- The project also aimed to promote connection within and across communities by promoting existing approaches to foster such connection. For example, a community workshop was run to promote the E13 Learning Community, an extended schools network of several schools in the Plaistow area.

‘Through this workshop children from 6 different schools came together to produce a piece of drama related to a local newspaper story. The children were in mixed groups with children from different schools working together on the piece...The enthusiasm of the tutors was very infectious and allowed the children to quickly relax and make new friends’ (Ali Helm, Teacher, Curwen Primary School and E13 Learning Community Representative, Newham).
The project also promoted new community centres in Newham such as the Hub and Grassroots, by hosting activities there. These had been built to mark the culmination of the New Deal For Communities (NDFC) regeneration project in the Plaistow and West Ham Area.

An unintended outcome of the project was to highlight the transport links between boroughs, which broke down perceived physical barriers between communities. Many participants, whilst attending various inter borough events such as the project finale, commented on their surprise at the ease with which they could travel between boroughs despite the physical presence of the Olympic development.

5.3.3 Promoting intergenerational learning

The project sought to promote intergenerational communication and understanding through forging connections and comparisons between the past and the present.

The project sought to achieve this through focusing on particular lived experiences and engaging project participants with these through creative participation. These encounters with the past encouraged reflections on the present through comparison. In this way past and present were linked together and a medium for intergenerational understanding established.

‘In interviews with older residents we explored the history of industry in the local area and industrial relations; the education system and how it has changed; the changes in gender roles; the changes to the physical environment. The workshop was very successful in promoting conversation between people of very different ages and ethnic backgrounds through the use of drama to explore themes and ideas’ (Clive Furness, Club Organiser, Swift Youth Club, Newham).
‘Students engaged particularly well with the elder citizens of Newham who came to give them a talk about their school days’ (Martin Ward, Teacher, Eastlea Community School, Newham).

‘One girl had drawn up a very detailed sports ground with all kinds of activities on offer (including kayaking and archery). I pointed out to her that Eton Manor had had a rifle range in the clubhouse basement for club members to use. Would she wish to include something like that in her ideal sports ground? She thought for a moment then offered a firm ‘no’ because this type of activity might encourage violence among young people. This provided an opportunity for a conversation about how and why attitudes change over time’ (Dr Michelle Johansson, Freelance Facilitator, Hackney Public Workshop).

– Captured oral histories also played an increasingly prominent part within the installation and aimed to promote intergenerational understanding through young people engaging with these lived histories during their visit to the installation.

‘We have noticed that people have listened to the oral history on a regular basis – often for long periods and not just a few seconds’ (Sue McAlpine, Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Hackney Museum).

‘The whole thing gave the children a chance to see life from a different perspective – they could see other life histories. They really enjoyed the whole thing’ (Visitor to Big Blue Fence Installation).
5.3.4 Learning through building skills.

- Various heritage-focused skills were developed for participants. These included skills in oral history gathering (through organising practical training) and archive research (through organising visits to local libraries and archives).

- Throughout all community workshops, participant’s creative skills were developed.

‘The workshop was very successful in promoting creative skills. The children did a lot of projects focusing on their creative skills like the collection of natural materials in the forest they had to label. They used that as inspiration to write a poem on the ecological changes to their local environment’ (Rianette Groenwold, Teacher, George Mitchell Primary School, Waltham Forest).

- Participants also had the opportunity to develop additional skills such as workshop facilitation (e.g. students from George Mitchell Secondary School facilitating a public workshop), and design (Swift Club participants designing a display box in the Big Blue Fence installation).
6 Project Review

6.1 Summary

6.2 What worked well

6.3 What didn't work so well
6.1 Summary

– This review is a reflection on the project process. As such it represents a formative evaluation of the project.

– It has been informed primarily by an end of project debrief meeting.

– Through reviewing what did and did not go so well, this evaluation identifies key learning points to inform any similar future projects.

– Key learning points include:
  – Locate USP (Unique Selling Point):
    – Identifying and promoting a project’s unique selling point is vital when looking to engage participants and partners
  – Be responsive to feedback:
    – Project should be adaptable to participant feedback and continually look to improve.
  – Build ownership

