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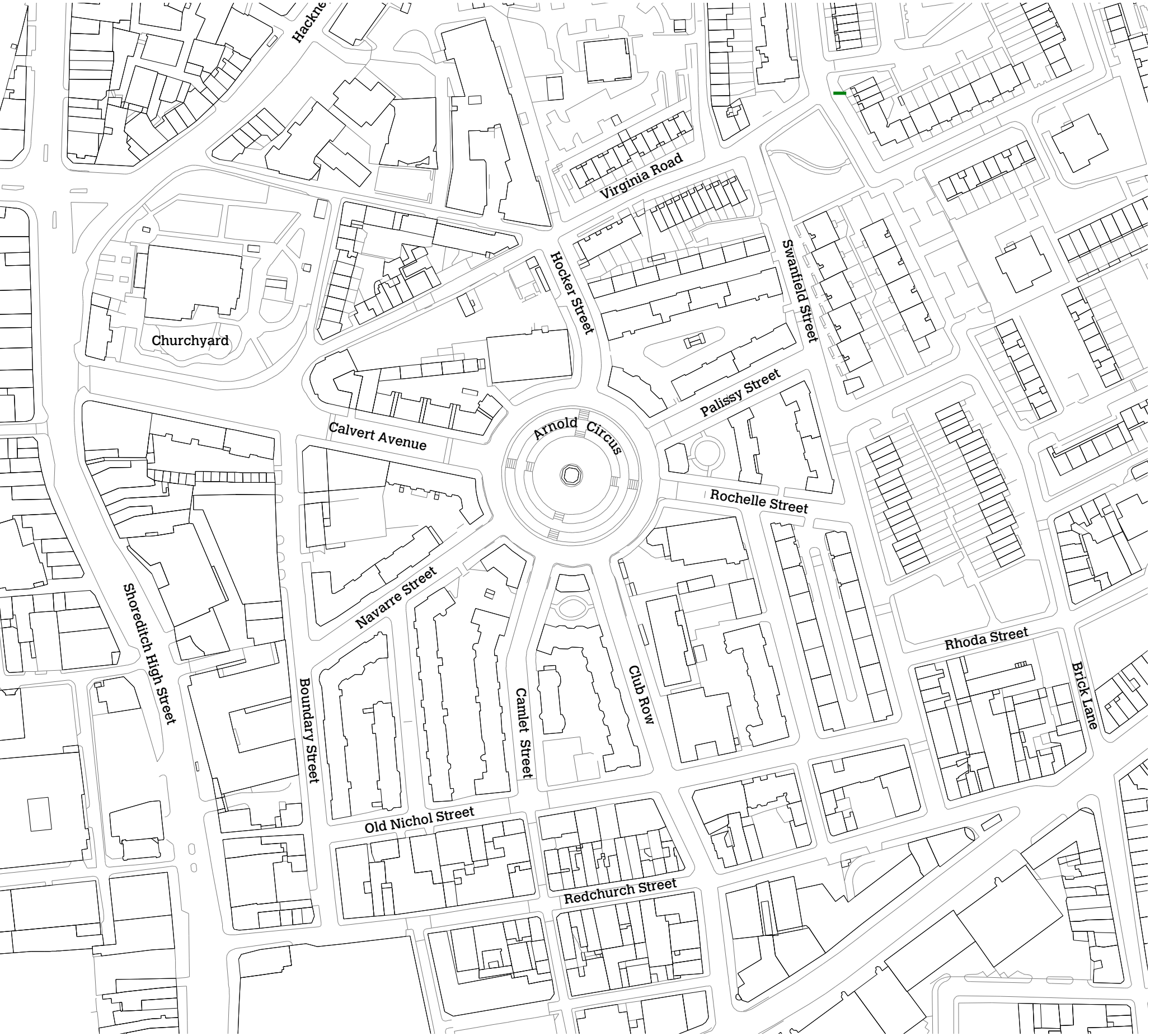
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Report Contents

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Summary of Issues & Opportunities**
- 1.2 Summary of Recommendations**

2. Context & Principles

- 2.1 Historical Context**
- 2.2 Social & Cultural Context**
- 2.3 Current context**
- 2.4 Policy Context**
- 2.5 ACCS Principles**

3. Visions for the Future of Arnold Circus

- 3.1 Key issues & opportunities**
- 3.2 What's the Time Arnold Circus?**
- 3.3 Visions**
- 3.4 The Third Tier**
- 3.5 Traffic Management**
- 3.6 Wider Area Strategy**
- 3.7 Long-Term Landscaping**
- 3.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

4. Participation & Ownership

- 4.1 Key issues & opportunities**
- 4.2 Community Consultation**
- 4.3 Arnold Circus Steering Group**
- 4.4 Framework for Participation**
- 4.5 Predictive Infrastructures**
- 4.6 Packages**

5. Management & Maintenance

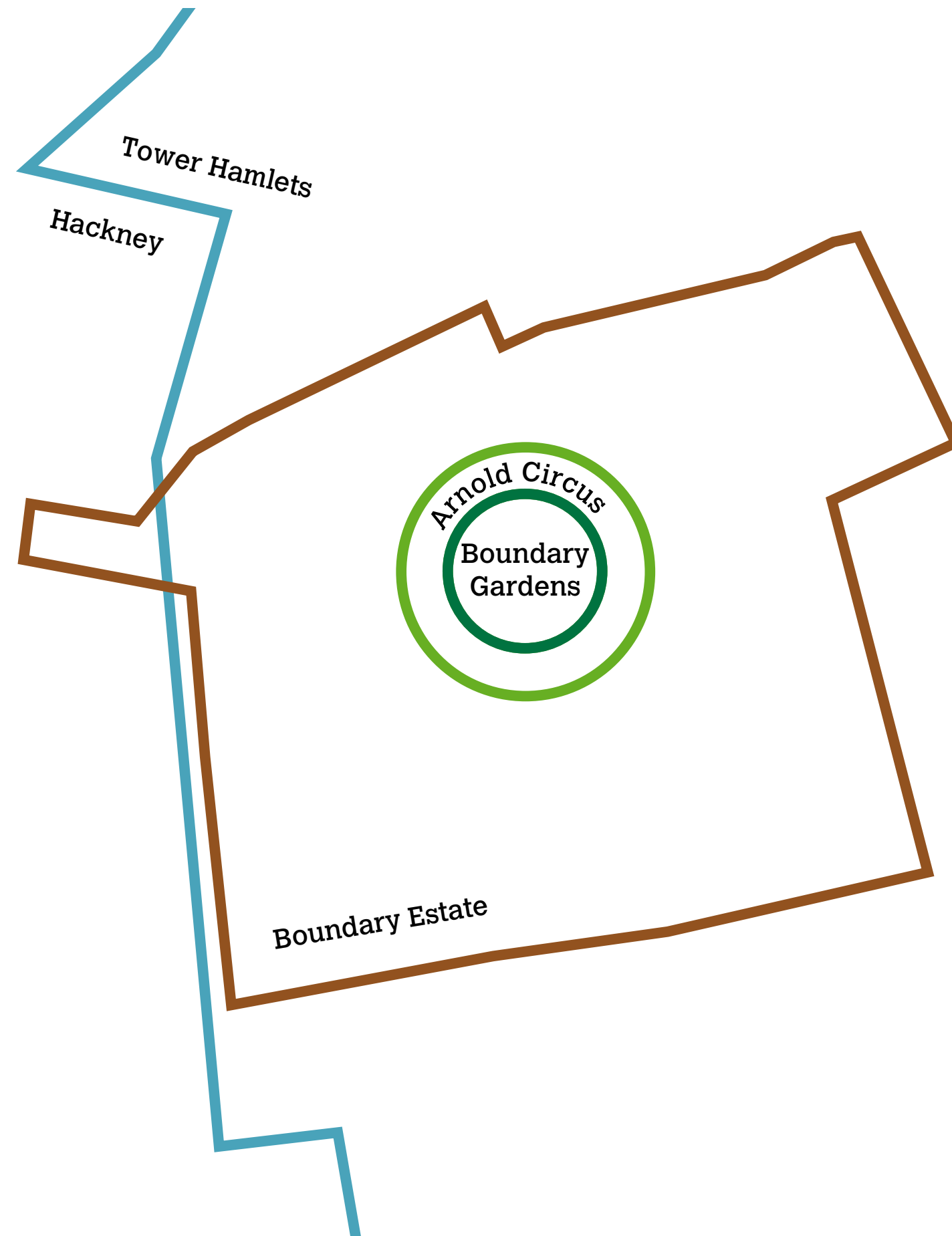
- 5.1 Key issues & opportunities**
- 5.2 Current Maintenance Arrangements**
- 5.3 Community & Council**
- 5.4 Future division of responsibility**
- 5.5 Resources & Employment**
- 5.6 Monitor & Evaluate the Current Arrangements**
- 5.7 Forms of communication**
- 5.8 Conservation Management Plan**

6. Summary of Recommendations

7. Appendix

- A - Assessment of Historical Character**
- B - Policy Framework**
- C - Policy & Guidance Consulted**
- D - ACCS Survey Methodology**
- E - ACCS Survey Long List of Questions**
- F - ACCS Survey Results and Evaluation**
- G – Grounds Maintenance Contract**
- H - Potential Levels of Involvement**

1. Executive Summary



1.1 Summary of Issues & Opportunities

The Arnold Circus Conservation Strategy (ACCS) is a plan for the long-term use, management, and maintenance of Arnold Circus, an extraordinary Grade II listed public space at the centre of the Boundary Estate in Tower Hamlets. The Strategy was commissioned by the Friends of Arnold Circus, and guided by a steering group representing London Borough of Tower Hamlets Parks & Open Spaces and Conservation departments, the Local Area Partnership, English Heritage, the Boundary Estate Tenants and Residents Association, and the Friends of Arnold Circus.

Having historically been the hub of local social activity, Arnold Circus fell into disuse and disrepair over the last 20 years. Now that the space is on the verge of significant restoration works funded through planning gain, the ACCS aims to ensure that the benefits of conservation are sustained within the local community, and that in turn the local community sustains the conservation of Arnold Circus.

The Strategy proposes a socially sustainable approach to conservation that involves re-owning heritage in the present as much as preserving the past. The approach is underpinned by five principles relating to key policy objectives; Sustainability, Accessibility, Participation, Design Quality and Adaptability.

The ACCS sketches out shared visions for the future character of Arnold Circus drawn from a public survey to develop an understanding of how the local community wish to use the space. It identifies two different but complementary sides to Arnold Circus's character; as a stage for social events and an environment for relaxing and appreciating nature. This character is both determined by, and dependent on, the local community. As a stage for planned and impromptu performances, the bandstand relies on the active input of the public. As a green, healthy, and historic site, Arnold Circus needs its users to participate in its upkeep.

'Visions for the Future of Arnold Circus' features recommendations to enable a broader range of possible uses, improve access to the site for all, and connect the space to an improved local network of complementary public and semi-public spaces.

'Participation & Ownership' proposes measures to ensure that change is planned 'with', as well as 'for' the users of Arnold Circus, on the understanding that engaging local people in the process of change can help Arnold Circus respond better to the needs of users, ensure a real sense of ownership, and encourage the community to take ongoing care of the space. Recommendations include a 'Framework for Participation' in the physical changes where the building works are seen as an opportunity to maintain engagement with the site through new forms of activities, and a phased programme of discrete but corresponding 'Packages' that maximise the potential for public involvement in long-term, incremental improvements.

'Management & Maintenance' proposes viable arrangements to sustain the benefits of the initial investment made in the forthcoming restoration, and prevent Arnold Circus falling back into a state of disrepair. Recommendations include a clear division of responsibilities, efficient redistribution of resources, and rooting the maintenance programme in the community by creating new employment for local people.

Arnold Circus was originally designed as the green and social centre of the Boundary Estate, for the wellbeing of the local community. The current willingness of that community to reengage with the space offers the key to its sustainable conservation. By encouraging community involvement with the site through time and experience of use, the restoration and subsequent maintenance of Arnold Circus could serve as a model for engaging the practice of planning-gain-led regeneration with real and everyday needs on the ground.



1.2 Summary of Recommendations

Chapter 3. Visions for the Future of Arnold Circus

3.4 The Third Tier

Remodel the surrounding streetscape to provide an accessible hardscaped extension of public space at street level

3.5 Traffic Management

Develop a Traffic Management Strategy to address buses, parking, and feasibility of temporary pedestrianisation

3.6 Wider Area Strategy

Audit of local public space, and strategy to pool resources and offer complementary uses

3.7 Long-Term Landscaping

Agreement between council and community over continuing gardening after the restoration works

3.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Consideration of SUDs

Chapter 4. Participation and Ownership

4.3 Arnold Circus Steering Group

Continue to meet bi-monthly throughout the duration of the forthcoming LBTH restoration works

4.4a The Site as a Place of Communication

A scheduled programme of events related to the works to increase perceptions of accessibility

4.4b The Site as a Place of Learning

Use the restoration works as an opportunity to encourage child and adult learning

4.4c Next Steps for a Framework for Participation

Plan a detailed programme of possible events surrounding the construction works in discussion with LBTH

4.5 Predictive Infrastructures

Intelligent planning to enable the delivery of incremental change within a coherent physical structure

4.6 Packages: Phased program of independent sub-projects

A phased programme of self-sufficient, independently funded commissions developed through community participation

Chapter 5. Management and Maintenance

5.4 Future Division of Responsibility

Unambiguous redistribution of responsibility for more efficient use of resources

5.5a A Group Effort to Maintain Arnold Circus

Practical coordination of various staff, volunteers and agencies who maintain Arnold Circus

5.5b New Employment in the Community

Root the upkeep of the space in the community by providing new employment for local people

6.6 Monitor and Evaluate the Current Maintenance Arrangements

Log frequency and quality of existing maintenance provision

6.7 Forms of Communication

Establish clear lines of communication between all parties

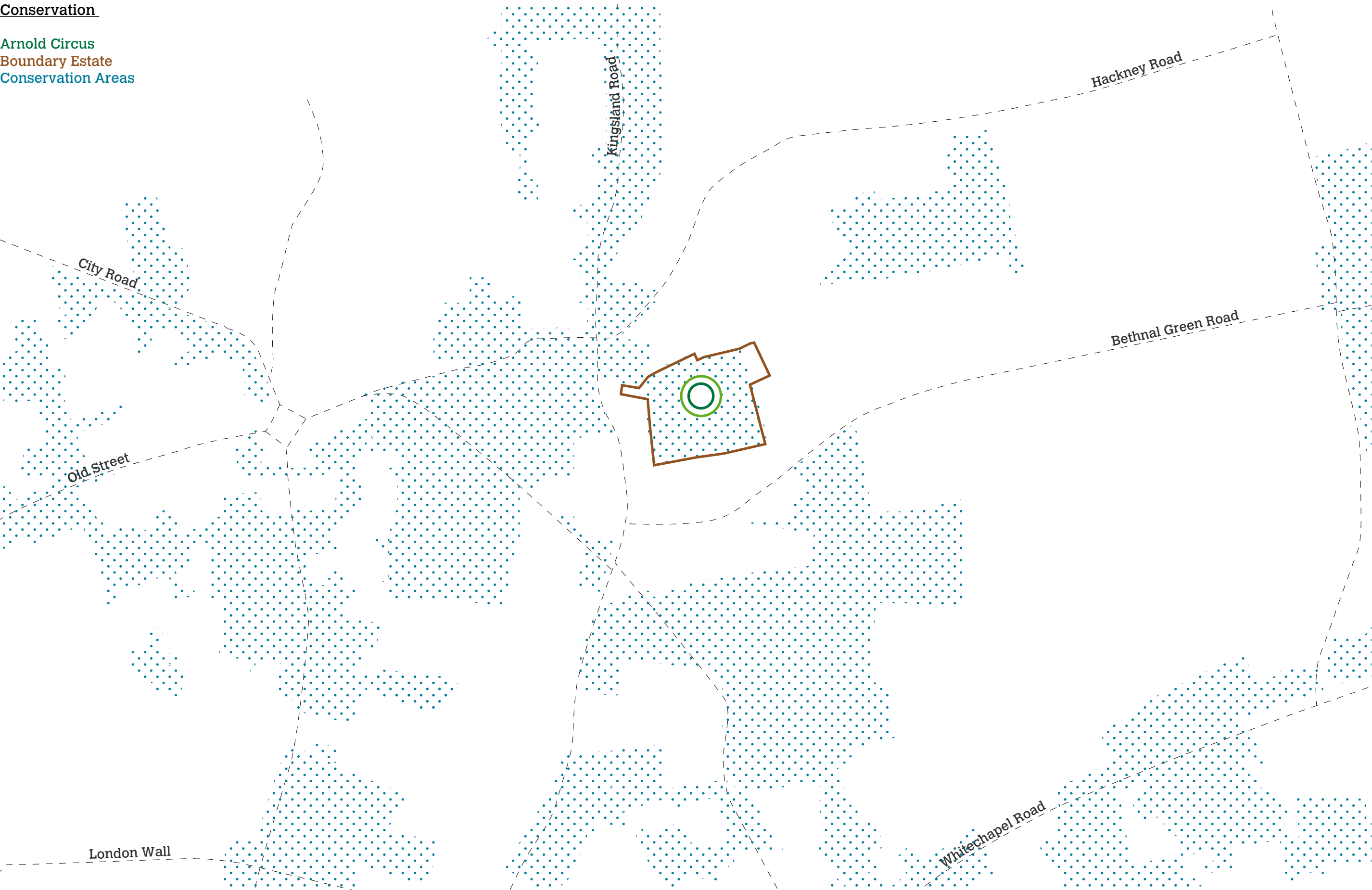
6.8 Conservation Management Plan

Commission a Conservation Management Plan for Arnold Circus including an accessible Maintenance Handbook

2. Context & Principles

Conservation

- Arnold Circus
- Boundary Estate
- Conservation Areas



2.1 Historical Context

An understanding of how Arnold Circus developed, and how it has been used throughout the past, forms the basis for how the gardens will be used long into the future.

Historical Development

Arnold Circus is at the centre of the Boundary Estate, London's first publicly funded social housing built by the newly formed London County Council (LCC) from 1890-1900. It was an experimental design that for the first time placed public space at the centre of working class housing to provide visual, physical and cultural unity, and a higher quality of life for the Estate's inhabitants.

The Boundary Estate replaced the 'Old Nichol'; a maze of streets, alleyways, and slum housing, with a death rate four times as high as any other part of London. A common Old Nichol saying went '*there can be no hell hereafter, we live in it already*'. Only 11 of 5,719 residents moved into the new estate.

The architect-in-charge Owen Fleming planned the estate as a series of broad tree lined avenues radiating from a central circular open space. This is Arnold Circus, which the report takes to include both Boundary Gardens and its encircling road. The gardens are arranged over two terraces, surrounded by perimeter railings. A bandstand sits at the centre of the upper plateau, at 3.5 metres above street level.

At the heart of Fleming's radical urban plan is a belief in the importance of public, open space. There is an unmistakeable clarity to the design of the estate, with five storey red brick tenement housing and two schools defining the central circus. The plan is conceived as a series of public and semi public open spaces, based on a precise understanding of historic urban typologies. A sequence of avenues, mews, courtyards and pocket gardens, each with a distinct identity, lead to the unifying public space of Arnold Circus; a focal point for the local community.

Historical Significance

The historical significance of Arnold Circus must be seen within the context of the Boundary Estate. The importance of the Estate as a unique and experimental example of philanthropic urban planning is recognised through its status as a Conservation Area.

Arnold Circus is the integral nucleus of the plan. Not only does it spatially define the surrounding urban layout, it was also planned to perform a pioneering role in the social structure of the Estate. The gardens are listed on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at Grade II.

The bandstand, erected in 1910, perimeter railings, and wrought iron arched overthrows are listed as Grade II, and are therefore recognised as being of national importance. The continuing value of these architectural features lies in their integration with the unique form of the gardens, and in turn the gardens' extraordinary integration with the character and social function of the surrounding estate.

A full report into the historical significance of Boundary gardens was conducted as part of the Chris Blandford Associates feasibility study, 2005 (CBA Report). The 'Assessment of Historical Character and Statement of Significance' is included as Appendix A.



Arnold Circus in 1909





Spatial Characteristics

The mound of Arnold Circus was built using earth displaced from the foundations of the surrounding housing to economise on carting costs. The unique spatial effect of the mound can be both problematic, and offer opportunities not available in conventional, street level open spaces.

Elevated above street level, the gardens can be seen to have a defensive aspect, where groups occupying the bandstand tend to dominate the space, potentially excluding other uses. In this sense, the spatial form reflects the 'motte' of historic motte and bailey castles, with the bandstand and railings functioning as a form of 'castle', and the surrounding road and car parking effectively performing the role of a moat.

Access to the first and second tiers is only possible via four sets of two flights of stairs, which considered in relation to today's standards mean the gardens are relatively inaccessible. Furthermore concertina gates and additional railings added at a later date, car parking spaces, mature plane trees, and until recently dense, unpruned shrubs, can combine to make the gardens seem fairly forbidding from street level.

On the other hand, the outlook from the raised position of the bandstand and terraces at the pole of seven radiating streets offers an extraordinary setting. This difference in levels between bandstand and street offers the potential for a more intimate and reflective space. It was also designed to maximise the visual benefit to the estate's residents. Minutes from a meeting of the LCC's Housing of the Working Classes Committee (HWCC) in 1897 record that *'the open space will be directly in view from the ends of the radiating streets, and being visible from almost every block of dwellings in the area, the shrubs on the elevated terraces will afford a pleasant relief in the tenant's outlook'*.

2.2 Social & Cultural Context

Social significance of Arnold Circus

Arnold Circus was planned as a space for relaxation, recreation and social activities, offering an *'advantage to the health of the whole neighbourhood'*; the direct opposite of the cramped and insanitary alleyways of the earlier Old Nichol slums. The new estate provided extensive community amenities including a shared laundry, bath house, and club room, shops, 2 schools, and 77 workshops for woodworkers and shoe-makers. The architect Owen Fleming envisioned the gardens as the unifying element at the heart of this model of social life. It was the gardens, where Fleming imagined that *'courting couples would stroll on fine summer evenings while the band played'*, that would make the Boundary Estate a community; more than *'merely a collection of dwellings'*.

Throughout the first half of the C20th Arnold Circus was well used and well maintained, with the LCC setting aside a budget to fund public activities on a regular basis. Known uses of the gardens included:

- Brass bands playing in Bandstand on Tuesday evenings and Sunday afternoons throughout the summer, from around 1909 possibly up until the mid sixties
- Twice yearly tea dances including Polkas and Waltzes
- An annual Arnold Circus Fair, where the roads would be closed for a traditional village fete including donkey rides, coconut shies and raffles
- Promenades around the circus every Sunday before and after service in St Leonard's church
- Outdoor chess playing, predominantly by Jewish residents in the first half of the C20th

Arnold Circus's integral position as the centre for community activity in the estate continued throughout subsequent social changes (from predominantly Jewish residents in the first half of the C20th to over half Bangladeshi in the '90s). However, a combination of social and economic deprivation and poor maintenance left Arnold Circus neglected, and by the '80s it had become an overgrown haven for drug dealing and prostitution.

By the late '90s, 100 years after its foundation, it had become evident that the intended role of the gardens as a 'focal point' for the local community had died away. Despite the structure of the bandstand and gardens remaining intact, the gardens were unsafe, unclean, and home to anti-social behaviour.

Following this period of neglect and decline, when the Bandstand was placed on the Building at Risk register, the local community has begun to develop renewed interest in the gardens. In 2004 a group of volunteers and local residents set up the Friends of Arnold Circus (FOAC), a charity who have started reactivate the gardens through a programme of outreach and events involving the community, with the aim of *'creating a public shared space for all'*. This return to the original ideals of the gardens has made a huge change in local perceptions of the gardens, despite the built elements remaining in poor condition.

Over the last four years Arnold Circus has hosted a series of events that have encouraged people back onto the circus, and helped to re-engage the local community in caring for this historic public space. Common uses now range from:

- Community gardening initiatives, such as bulb planting involving local school children and volunteers
- Socialising space for groups of local teenagers
- Annual Sharing Picnics organized by FOAC every July, with the roads closed off, donkey rides, raffles, and music etc...
- Playing the billiards-based board game Carrom, both impromptu, and during the annual Carrom Board Championships organized by FOAC
- Brass bands returning to play in the Bandstand (also FOAC)
- Furtive pumpkin planting and growing food by residents of the estate (who do not have their own gardens)
- One off community events such as 'Circus on the Circus' or 'Turn Over the Page', involving FOAC and other local organizations like Circus Space, and the North Brick Lane Residents Association

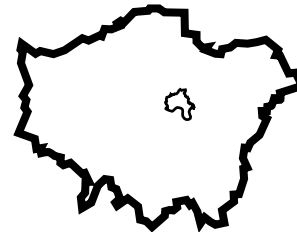
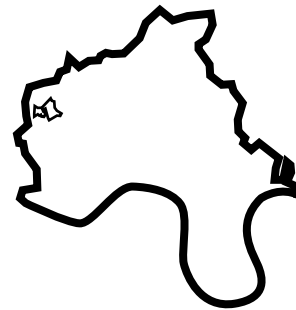
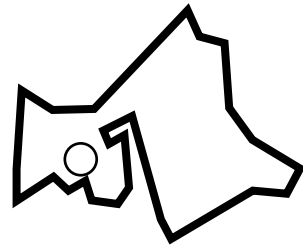
It is now imperative for the long term conservation of Arnold Circus that the space continues to develop in a way that reflects the contemporary needs and desires of the residents of the Boundary Estate and its surrounding community. English Heritage have identified the necessity of establishing new viable uses for the gardens, and in particular the bandstand, as a crucial step towards securing the space's future. Similarly the 2005 CBA Report regarded the restoration of the gardens as *'an opportunity to mobilise and connect the community and to once again use this space as it was originally intended'*.

Neighbourhood*

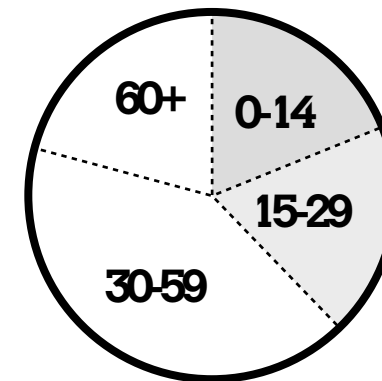
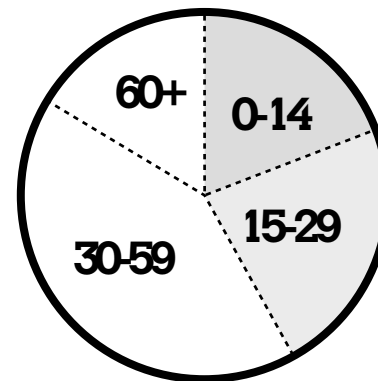
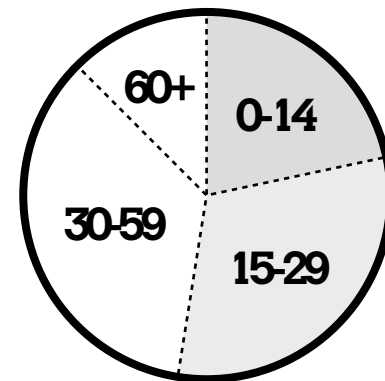
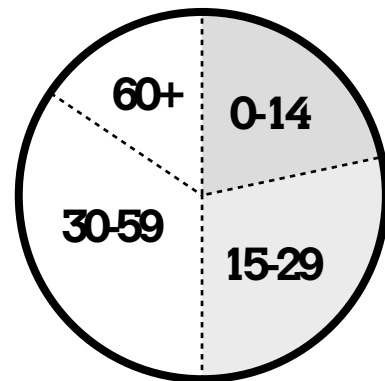
LBTH

London

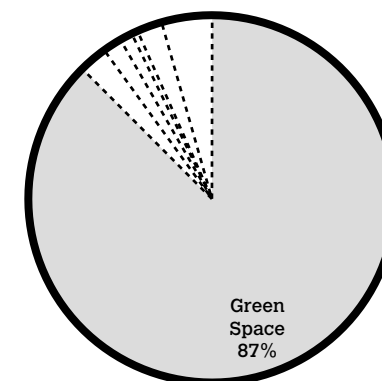
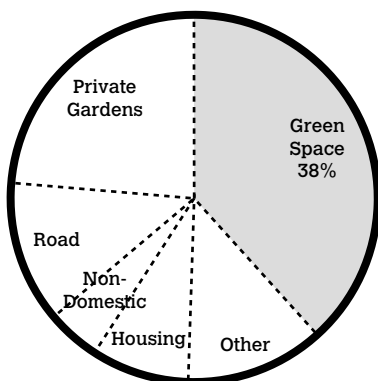
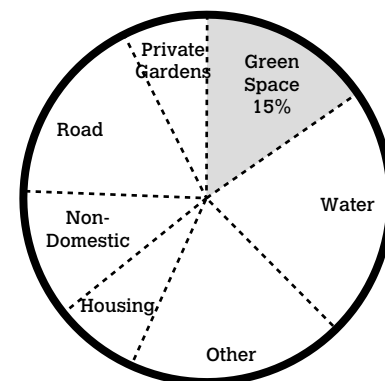
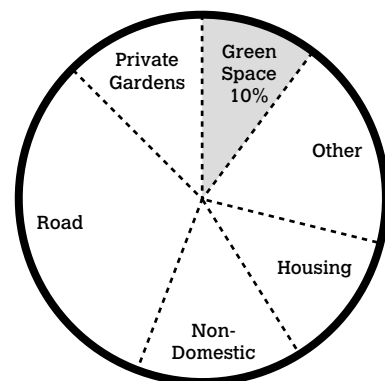
England



Age Structure



Land Use



Who are the local community?

Since the displacement of Jaygo residents in the 1890s, the site has undergone further social churn throughout the C20th. Many of the Estate's initial residents were Jewish émigrés who had fled pogroms in Eastern Europe towards the end of the C19th. The Jewish community established the Machzike Adass, or Spitalfields Great Synagogue, on Redchurch Street in what had previously been both a Huguenot and Methodist church. The character of the estate began to change with the arrival of Bengali immigrants from the 1960s onwards – a shift signalled by the conversion of the Synagogue into the Jamme Masjid Mosque in 1976. Today it is estimated that almost half of the Boundary Estate residents are Bengali.

Over the last ten years, developments in the wider area, such as the emergence of Shoreditch and Bethnal Green as a centre for creative and cultural industries, are gradually adjusting the character of the area once again. The Boundary Estate's central location in London's evolving East End, and proximity to the City have made it an increasingly desirable location to live, attracting a new generation of artists and creative professionals to the area.

These increasing market pressures have been reflected in rental values and house prices. Today approximately 200 of the 529 flats are privately owned, and many are sublet to temporary tenants.

Despite the gradual eastern shift of the City and a changing economic outlook, evidenced by developments in the pipeline for Bishopsgate Goods Yard, Arnold Circus remains one of the few green spaces in a socially and economically deprived context. Arnold Circus is within the Weavers ward of Tower Hamlets, which according to the average data from the Community and Local Government English Indices of Deprivation 2007 ranks as the third most deprived district in England. The Office for National Statistics ranks Weavers within the 7% of most deprived wards in England. The immediate neighbourhood (Super Output Area 006C) suffers from higher rates of unemployment (7.1%) than the average for Tower Hamlets (6.6%), and England

(3.4%). Health, crime, and access to jobs are also major issues. Green space represents only 10% of the Super Output Area, relative to 15% over Tower Hamlets and 39% throughout London. As one of the few green spaces in the neighbourhood, it is vitally important the Arnold Circus is used to its full potential.