Look to continually build participants’ and potential partners’ ownership of project and identify and respond to their personal objectives and motivations.
## 6.2 What worked well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What went well</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Possible Cause</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Found venues for hosting installation, and identified community groups for</td>
<td>Primary project deliverables were achieved across three boroughs within</td>
<td>Persistent communication and chasing.</td>
<td>At planning stage, build in sufficient time for project team to build networks and contacts –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workshop programme, in all three boroughs.</td>
<td>deadlines.</td>
<td>Focused on meeting contacts face to face rather than on phone.</td>
<td>ideally through devoting time to visit contacts.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtained a small handful of excellent contacts that provided extensive information and other</td>
<td>Identify ways that project can help benefit individuals’ and groups’ own objectives to get their</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>contacts.</td>
<td>support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation gave the project a unique selling point.</td>
<td>Allowed project to present itself as unique compared with lots of other</td>
<td>Combined an excellent creative idea with key issues of accessibility and learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project team kept learning when moving to each new borough about ways of</td>
<td>In many ways the work undertaken within the third borough proved more</td>
<td>Project contained natural opportunities to apply learning as aiming for similar objectives in each</td>
<td>Become adaptable to feedback so that key review points are built into project process – where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improving approach to achieve more success.</td>
<td>successful due to lessons learnt from previous boroughs.</td>
<td>new borough as those before.</td>
<td>changes can be implemented if need be.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All get ins and get outs of installation in all venues ran very smoothly.</td>
<td>No health and safety issues for venues and all installation deadlines</td>
<td>Good team who knew what they were doing with Tony Gouveia overseeing as informal stage manager.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>were met in each venue.</td>
<td>Also design and structure of installation was good, so caused no problems.</td>
<td>Identify a specific stage manager role to oversee any similar issues at outset of project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idea for project finale and storybook was good.</td>
<td>Brought three boroughs together. Enabled project reflection and</td>
<td>Came from a suggestion made by the project steering group to enable all participants to see full</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>celebration. Had a tangible output to give to participants to promote learning and say thank you.</td>
<td>throughput of project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The broad approach to promoting legacy of content acquired through the</td>
<td>Promoted several ways of accessing information hopefully ensuring wider</td>
<td>Legacy strategy focused on ‘access’ to information as vital rather than ‘presentation’ of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>project was more successful than putting everything onto dedicated website.</td>
<td>access.</td>
<td>information.</td>
<td>Build project legacy strategy based on how potential beneficiaries of such legacy will access</td>
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<td>it.</td>
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<td>Promote a collaborative and creative approach in considering forms of enabling legacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 6.3 What didn’t work so well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What didn’t go well</th>
<th>Impact/Effect</th>
<th>Possible Cause</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between creative organisations and some heritage groups can be challenging (although worked very well in Hackney with Hackney Museum).</td>
<td>Difficulty obtaining concerted support from some heritage organisations to fulfil the project objectives. Demonstrated in an inability to dedicate resources to project or Immediate Theatre having to prove their credibility with heritage work.</td>
<td>Difference of culture, practice and approach between heritage organisations and creative organisations. Resourcing difficulties for heritage organisations. Inability for some heritage staff to work on a freelance basis.</td>
<td>Establish a formal partnership between a creative organisation and a heritage organisation at the outset of the project. The heritage organisation can represent the project from a heritage perspective, across all boroughs attracting greater support from other heritage providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of community groups approached or worked with initially were not wholly suitable for the project.</td>
<td>In Hackney and Waltham Forest some groups were unable to commit sufficient time, attention or interest towards the project.</td>
<td>Insufficient time Difficulty ‘selling’ what the project was offering. Insufficient numbers of community groups approached initially.</td>
<td>Create specific requirements for the type of group to engage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to market public events.</td>
<td>Some public workshops and events struggled to attract sufficient attendance from local public despite various methods of active marketing.</td>
<td>Sometimes insufficient support in respect of marketing from venue hosting event. Difficulty getting public to commit attendance to events.</td>
<td>Enable greater ownership towards marketing events by specific venues by understanding and articulating why such events can support their own goals. Provide more focus towards the marketing of public events by committing to less and inviting pre-organised groups to ensure suitable attendance, with the general public also free to attend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whilst no major problems with installation, there were lots of little ongoing maintenance requirements.</td>
<td>Took up disproportionate amount of various project members time.</td>
<td>A project role for ongoing maintenance had not been considered at the outset of the project. It was therefore a job that had to be fitted around other work and so took much longer than anticipated.</td>
<td>Consider carefully all potential project roles at outset of project and allocate time and resource to all, even if considered minor roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legacy of the project.</td>
<td>Extremely long time was required to prepare and format source material in order to be easily accessible for the future audiences.</td>
<td>As this was the first project of its kind handled by this organisation, we were initially unaware of the potential for the huge amount of material that was ultimately collected. The variety in formats of various materials required a wide range of specialist skills to process.</td>
<td>Highly recommend the appointment of one particular legacy coordinator from the beginning of the project.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>