Sources

- Communities and Local Government; Office for National Statistics; Valuation Office Agency; Neighbourhood Statistics
- Communities and Local Government; The English Indices of Deprivation 2007

OPTION 1



Tree Retained



Tree Removed



New Tree

Planting to beds

Reinstated incl soil beds



Grass



Shrubs - ornamental

Restoration of:



Bandstand



Railings + Gates
incl Retaining Wall
Surfacing



New Crossing



New Seating - Benches

OPTION 1A



New Uses

- Boule

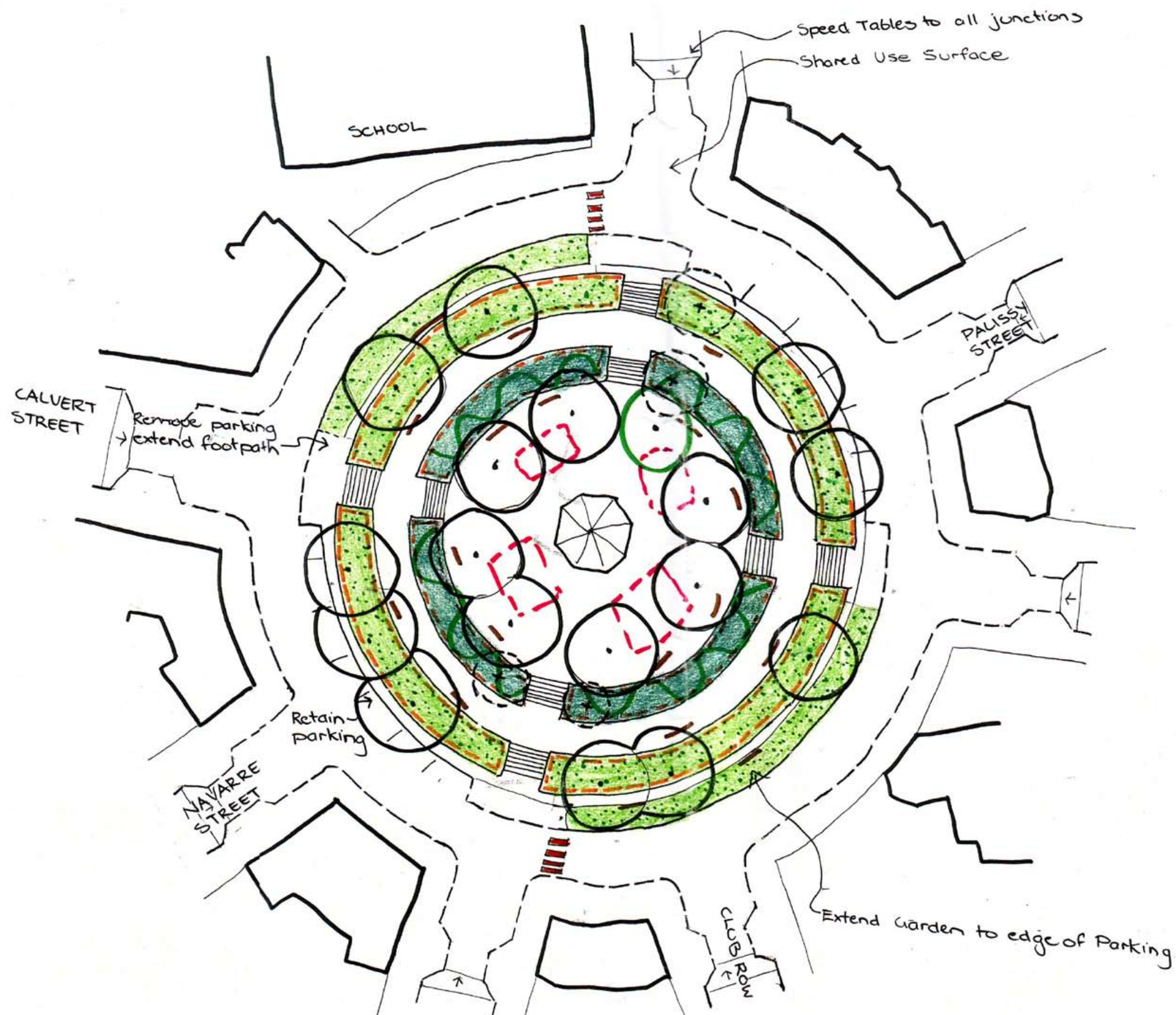
- Play Area

- Chess - chairs + Tables

- Additional Seating

Lighting

New Use for
Bandstand



2.3 Current context

Chris Blandford Associates Feasibility Study

In 2005 London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) commissioned Chris Blandford Associates to carry out a feasibility study for the possible restoration of the gardens. The CBA Report, summarised in section below, recognised that Arnold Circus was in need of conservation and repair, and that *'consultation with key stakeholders, FOAC and the local community showed that there is a strong desire to restore the gardens for community use and as a focus for the Boundary Estate'*.

It concluded *'This feasibility study now provides a solid basis for LBTH, the Friends of Arnold Circus and stakeholders to take the project forward to develop an agreed design option and to source funding for the project.'*

Key Issues:

- Access
- Improvement of existing Planting
- Rundown Appearance
- Restoration of Historic Elements
- Combating anti-social behaviour & vandalism
- Traffic calming

Recommendations:

- Restore the bandstand, railings, and planting bed levels
- Repair the retaining wall, paths, surfaces, sandstone coping and steps
- Remove pedestrian barriers and the remains of the drinking fountain
- Install new lighting, new seating and new planting

Opportunities for further study:

- Envisaging the use of gardens
- Development of a management strategy and partnership
- Access plan
- Business plan for the Bandstand
- Phased implementation of works
- Highways alterations
- Community gardening scheme
- Educational programmes
- Wildlife conservation

In summary, the CBA report provides valid & useful groundwork for the physical restoration of the gardens, and outlines further work, particularly in relation to a plan for sustaining and looking after the gardens.

The ACCS acknowledges the analysis and takes on the recommendations of the CBA Report. What is clear from the initial survey is that any recommendations will be worthless if thought, time and funding are not invested in ensuring the local community use, manage and maintain the park.

Recent Developments

'Today, the Gardens are suffering. Mature trees and shrubs block out light and no longer promote the feelings of well-being as originally intended. Other planting is patchy or overgrown. The ironwork around the Gardens is corroded, the gates have largely disappeared, as have the once plentiful benches, and the bandstand is now a building at risk.' CBA Report, 'Assessment of Historical Character and Statement of Significance', 2005

Since the completion of the CBA Report little has changed in the physical state of Arnold Circus, other than improvements in the planting and repairs to a section of inner railings funded and implemented by FOAC.

However, towards the end of 2007 approximately £600,000 of planning gain (funding from a Section 106 agreement with the Bishops Square development in Spitalfields) became available for LBTH to carry out restoration works on Arnold Circus.

The potential physical restoration of the gardens is a welcome opportunity for positive change, but conversely it also carries the risk that a sudden overhaul could further distance Arnold Circus from its former role at the centre of community life. Many local residents already feel marginalised by the rapid transformation of the surrounding area. It will be important that changes at Arnold Circus are made with, and by, the local community, so that the benefits are valued and maintained over the long-term, and to prevent the gardens from falling back into a state of disrepair.

Now that the gardens are on the verge of significant restoration works, how can we ensure that the benefits of conservation are sustained within the local community, and that in turn the local community sustains the conservation of Arnold Circus?

In November 2007, the Friends of Arnold Circus commissioned this strategy for the long-term use, management, and maintenance of the gardens, match funded by a Historic Buildings Grant from the LBTH Conservation Department. FOAC felt it was important to look far ahead to the long-term future of the space in order to form a clear understanding the demands and implications of what needs to be done in the present.

The Arnold Circus Conservation Strategy (ACCS) develops a vision for the future uses of the gardens based on broad consultation, specifies measures for ongoing management and maintenance, and makes a series of recommendations regarding the forthcoming works that can help ensure their long-term viability.

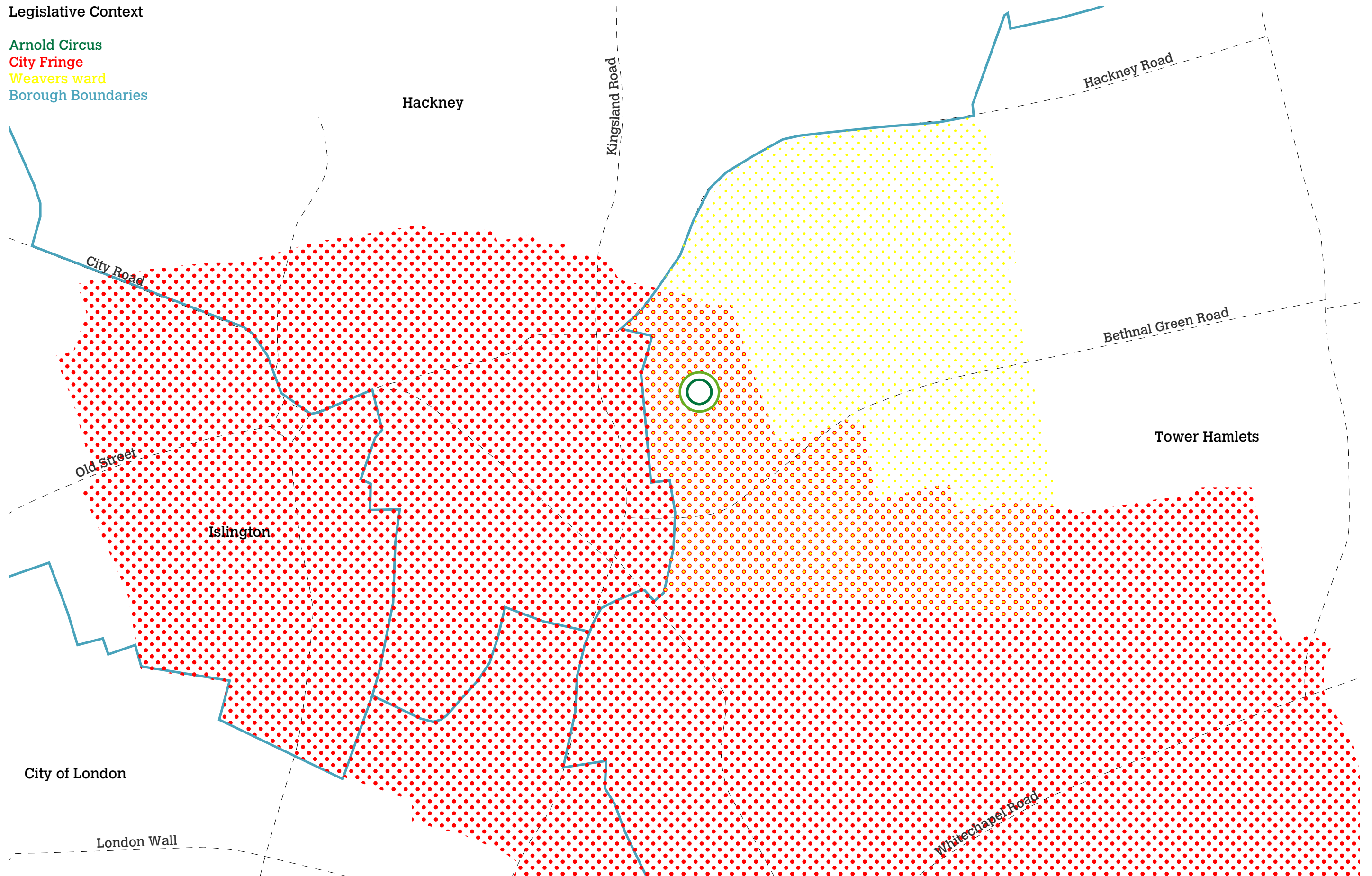
Legislative Context

Arnold Circus

City Fringe

Weavers ward

Borough Boundaries



2.4 Policy Context

The Arnold Circus Conservation Strategy takes on principles and guidance set out in the current conservation and planning legislation at national, regional and local levels. The following section highlights key policy used to develop and define the ACCS principles against which all recommendations are measured. For an analysis of the policy framework see Appendix B.

Britain is currently enjoying a renaissance in the emphasis in public open space within its cities. At a time when over half the population of the world now live in urban settlements, and virtually all the population growth over the next thirty years is expected to be concentrated in urban areas, it is vital to ensure that the quality of these urban environments is to a high standard, promoting healthy, inclusive, sustainable urban living.

- Public open space: Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17
- Planning, Sport and Recreation: Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2002)
- Shared community empowerment: Community Empowerment: Building on success (CLG, 2007)
- Design standards towards accessibility for all: Inclusive Mobility (DfT 2006)

London in 2008 is at the forefront of this urban renaissance. The evolution of the Mayor's Architecture and Urbanism unit into Design for London has promoted the need for quality public space together with the two other mayoral agencies, Transport for London and the London Development Agency. Programmes such as the Mayor's 100 Public Spaces, Olympic Park, and East London Green Grid make the current period comparable to the time of the construction of Arnold Circus in the late C19th, when the Victorian public park movement transformed London's public realm.

- Overarching guidance and policy: The Amended London Plan (GLA, 2004)
- Public realm design quality: Mayor's 100 Public Spaces Programme (GLA, 2002-)
- Detailed strategic guidance: Supplementary Planning Guidance documents specifically: Draft East London Green Grid Framework (GLA, 2006)
- Draft Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation (GLA 2006)

Arnold Circus is within the City Fringe, an area to the north and east of the City of London, covering parts of the boroughs of Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets. The arc of the eastern city fringe from Shoreditch to Wapping is identified in the London Plan as an area with 'significant development capacity', with '*particular scope to support the critical mass of London's financial and business services related to the city economic cluster as well as other economic clusters such as the creative industries*'.

- Local implementation of broader policy in each Borough: Sub Regional Development Framework for East London (GLA, 2006)
- Local development guidance: The Draft City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework (GLA, 2006). Specifically the Bishopsgate/ Shoreditch 'Opportunity areas'

Despite the scale of new development in the City Fringe, the LBTH City Fringe Area Action Plan expects that the immediate context of the Weavers sub-area will not undergo substantial change in the next 10-15 years. As a result improving the existing housing estates and developing smaller public spaces to complement and connect the existing open space network has been identified as a local priority.

- Local borough strategic development plan: London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework (LBTH, 2006) and associated Local Development Documents including Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents
- Core borough strategy applied to specific areas: The City Fringe Area Action Plan (LBTH, 2006)
- Borough wide public space strategy: Open Space Strategy (LBTH, 2006)

Other key non-statutory guidance consulted includes:

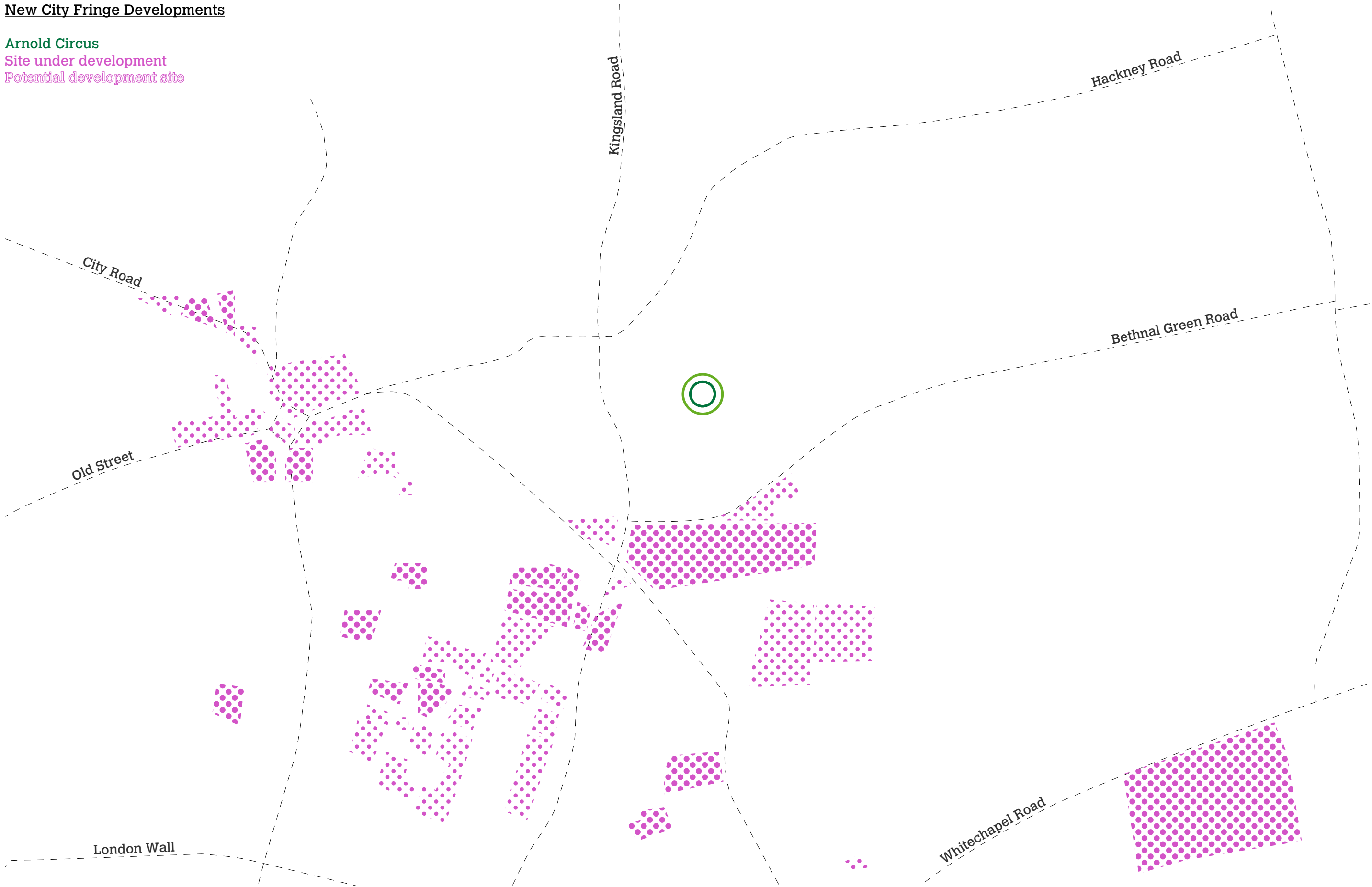
- Easy Access to Historic Landscapes (EH, 2005)
- Conservation Plans in Action: Proceedings of the Oxford Conference (EH, 1999)
- Streets for All – A London Streetscape Manual (EH, 2000)
- Climate Change and the Historic Environment (EH)

- Decent Parks Decent Behaviour (CABE, 2005)
- Parks need Parkforce (CABE, 2005)
- It's Our Space (CABE, 2007)
- A guide to producing park and Green Space Management Plans (CABE, 2004)
- London Biodiversity Action Plan (London Biodiversity Partnership)

For a full list of policy and guidance consulted see Appendix C.

New City Fringe Developments

- Arnold Circus
- Site under development
- Potential development site



2.5 ACCS Principles

Conservation

‘The historic environment is important in many different ways- as architecture or landscape, for its memories, its familiarity, for the story it has to tell, for its contribution to community or to our spiritual lives. It has shaped the places where we live and work and is fundamental to the quality of life... Like other aspects of the environment, the historic environment deserves our most thoughtful care.’ Understanding Historic Buildings and their Landscapes for Conservation (EH, 2001)

‘Where a multicultural area - such as around the Boundary Estate - is concerned, this act of re-adopting heritage is especially important. For heritage is not a matter of the past alone; it is a matter of a constant re-engagement and identification.’ Naseem Khan, chair of FOAC and member of the Tower Hamlets Conservation Advisory Group (CAG)

The understanding of conservation adopted by the ACCS is expressed by the sum of these two attitudes; thoughtful care towards our historic environment, allowing us to re-adopt and re-engage with our heritage, in our time. Essentially, the regeneration of our heritage.

Through analysis and appreciation of the principles underpinning the city’s historic landscape, we can find appropriate uses in today’s context, and ensure that our built heritage remains an integral part of our daily life. In doing this we must ensure distinct characters and identities are preserved. In this way historic structures, however significant, remain dynamic and engaging, and therefore well used and maintained.

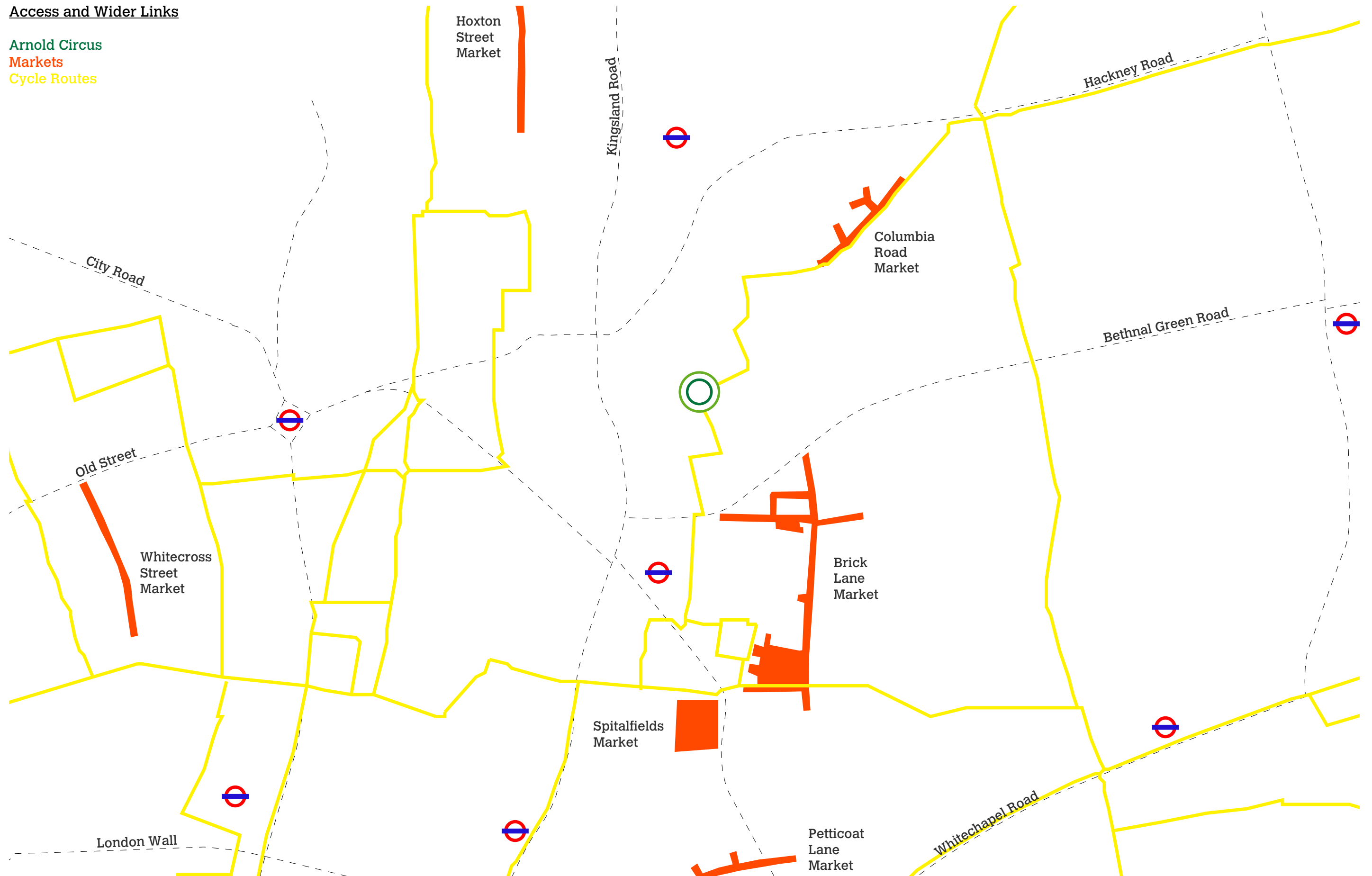
The ACCS understands the principle of conservation as re-owning our heritage in the present as much as preserving the past.

Access and Wider Links

Arnold Circus

Markets

Cycle Routes



The ACCS Principles

The following principles expand upon this inclusive and engaged approach to conservation. The principles relate to the key themes identified in the policy context, offering a simple and precise application of policy objectives.

Sustainability

Long-term social accountability, as much as an ecological approach to the natural environment.

Key opportunities for sustainability at Arnold Circus include:

- Environmental improvements for both community well-being and nature conservation
- Community involvement in design practices (see chapter 4)
- Commitment to an economy of means, as well as promoting environmentally sound solutions (see 3.8)
- Sustainable procurement (see 4.6)

'Sustainable urban design: Good design ensures economically viable places and spaces that are resource efficient, adaptable, durable, inclusive and fit for purpose.' Communities and Local Government Sustainable urban design guidance notes

Accessibility

Intellectual/perceived accessibility as much as physical access.

Key opportunities for improving access at Arnold Circus include:

- Removal of pedestrian barriers whilst conserving the historic character of Arnold Circus (see 3.4)
- Traffic calming (see 3.5)
- Links to surrounding green space (see 3.6)
- Addressing local perceptions of the space and encouraging a sense of belonging (see chapter 4)

'Improve accessibility to existing and new open spaces through effective use of transport links;

creation of green chains; building of bridges; creation of new entrance points to good quality parks.' LBTH Open Space Strategy

Participation

Opportunities for the community to participate in the process of change as much as the completed works.

Key opportunities for enabling participation at Arnold Circus include:

- Facilitating community-initiated uses of the space (see chapter 3)
- Involving the local community in the process of construction (see 4.4)
- An engaging and creative ongoing consultation strategy (see 4.4)
- Maximising opportunities for hands on involvement in physical change (4.6)

The LBTH LDF Core Strategy sets out a vision for the future of the borough where, by 2016: *'The diverse needs of the people in the borough are considered and community planning is tailored to maximise participation from the community'*.

Design Quality

Good maintenance as much as initial investment.

Key opportunities to ensure design quality at Arnold Circus include:

- Clearly defined schedules and responsibilities for maintenance (see chapter 5)
- Allowance for additional investment in long-term maintenance (see chapter 5)
- Incorporating opportunities for bespoke, innovative designs (see 4.5)

'The best public realm schemes strive for the highest achievable quality... an understanding of the principles of good design, a balancing of the sustainable over the quick fix, of quality over quantity, of innovation over the easy option... Quality can also save money in the longer term,

since lowest cost does not necessarily equate to best value. There is no point in creating a good new public space and then not maintaining it to an acceptable standard.' Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2002)

Adaptability

Enabling the maximum, rather than determining possibilities.

Key opportunities to ensure adaptability at Arnold Circus include:

- Providing for diverse uses, rather than one compromised solution (see chapter 3)
- Multi-functional space that can be used for a range of different activities (see chapter 3)
- Intelligent infrastructure that allows future additions and adjustments (see 4.5)
- Resilient design that can accommodate changes in use (see 4.6)

'The Green Grid promotes the creation of a network of high quality and multi-functional open spaces, maximising opportunities for improving quality of life.' East London Green Grid (GLA, 2006)

3. Visions for the Future of Arnold Circus



3.1 Key issues & opportunities

‘The restoration of the Gardens could be a real opportunity to mobilise and connect the community and to once again use this space as it was originally intended.’ CBA Report, 2005, p7

The restoration of Arnold Circus comes at a time when there is both a pressure on public space to respond to the contemporary needs of city dwellers, and renewed appreciation of the role the public realm plays in urban life. Existing open space in the ‘city fringe’ is a scarce and already overstretched resource that will come under further demands in the next decade due to significantly increased residential and daytime densities.

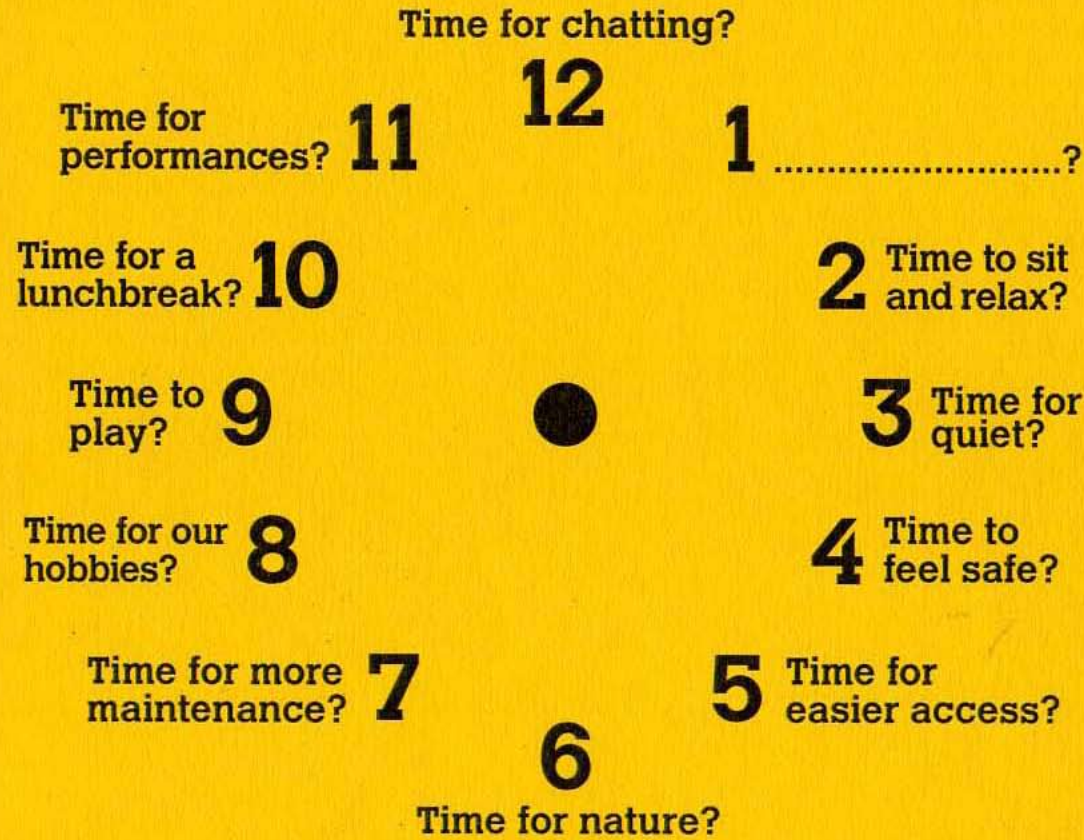
The challenge at Arnold Circus will be sustaining the site’s extraordinary character through a process of updating its role and use in the community. The combined impetus of the impending LBTH restoration works and the community’s renewed interest in Arnold Circus makes it an important time to reassess what the character of the space has become, and imagine what it could be in the long-term, before becoming preoccupied by what it should look like now.

The ACCS sketches out shared visions for the future character of Arnold Circus, based on consultation to develop an understanding of how the local community wish to use the space.

- A green and social space, in the spirit of the original design
- A space that enables the maximum range of uses, without limiting possibilities
- A space that is accessible and welcoming to all
- Connection to an improved local network of complementary public and semi-public spaces
- A landscape rooted in the local community through continuing upkeep
- Efficient and sustainable use of resources

What's the time, Arnold Circus?

There is funding available for Tower Hamlets to improve Arnold Circus. Over the next year you'll be asked to help decide how it changes. You can start by drawing 1 or 2 hands on the clock to give your vision for the future of Arnold Circus. Post or hand in your clock to the Community Laundrette, 28 Calvert Avenue E2 7JP, to have your say.



For more information see www.friendsofarnoldcircus.wordpress.com

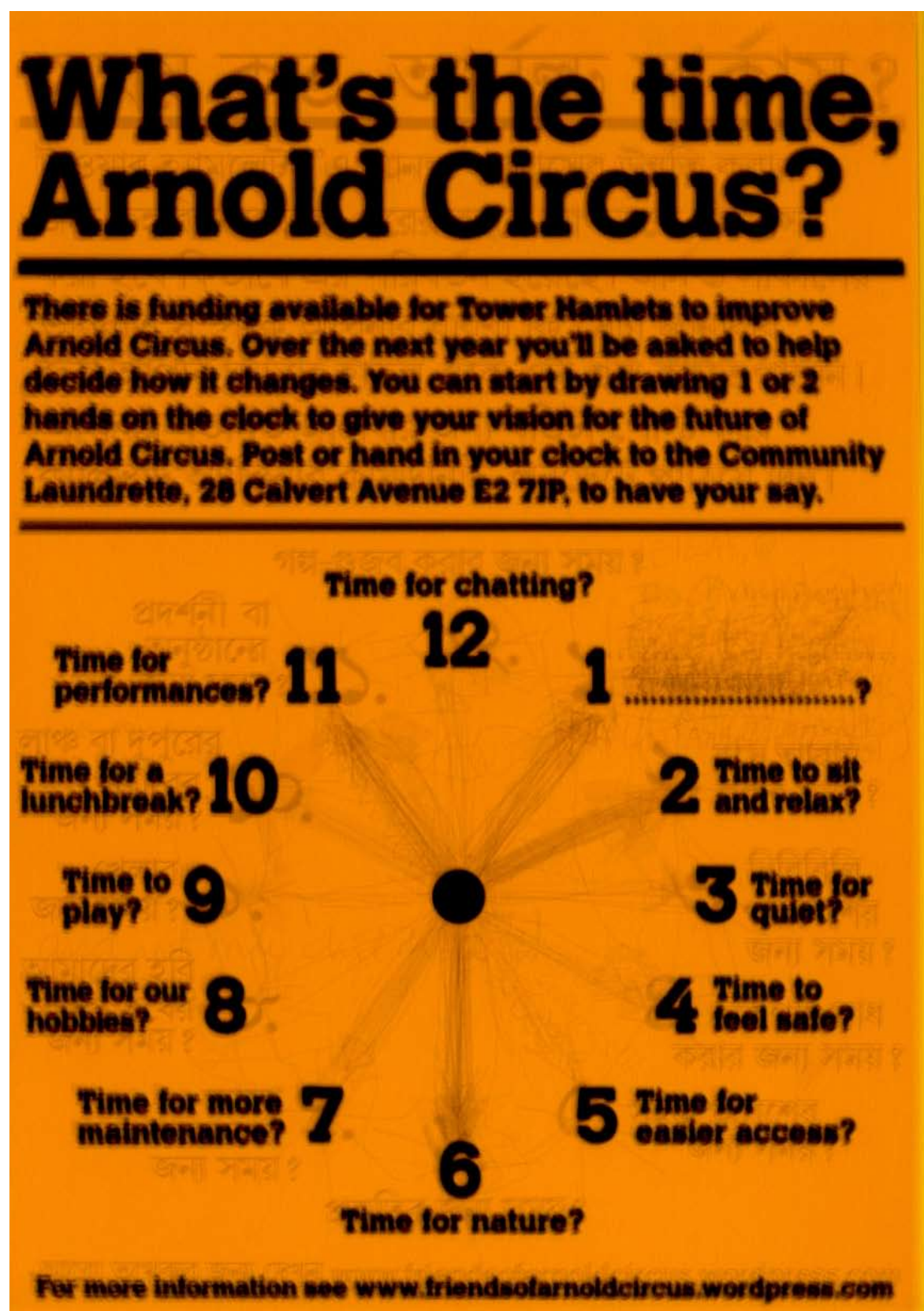
সময় কত, আর্নল্ড সার্কাস ?

টাওয়ার হ্যামলেটস্‌এ আর্নল্ড সার্কাসের উন্নতি করার জন্য তহবিল রয়েছে। পরের বছরে আপনাকে জিজ্ঞাসা করা হবে কিভাবে এর পরিবর্তন হয়েছে। আর্নল্ড সার্কাসের ভবিষ্যত সম্পর্কে আপনার ধারণা কি সেটা জানানোর জন্য আপনি ঘড়িতে হাতল ঐকে এটা শুরু করতে পারেন। আপনার মতামত জানানোর জন্য ঘড়িটা পোস্ট করে ক্যালভার্ট অ্যাভিনিউ কমিউনিটি লনড্রেটে পাঠিয়ে দিন।



আরো তথ্যের জন্য দেখুন www.friendsofarnoldcircus.wordpress.com

Flyer distributed to 1500 local residents



All responses overlaid

3.2 What's the Time Arnold Circus?

ACCS Survey

The consultation exercise carried out as part of the ACCS took the form of a public survey, designed to gauge local opinion about the future of Arnold Circus in a creative and non prescriptive way. The survey was devised in collaboration with FOAC and the LBTH Consultation and Involvement Team:

- To promote a creative consultation process – and introduce a format that encourages active participation in gaining insight into local users needs, opinions and future visions of Arnold Circus
- To publicise the pending restoration works to be carried out on Arnold Circus (through the Section 106 funding)
- To access a broad range of opinion within the local community and collect qualitative data to suggest how best to distribute long-term resources
- Identify the type of environmental improvements that could help facilitate the desired future of Arnold Circus
- Establish a focus for the next level of consultation
- Take the first steps towards recording local visions for a future Arnold Circus

Participants were invited to respond to a simple question; 'What's the Time Arnold Circus?' by drawing hands on a clock face to show their priorities for the future of Arnold Circus.

1500 flyers were distributed to the local community, and a large 'clock', replicating the image on the flyer was displayed in the window of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, providing a point for informal discussion and adding a physical dimension to the survey.

See Appendices D and E for full details of the methodology

Analysis of Responses

The summarised results from a total of 202 responses to the survey were:

Time for	17%
Time for performances	15%

Time to sit and relax	14%
Time for nature	14%
Time for more maintenance	8%
Time to play	7%
Time to feel safe	7%
Time for a lunch break	5%
Time for quiet	4%
Time for chatting	4%
Time for easier access	3%
Time for our hobbies	2%

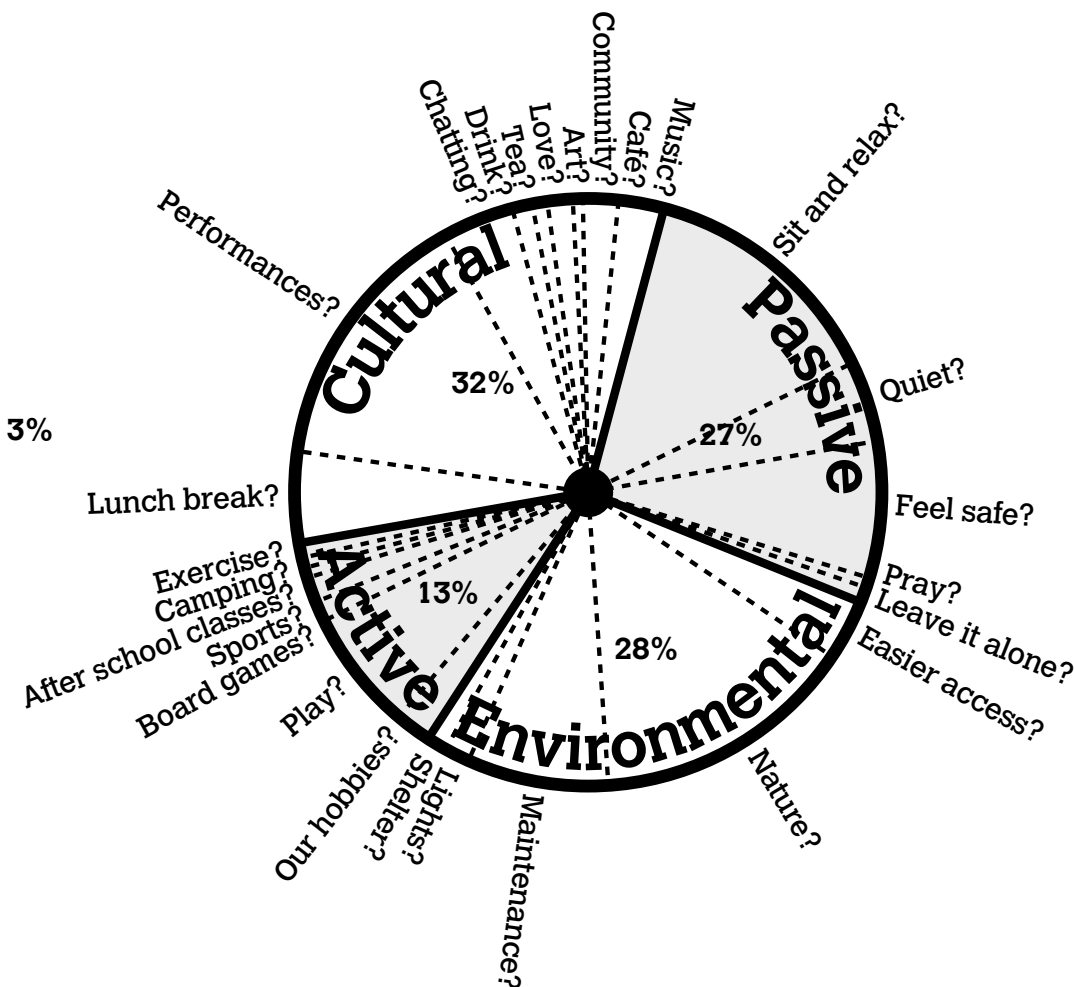
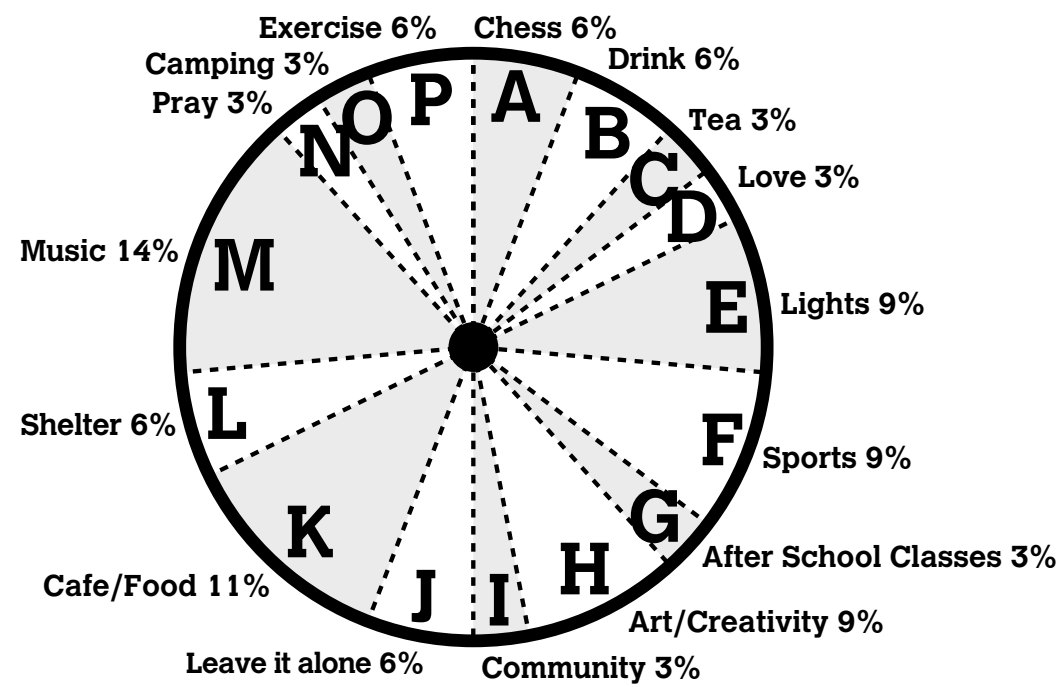
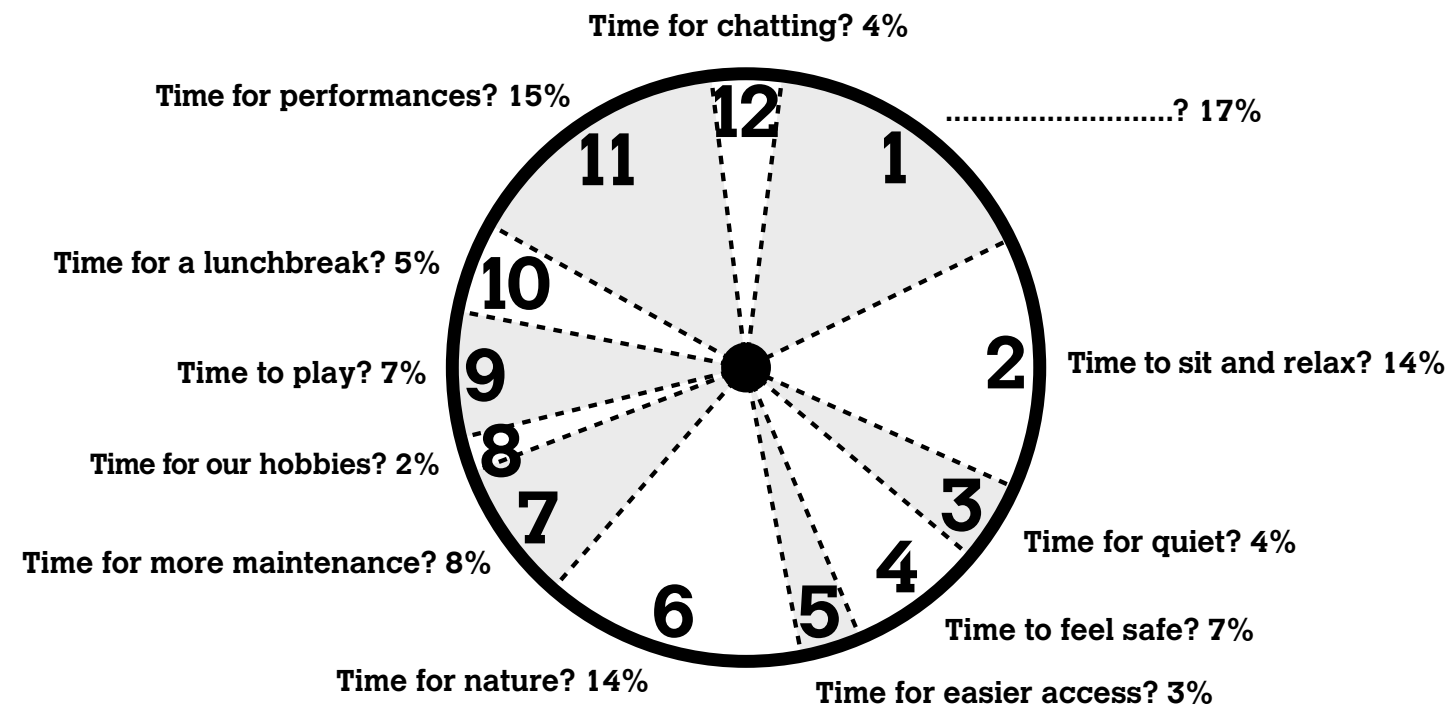
Of the 17% of answers that filled in the blank hour on the clock, the responses can be summarised as:

Music	14%
Food/Café	11%
Lights	9%
Sports	9%
Arts/Creative	9%
Shelter	6%
Exercise	6%
Chess	6%
Drink	6%
Leave it alone	6%
Tea	3%
Love	3%
After school classes	3%
Praying	3%
Camping	3%

The polarity and breadth of responses, and people's keenness to contribute their own views is indicative of the strength of opinion about the future of Arnold Circus. The results show a balance of active uses including performances, music, food, arts and sport, with more passive ambitions such as sitting and relaxing, appreciating nature, and feeling safe.

Potential Conflicts in Use

The feasibility of accommodating a range of more active uses whilst maintaining the gardens as a quiet and reflective place is an obvious issue. Use of the Circus that involves groups of people gathering to 'listen to music', 'play games', or 'exercise' could potentially disrupt a 'quiet and reflective' use of Arnold Circus. Similarly activities that require additional equipment or infrastructure such as 'hobbies', 'shelter', 'gardening' or 'night time use'



are contrary ambitions to those who wish to see it unchanged or 'left alone'.

The responses suggest the need for a space or network of local spaces that can accommodate a variety of uses, including those that are unforeseen or impossible to predict. It also highlights the need for an inclusive approach that can reconcile potentially conflicting demands for the use of Arnold Circus, by

- Interpreting the results to form a coherent set of visions for the future of Arnold Circus (see 3.3)
- Identifying significant individual topics as a focus for the next level of consultation and participation (see 4.4)
- Looking for possible routes towards layering of uses to allow a wide range of life styles and activities to coexist in the same space, if not at the same time
- Acceptance of difference rather than seeking consensus for a solution acceptable to all

Accommodating Different Uses

Arnold Circus's dual roles as a stage for social events and an environment for relaxing and appreciating nature are in fact interdependent, and not necessarily incompatible. There is an historic correlation between frequent use of the bandstand for performances and good maintenance of the gardens offering a welcoming environment. For example preparations for occasional FOAC events currently play a major part in keeping the space clean.

The ACCS proposes an approach that can develop Arnold Circus's potential as a socially engaged public space whilst respecting its unique environment and specific role at the centre of the predominantly residential Boundary Estate.

- A schedule of maintenance that contributes to keeping the Circus available for diverse uses (see chapter 5)
- A coordinated programme of events that is appropriate to the capacity of the space (see 4.4)
- Consistent scheduling of events and activities to allow for quiet uses during weekday daytime





- Infrastructural improvements to facilitate access to Arnold Circus (see 3.4 and 3.5)

For full analysis and evaluation of survey results see Appendix F

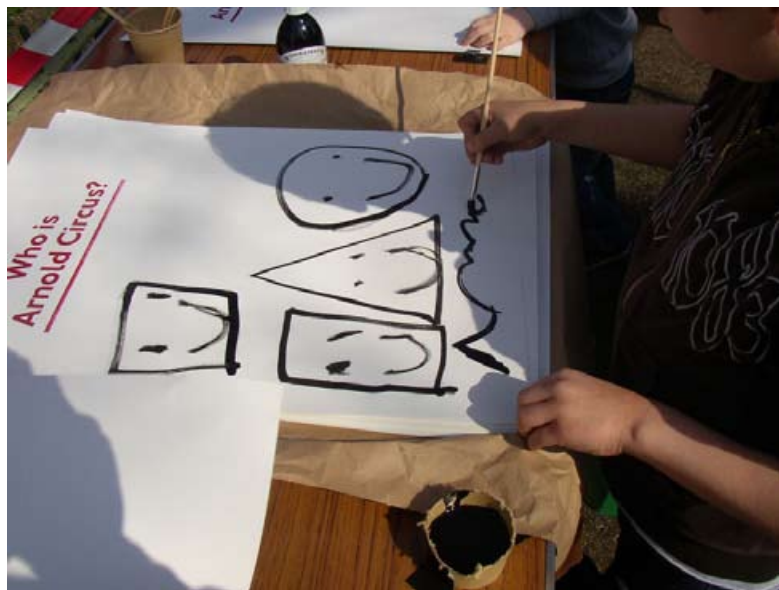
Capacity for Events

Consideration needs to be given to the site's capacity for different types of events. The bandstand at Arnold Circus was designed for brass band concerts. During the early history of Arnold Circus brass bands performed as regularly as twice weekly. At this time Arnold Circus also played host to regular tea dances, an annual fair, and other activities that reflected the social and cultural needs of the community at that time (see 2.2).

The historical use of Arnold circus, as venue for concerts, performances and programmed social events sets a precedent for its contemporary and future use. Just as the historic use of Arnold Circus reflected the culture of its time, contemporary use should fulfil the cultural and social aspirations of the surrounding community (see 2.3 & 3.2).

The following issues have been identified as determining factors in defining Arnold Circus's capacity to host events, and should be explored further to establish the thresholds and frequencies of an events programme:

- Provision of public toilets
- Provision of an electrical supply
- Need for additional seating
- Potential impact on parking spaces and bus routes
- Impact of noise on local residents
- Increased volumes of litter and subsequent demands on maintenance services
- Accommodating the differing mobility needs of people attending events
- Reliance on voluntary support, currently coordinated through FOAC
- FOAC have recorded an attendance of up to 200 people during recent events on the circus. The success of these events is a good indicator of the capacity of both the local communities and amenities to accommodate increased volumes of people



Stall on Arnold Circus by Alexandre Bettler

3.3 Visions for the Future Character of Arnold Circus

Who is Arnold Circus?

The successful conservation of Arnold Circus depends on maintaining the inherent character of the space throughout forthcoming changes. The ACCS survey forms a sense of the character of Arnold Circus through the eyes of its users. These visions come from the existing context of Arnold Circus as a geographical place, and as a community of people.

Responses to the question ‘What’s the Time Arnold Circus?’ identified two different but complementary sides to Arnold Circus’s character; as a stage for social events and an environment for relaxing and appreciating nature.

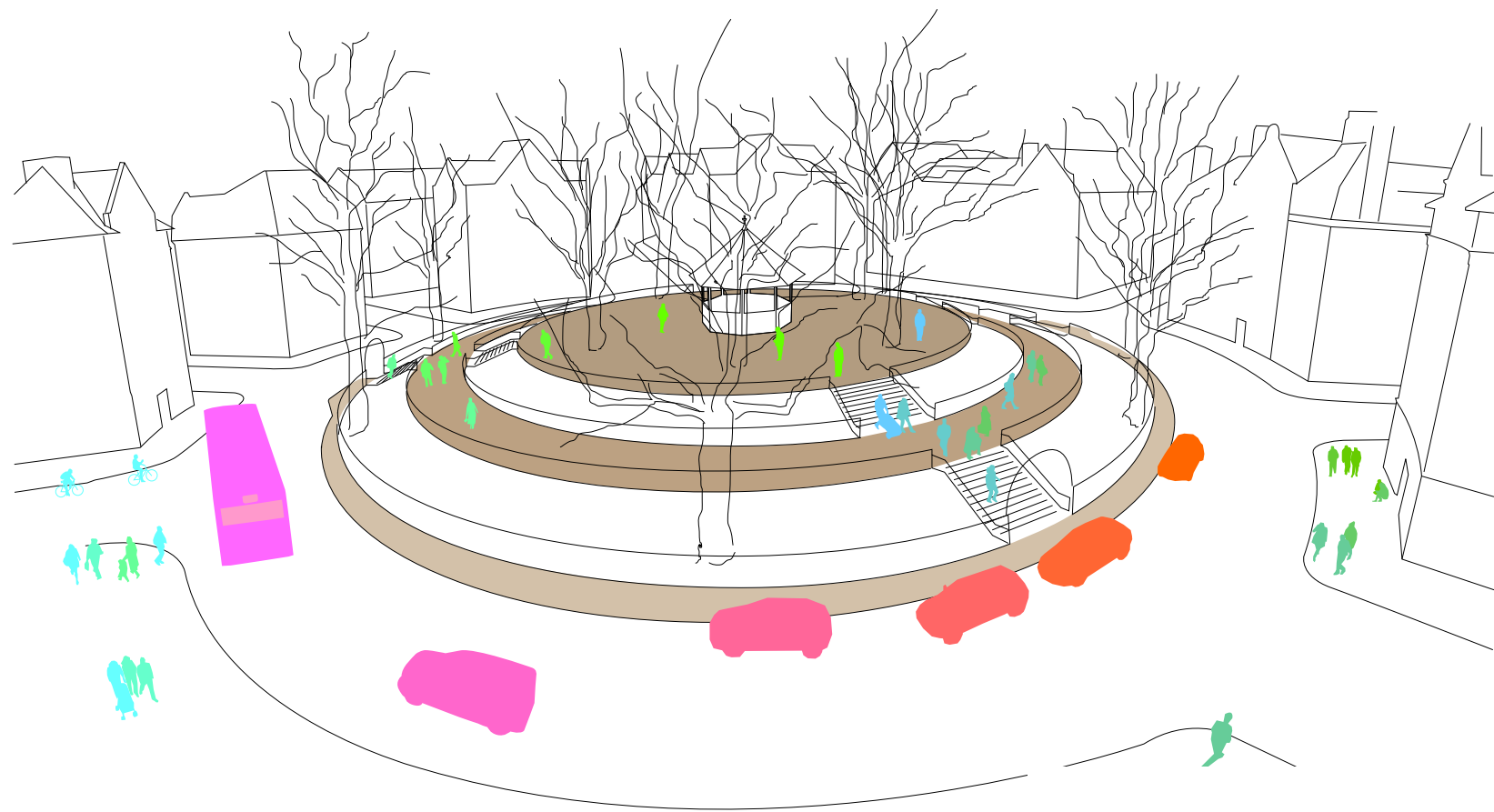
The use of the space throughout its early history and recent reengagement by the local community mirrors this; the community is once more identifying Arnold Circus as a place to gather for concerts, performances and events, and at quieter times as a place to garden and enjoy nature.

Arnold Circus’s character is both determined by, and dependent on, the local community. As a stage for planned and impromptu performances, the bandstand relies on the active input of the public. As a green, healthy, and historic site, Arnold Circus needs its users to participate in its upkeep.

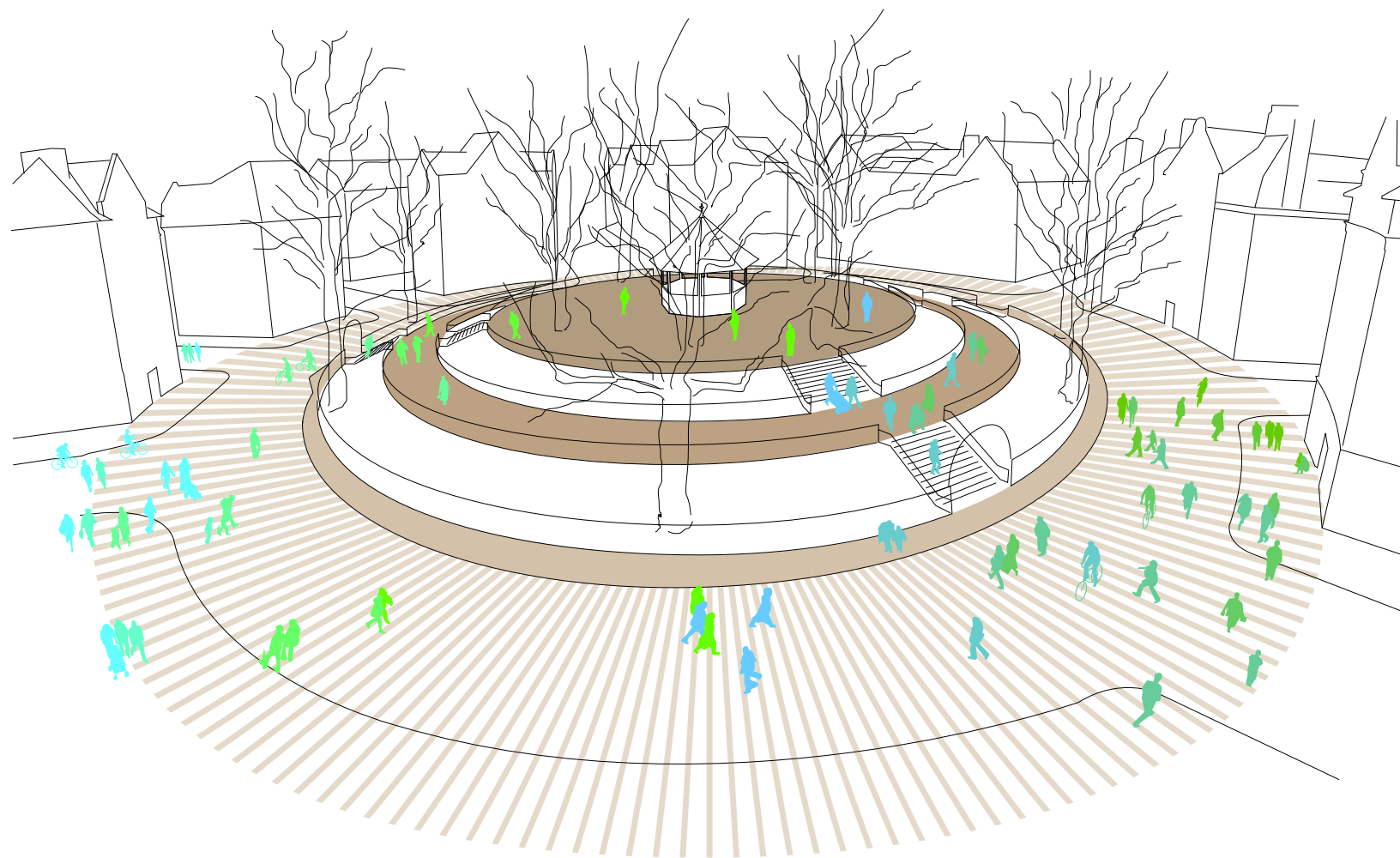
This mutual relationship was first established by Owen Fleming’s original design. By placing Arnold Circus at the centre of the Boundary Estate, Fleming expressed a belief in the significance of public open space to the health and wellbeing of urban life. Whether used or neglected, Arnold Circus continues to reflect the health of both the natural and social environment in the surrounding area.

Arnold Circus has a unique character founded in its users; the challenge now is finding ways in the contemporary context to ensure the character of this historic space remains accessible, through changing times, to the community of the Boundary Estate, and its surrounding area.

The following recommendations, in combination with the further recommendations made in chapters 4 & 5 are potential means to re-establish and sustain the historic character of Arnold Circus through re-owning the space today.



Encircling road dominated by vehicles



Temporary pedestrianisation of 'theThird Tier'

3.4 The Third Tier

Aims

- Provide accessible open space at Arnold Circus
- Enhance the streetscape around the central gardens of Arnold Circus

Arnold Circus's unique topography presents a barrier to access for a range of users. This marginalised group includes users of restricted mobility, people with prams, elderly and disabled users unable to negotiate the 18 steps to the top tier. The design implications of improving access to the gardens have been addressed through the 2005 CBA Feasibility Study. The report presented four options:

1. New road crossings and extended footways
2. Ramped access
3. Grassing over the north eastern segment of the encircling road
4. A funicular/ stairlift

Option 1 was ultimately agreed on as the preferred design option; however none entirely satisfy demands for easily accessible open space without disrupting the historical layout of the gardens:

1. Fails to provide open space accessible for users of restricted mobility
2. Would result in the loss of planting beds, the removal of at least three mature plane trees, and the addition of prominent retaining walls and railings
3. Compromises the symmetry and integrity of the historical character of the site
4. Was identified as having problems such as feasibility, cost, maintenance, health and safety, and also impacts on the visual appearance of the site

Taking on board these limitations the ACCS suggests that a lighter touch in combination with time-based traffic calming measures may offer a more satisfactory solution.

The ACCS recommends a series of simple measures to redefine the perceived extent of Arnold Circus to include both the gardens *and* its encircling streetscape. Continuity in the material treatment of hardscaping between the two raised tiers of the gardens and surfaces of the encircling road, and planters at the circumference of the space greening

the threshold between private and public realm could effectively offer an accessible Third Tier.

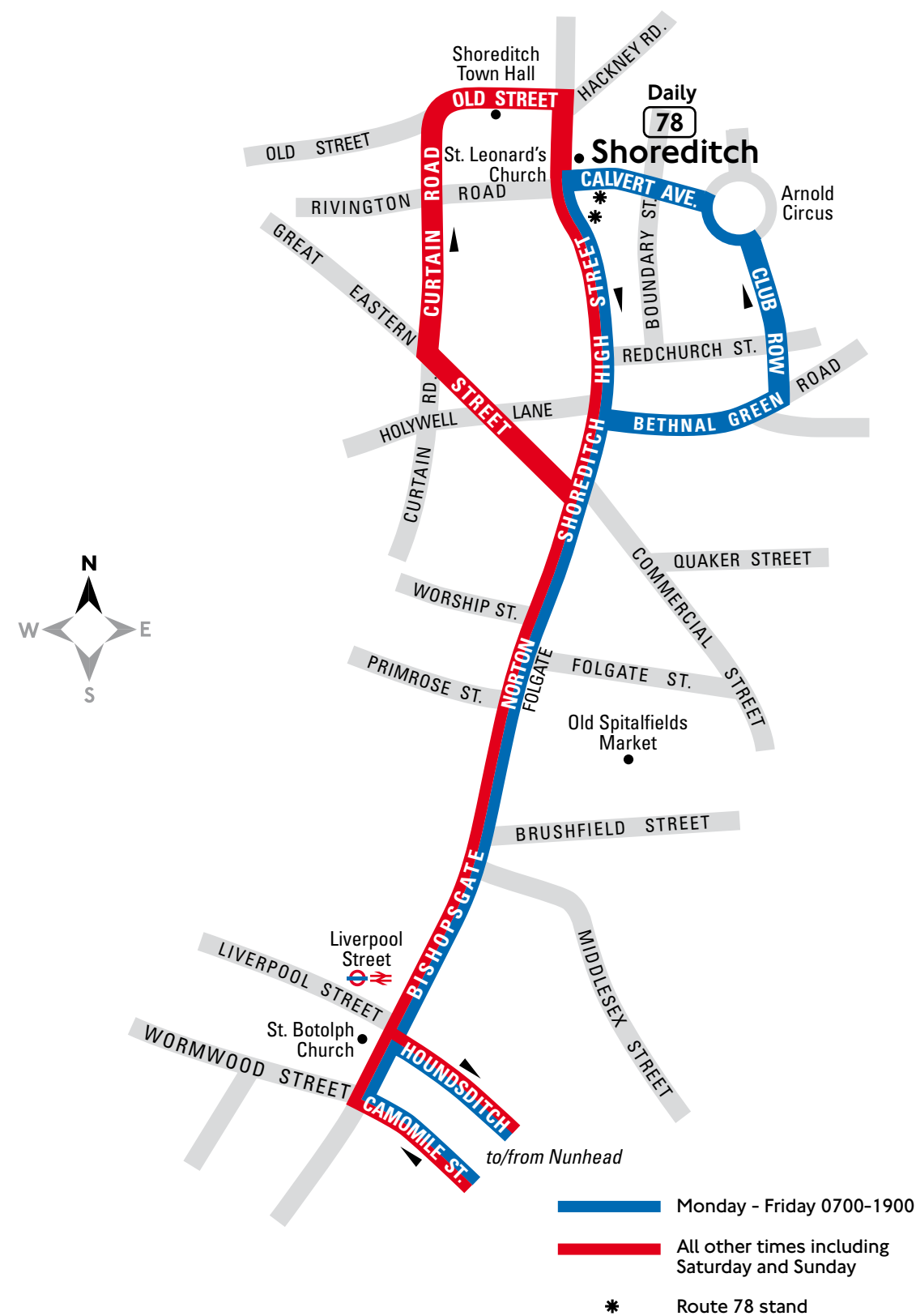
Temporary traffic calming measures such as rising bollards could allow occasional pedestrianisation of the carriageway, providing an extended and easily accessible public open space. This could partially resolve the contradiction between current DDA regulations on physical accessibility and the preservation of a historic landscape with limited space to incorporate a compliant means of access. However street closures would be subject to detailed traffic studies, and assurance would also be needed as to whether buses can be diverted at the relevant times.

Even if the budget for forthcoming restoration works proves insufficient for carrying out major alterations to the surrounding streetscape, the LBTH Highways department should be consulted early in the design of the restoration works to discuss the feasibility of traffic calming, reduction of parking spaces, and temporary road closures, with a view to further changes in the longer-term.

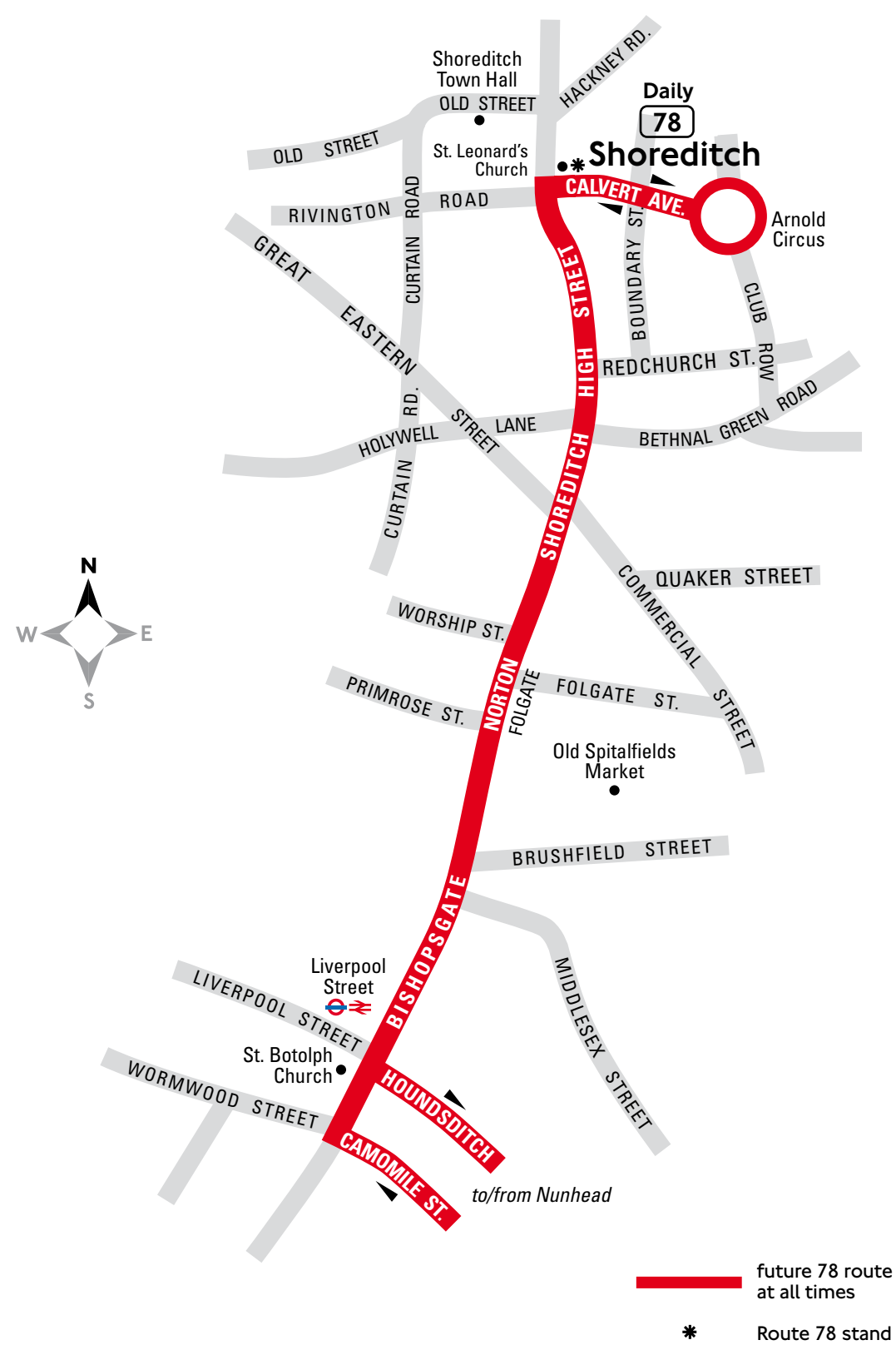
Recommendation 3.4: The Third Tier

- Material continuity between public realm hard surfaces including the raised tiers, pavements and carriageway around Boundary Gardens
- Temporary traffic calming measures, such as rising bollards and/or occasional suspension of parking bays
- Remove any unessential barriers and clutter around the pavement and road
- Ensure that the street around Arnold Circus, the Third tier, is included within the programme of yearly events
- Possible planters/ planting adjacent to the buildings that face the circus
- Incorporate unused or underused land around the circus into a broadened planting strategy

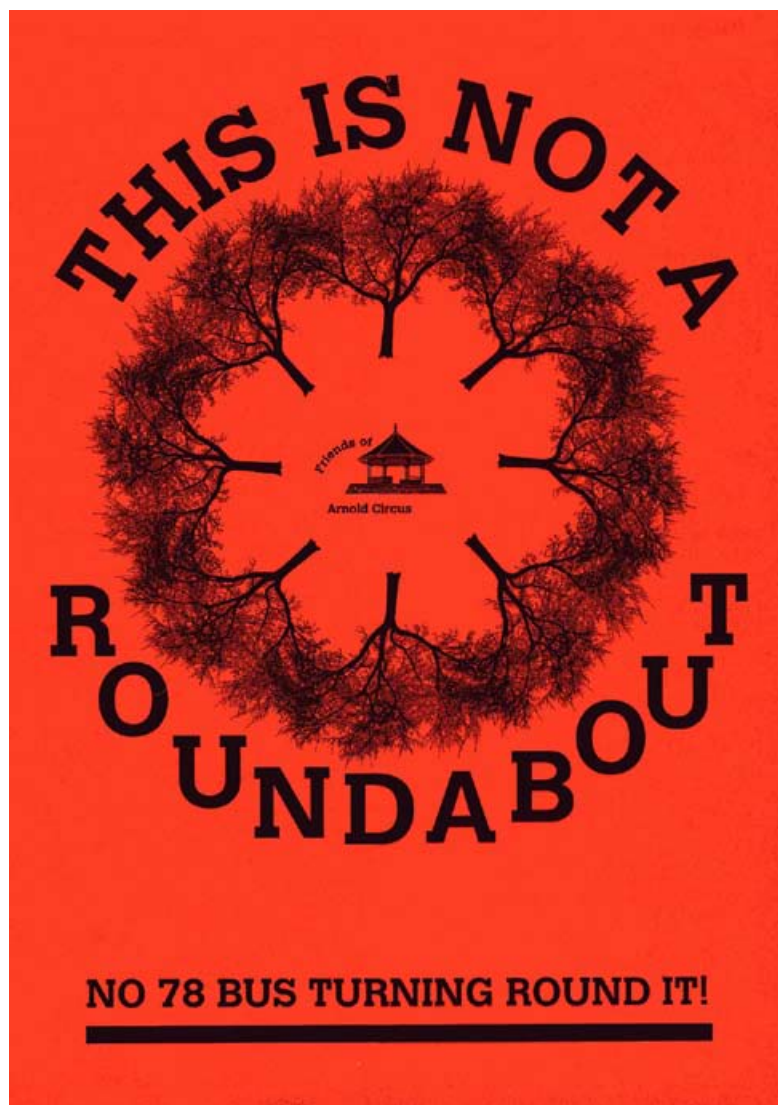




Previous 78 Bus Standing Arrangements



Current 78 Bus Standing Arrangements



3.5 Traffic Management

Aims

- Give priority to pedestrians over traffic within the realm of Arnold Circus
- Safer and clearer access into the Gardens

The scope of this vision is to highlight the necessity for a more detailed traffic model to be established for Arnold Circus. No specific modelling has been undertaken within this report.

Current context

- 2006-7 Installation of 1 raised traffic table on the south side of Arnold Circus
- 2008 Safer Routes to School initiative, installing a series of raised traffic tables around the circumference of Arnold Circus

Through consultation and discussions within the steering group the ACCS has identified 4 key issues regarding the future development of Arnold Circus in relation to traffic:

The 78 Bus Standing Arrangements

TfL implemented changes to the standing arrangements of the 78 bus in 2006 after relocating the bus stand from the south to the north side of Calvert Avenue. Recently the 42 Bus has been temporarily rerouted to the same stand, meaning Arnold Circus is now circumnavigated by an average 14 buses per hour between 9am – 6pm, Monday – Saturday. This has been a contentious issue amongst the local community, with some groups including the local school staging protests against the use of Arnold Circus as a roundabout for buses to turn at the end of their journey. Disadvantages of the current arrangements brought up during consultation include:

- Causes a potential hazard for pedestrians wanting accessing the gardens, and schoolchildren attending Virginia Primary School
- Puts passengers getting in/out of parked vehicles around the central island at risk
- Generates high levels of noise in a relatively quiet residential area.
- Detracts from the nature of Arnold Circus

- Jeopardizes a section of the National Cycle Network

Car parking around Arnold Circus

Designated parking bays around the circumference of the gardens have also been identified as a significant barrier to access through consultation. Prior to the Safer Routes to School works, parked cars blocked 3 of the 4 entrances to the gardens. The removal of the parking bays, it is thought, would improve physical and perceived access to the space.

Temporary Pedestrianisation

A number of community events held on Arnold Circus require temporarily closing Arnold Circus to traffic, typically for a period of around 6 hours on a Sunday. If combined with environmental enhancements to the streetscape as suggested in 3.4, temporarily closing Arnold Circus to vehicular traffic on a more regular basis could have great benefits in terms of accessibility, offering a more inclusive open space.

A shared surface or fully pedestrianised?

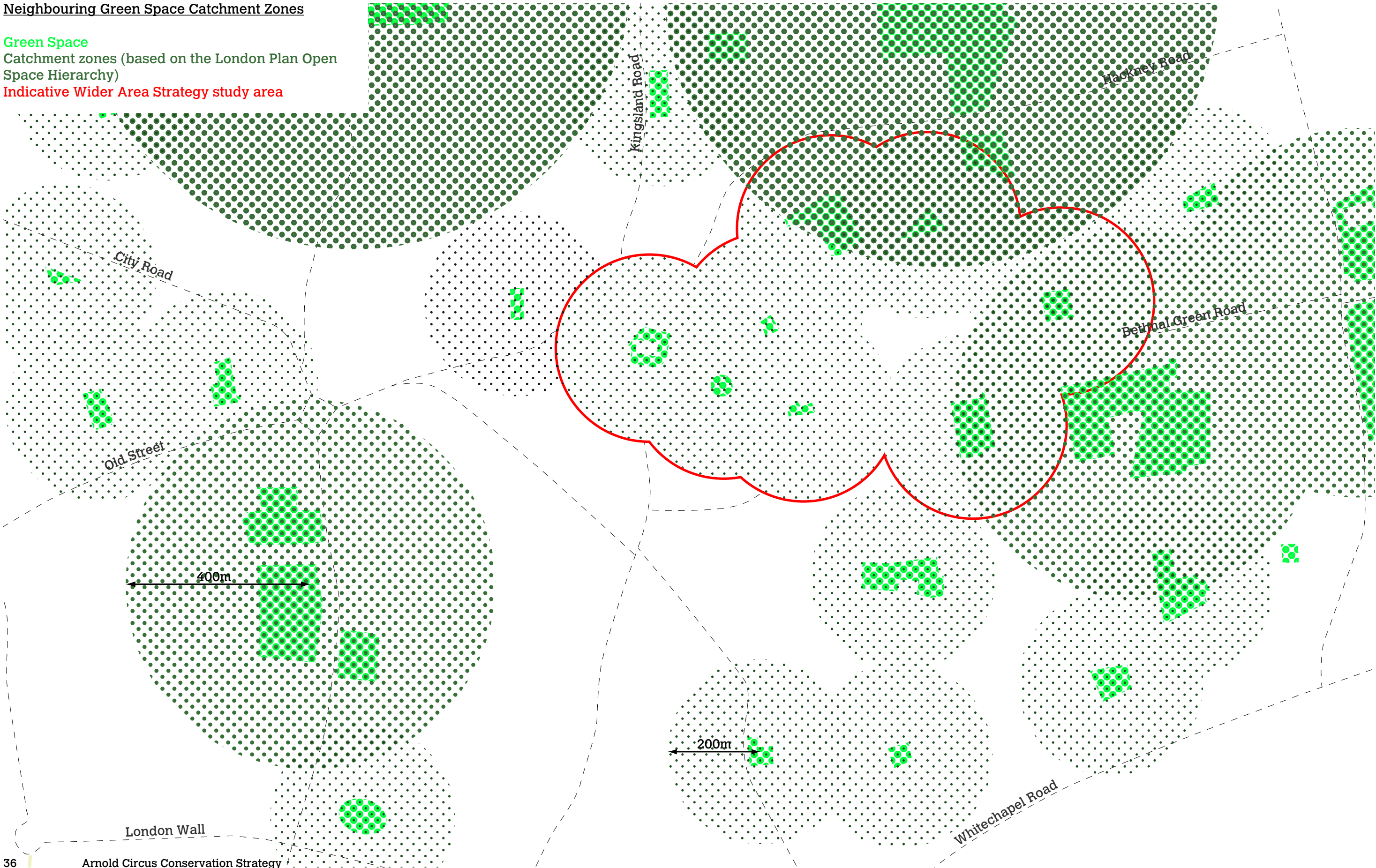
As long term consideration investigation should be carried out into whether Arnold Circus could be fully pedestrianised or developed as a shared surface with right of way to pedestrians. There was no consistent opinion amongst groups consulted on this topic.

Recommendation 3.5: Traffic Management

- Develop a traffic management strategy in full consultation with local user groups, and in conjunction with the forthcoming restoration works to address the feasibility of:
- Rerouting the 78 Bus standing arrangements
- Removal/relocation of parking spaces
- Temporary pedestrianisation
- Implementation of a shared surface
- Permanent pedestrianisation

Neighbouring Green Space Catchment Zones

Green Space
Catchment zones (based on the London Plan Open
Space Hierarchy)
Indicative Wider Area Strategy study area





3.6 Wider Area Strategy

Aims

- Share knowledge and resources throughout a wider area around Arnold Circus
- Promote a legible and complementary sequence of public space in the spirit of Owen Fleming's vision
- Make best use of available public open space
- Enable the maximum range of uses through the intelligent programming of a network of open space

In an area where public open space is scarce and subject to increasing demands, there is a need to develop a clear strategy towards underused local amenity space that can unlock the full potential of sites to form a coherent local network of open space, or in current policy terms, a local Green Grid.

As individual spaces, small local sites can fall under the radar of mainstream improvement programmes as they are perceived to provide relatively limited amenities, and are consequently given a low priority for receiving funding. When considered as part of a network of complementary spaces they are able to provide a better range of services for a larger amount of people over a wider area.

In an area such as Shoreditch, where three borough Open Space Strategies (LBTH, Hackney and the City of London) intersect, this context becomes more complex and the need for joined up thinking at a local level becomes even more relevant.

The process of establishing a network of open spaces in the local area around Arnold Circus is already underway in the form of the Shoreditch Green Umbrella. Shoreditch Green Umbrella is the working title given to an alliance of community groups concerned with the shared management of green spaces in the area. Current members are:

- Arnold Circus (FOAC)
- Boundary Estate Courtyards (BETRA)
- Jesus Green (Jesus Green Residents Association - JGRA)
- Rhoda St Green (North Brick Lane Residents Association - NBLRA)
- Rochelle and Wonder Garden (CVS)
- Shacklewell Street Garden (NBLRA)

Neighbouring Greenspace

Existing green space
Underused green space
Potential Opportunity Sites
Hardscape
Playspace





Further spaces that could be adopted into this network include:

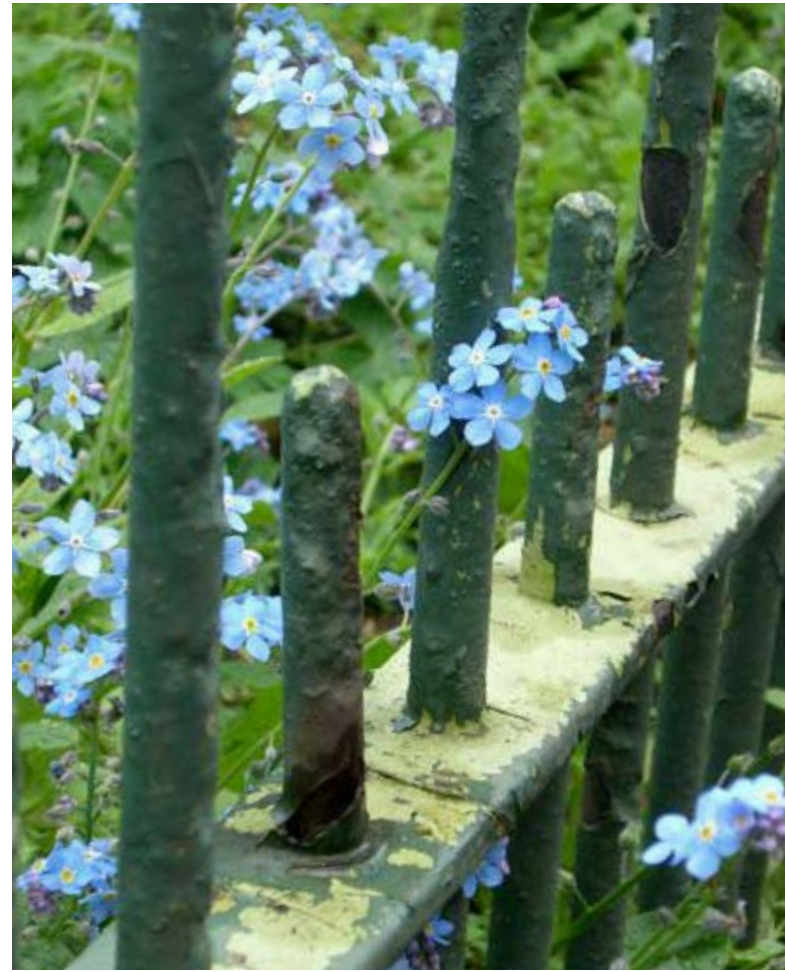
- Shoreditch Church Gardens
- Virginia Gardens
- Ravenscroft Park
- St Matthew's Churchyard
- Tomlinson Close greenspace & m.u.g.a
- Turin Street - Crewe House Play Area
- Camlet Street Playground
- Shacklewell Street m.u.g.a
- Any new open space as part of the Bishopsgate Goodsyard development

In the spirit of Owen Fleming's vision for the Boundary Estate, the ACCS recommends a comprehensive audit and the development of cohesive design guide for open spaces within an extended 'Shoreditch Green Umbrella'. The scope of this strategy should cover existing green spaces, underused sites, hardscaped play areas and semi-public courtyard spaces between residential blocks.

The following diagrams identify green spaces within the wider context, and outline an indicative study area based on the London Plan's 'Open Space Hierarchy' specification (Draft Further Alterations to the London Plan, September 2006).

Recommendation 3.6: Wider Area Strategy

- Shoreditch Green Umbrella to consider seeking funding to commission a Wider Area Strategy for open spaces throughout an agreed catchment area
- A cross borough study, applying the principles of the East London Green Grid on a micro scale
- Map past and current uses, and assess the feasibilities of sharing and dividing uses between the diverse spaces
- Map future development sites which will provide new public open space, and new users
- Produce a strategy for the effective pooling of resources (tools, seeds, knowledge and skills)
- Propose ways to enable the limited stock of public open space to work extra-hard for the benefit of local users
- Address issues of naming, wayfinding, and public perceptions of identity



3.7 Long-Term Landscaping

Aims

- Ensure a long-term planting strategy is developed in the lead up to the LBTH restoration works in consultation with community volunteer gardeners
- Develop a collective vision for the long-term landscaping of Arnold Circus
- Minimise the impact that the LBTH restoration works have on the planting of the gardens

It is important for the long-term success of the LBTH restoration works that the planting plan for the gardens complements the ambitions of volunteer gardeners and the ongoing programme of the FOAC gardening sub committee. A dialogue should be established with local groups to ensure that resources and funds are managed effectively both before and beyond the restoration works.

The FOAC gardening sub-committee have expressed uncertainty over how best to allocate resources leading up to the restoration works, and whether to continue to plant the beds with new bulbs. It is not yet clear whether soft landscaping would survive during the building schedule. However it is undesirable for the gardens to remain unplanted for periods of time.

There is a requirement to develop a planting programme after works have taken place. Who will be responsible for the re-planting of the gardens? Will there be funds available to allow for community involvement in re-establishing the gardens where necessary? Consideration needs to be given in advance to best programme seasonal planting and ensure the required funds are in place.

Key issues

It is important that a long-term soft landscaping scheme is adopted by all; this should be developed by community groups and council working in cooperation. It was agreed that the steering group could provide a useful forum for this discussion. Key considerations highlighted by the steering group were;

- Use of 'drought tolerant' plants appropriate for a habitat of dry shade

- Mature planting obscuring views in and out of the site urgently needs addressing
- The shading and water absorption caused by the existing mature plane limits possible planting species
- However the trees are a well-loved feature of Arnold Circus, and their removal should not be considered as a way of improving conditions for planting

Recommendation 3.7: Long-Term Landscaping

- FOAC to continue planting programme with consideration to the LBTH restoration works
- A coherent management and maintenance strategy to be adopted to best suit FOAC and LBTH with regard to ongoing gardening duties and responsibilities (see chapter 5)
- A channel of communication to be established between LBTH and the FOAC Gardening sub committee (see 5.7)
- Funding opportunities and resource allocation to be discussed between FOAC and LBTH

3.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

The role open space plays in the urban environment will come under increasing pressure to address concerns about climate change and resource conservation. Opportunities for Arnold Circus to make a positive contribution to both the local and global environment should be explored ahead of LBTH restoration works.

Sustainable Urban drainage (SUDS) is a concept that includes long term environmental and social factors in decisions about drainage. It takes account of the quantity and quality of runoff, and the amenity value of surface water in the urban environment.

The Problem of supplying water to Arnold Circus has been highlighted as a key concern for any future planting scheme. Due to the large number of mature plane trees on Arnold Circus the beds are very dry, limiting the range of plants that will grow successfully. Potential options for dealing with the limited supply of water have been discussed through the ACCS steering group:

- Reinstating the historic water supply
- Restoration of historic drainage channel in conjunction with surface level rainwater catchment
- Experiment with planting drought tolerant plants

Recommendation 3.8: SUDS

- Restoration of Drainage Channel in conjunction with resurfacing and repairs to hard surfaces
- Reinstatement of the intended soil level on the planted beds
- Investigate viability of reinstating the historic water supply during the initial phase of restoration works

4. Participation & Ownership



4.1 Key issues & opportunities

'Community involvement with public space schemes, large and small, is essential to getting a scheme that really works and is sustainable in the long-term... The benefits of active involvement of local people can outweigh the additional efforts required – active engagement of the community has been proven to bring about results that better meet users' needs. Where communities have been effectively engaged in projects the outcomes are better – and stay that way for longer.' ODPM, Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener, 2002

Genuine community participation in environmental change has the potential to make public open spaces better designed, better used, and better maintained.

The ACCS puts forward a series of recommendations based on engaging the community that can help Arnold Circus respond better to the needs of users, ensure a sense of ownership, and encourage the community to take ongoing care of the space.

Participation, as outlined in the ACCS principles, can be a significant means of establishing the long-term conservation of Arnold Circus.

Responding to the needs of the community

- In an area that offers people limited access to green open space there is particular pressure for existing open space to provide amenities that are suitable to the needs of the local community
- Allowing a 'bottom-up', community led approach to setting the agenda for change can lead to results that are suitable for, and valued by, users
- The aim is not only to gain insight into the community's views on priorities for the allocation of funding, but also developing an ongoing dialogue between council and community that, at best, can serve to provide a collaboration with the shared vision of making this local space better for all its users

Ensuring Ownership

- There is a risk that if the local community are not sufficiently involved in the processes of physical

change they will remain ambivalent, or even become alienated from a new-look environment

- *'There are many positive benefits to involving the community in the management and development of their parks and open spaces. Creating a shared sense of ownership of that space and the development process can help to break down some of the barriers between people of different backgrounds and circumstances, in turn leading to greater community cohesion.'* ODPM, Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener, 2002

Participating in Change

- Active participation should give more than the feeling of having a say in a decision; it should offer users a means to physically transform the public realm
- Even so, the benefits of involvement can be as much about transformation of the community itself through its empowerment to influence its own surroundings, as the sum of those physical changes
- In this sense, temporary works or events can hold as much conservation value as lasting physical elements
- Effective participation can enable Arnold Circus to be both sustainable through public responsibility, and flexible through responsiveness to change

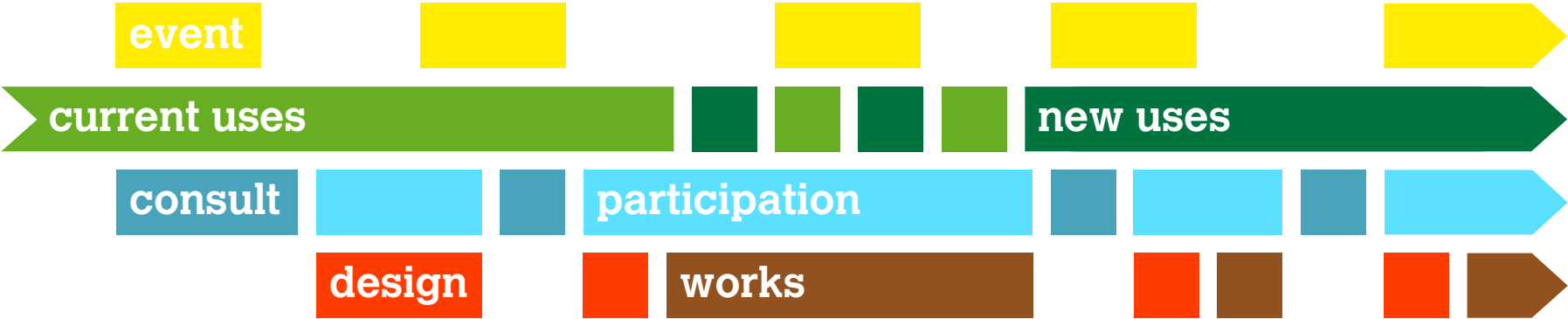
An Inclusive Approach

- Groups or elements of the local community that are currently perceived as the source of 'anti-social behaviour' should be actively included in the consultation process to ensure that the regeneration of the gardens does not intensify rifts between users
- *'Creating a sense of 'ownership' of public and community spaces is a pre-condition of successful use, care and maintenance. The key stakeholders in a secure public realm are the public themselves, including children and young people, and their involvement at all levels is essential.'* K Worpole, No Particular Place to Go? Children, young people and public space, 2003
- 'The Bandstand Boys' - Local youths who are major users of the park, and spend a lot of time

Conventional Programme



Recommended Programme





Case Study: Mint Street Park, Southwark

'Within weeks, a group of excluded youths vandalised the first installation. So, without accusing them of anything, we decided, during the second phase, to find out what they wanted from the lighting, as they used the park a lot,' reports Peter Graal, the community garden facilitator from BOST. 'They came up with an idea for the new lights and, a year to this day, they have still not been vandalised.' CAGE, Decent Parks? Decent Behaviour?

socialising in the bandstand should be made to feel that the changes are also for their benefit

- Dog owners – locals who walk their dogs on the gardens should be consulted over measures to prevent dog fouling on the gardens. An all out ban on dogs may not be observed, or may simply displace fouling to neighbouring pavements, if there are inadequate alternative places to walk dogs
- Street drinkers/drug users – although less frequent users than in the past, continue to congregate on Arnold Circus. It needs to be questioned whether their occasional presence is necessarily to the exclusion of other users. Discussions with this group and with the community should take place with the involvement of LAP1 and the LBTH Consultation and Involvement team

Resources

To ensure that the proposals set out in the ACCS are feasible it is essential that recommendations are deliverable within the scope of existing resources, and avoid placing extra onus on council time and funding.

- Make use wherever possible of existing resources, including Community Park Rangers, the LBTH Consultation & Involvement Team and Local Area Partnership
- Advocate, and seek to work with, the proposed Housing Community Support Officer for Boundary Estate
- Continue and develop the programme of voluntary community involvement
- Use the Arnold Circus Steering Group as a forum to engage a partnership approach and streamline communications (see 4.3 Arnold Circus Steering Group)
- Local community to seek alternative funding sources as necessary, in particular for the delivery of the proposed 'Packages' (see 4.6)

A Permeable Process

In essence the ACCS aims to stretch the process of change to become more publicly accessible

and open to community participation, meanwhile reinforcing the current programme of temporary community events, consultation, and maintenance.

This approach proposes a permeable organization for the forthcoming LBTH restoration works, but also recommends means to continue an open process of incremental change into the future. It is based on the belief that the site should never seem 'closed', and the improvement works should never seem 'completed'. The ACCS sets out current, medium and long-term goals for participation:

Current

- Work to date has been discussed under the heading existing consultation. It is important that this work now forms the basis of all future consultation both in the medium and long-term

Medium-Term

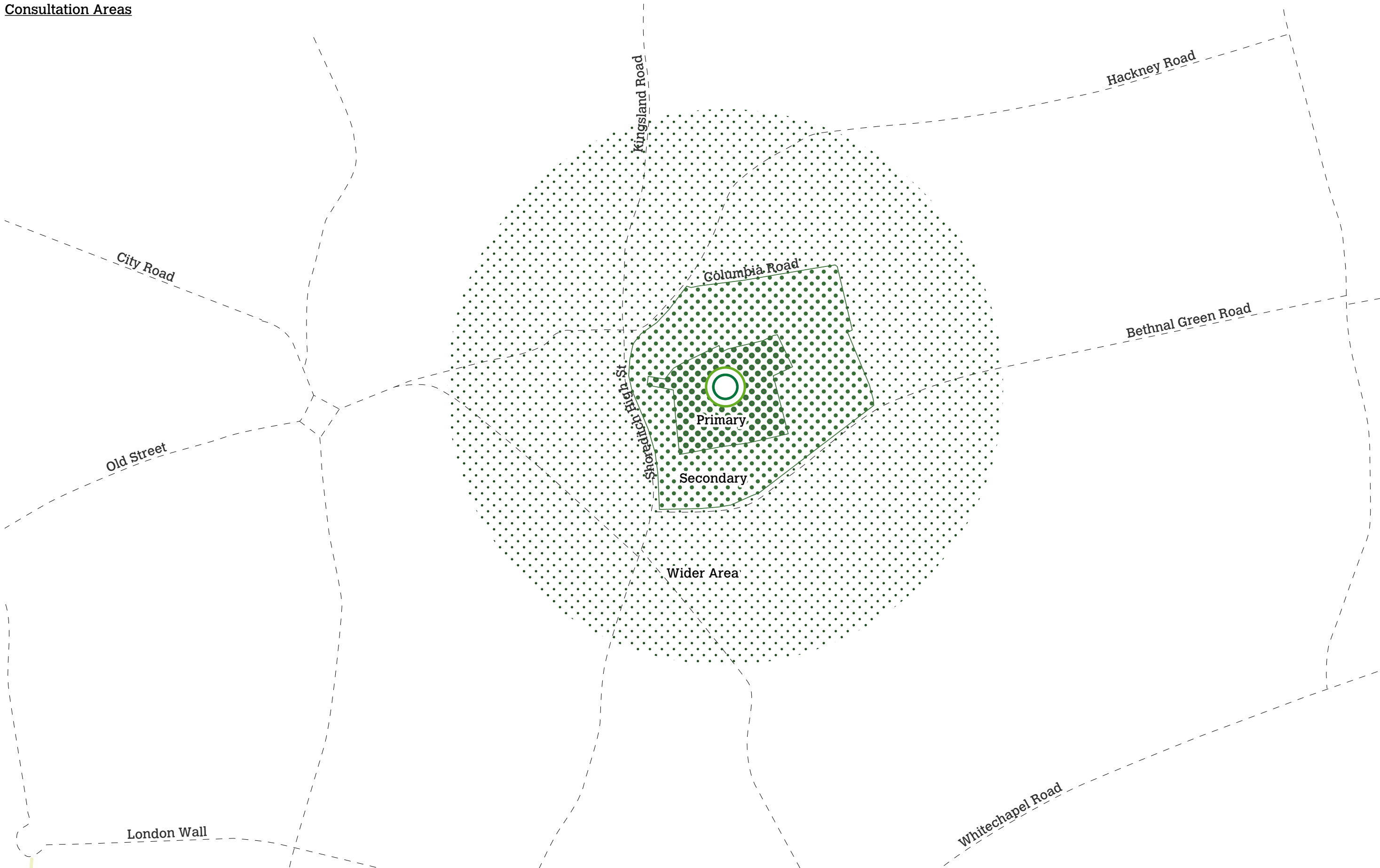
- Consultation leading up to and during planned LBTH restoration works to focus on enabling the local community to remain connected to Arnold Circus while it is closed for construction works
- Council & Community to collaborate on consultation relating to the works
- Community to actively participate in the works

Long Term

- Ongoing programme of outreach run by FOAC
- Independent series of sub-projects based on a process of public participation, onsite prototyping, and hands-on building work

By encouraging community involvement with the site through time and experience of use, the restoration of Arnold Circus could serve as a model for engaging the practice of planning-gain-led regeneration with real and everyday needs on the ground.

Consultation Areas



4.2 Community Consultation

Past/Current Programmes

Users of Arnold Circus and residents of the Boundary Estate have been consulted by FOAC, BETRA and LBTH on their perceptions of, and relationship to, the gardens through a number of initiatives over the last 4 years:

FOAC

The Friends of Arnold Circus have coordinated a programme of community consultation and outreach over the last four years, successfully developing a stronger sense of ownership and involvement amongst disparate elements of the community.

The Environment for All programme, has involved local schoolchildren and community groups in readdressing their relationship to Arnold Circus, through a series of projects exploring the twin themes of environmental awareness and social change:

- Friends 2004 Survey; a statistical survey conducted throughout the year to gather opinion about Arnold Circus.
- Green Circus is a year long project involving children at the neighbouring Virginia Primary School. Workshops, activities and fieldwork out on the gardens developed awareness of the site's history and nature, and generated a sense of responsibility and ownership amongst the children.
- The Women's Group at St Hilda's took part in Bagaan, a 9-month project in which they collaborated in designing and stitching a large wall hanging inspired by natural features found in the gardens
- Memories and Futures sought out and recorded people's memories and views about living around Arnold Circus. It built on the core group of older residents who had both attended the brass band concerts and – in some cases – participated in the seniors' dance project for Circus on the Circus.
- The FOAC Gardening Sub committee has worked regularly with attendees of Headway House, a social centre for people with acquired brain injury.

FOAC have developed a sensitive understanding of changing perceptions and attitudes to Arnold Circus, and laid the groundwork for an inclusive and community-led approach to regeneration.

BETRA

The Boundary Estate Tenants and Residents Association have contributed significantly to the improvement of the Estate's open spaces. The group initially formed in 2004 under the name 'Boundary Community Trust' in order to campaign for the refurbishment of the Camlet Street Playground.

In its current form, BETRA aims to promote the interest of residents on the estate. The group have carried out an extensive consultation with Boundary estate residents, addressing the issue of a move to set up an ALMO agreement for the future management of the housing stock.

Gail Burton, Chair of BETRA records 'One positive outcome of this potentially divisive and unsettling saga has been to unite and focus the people on the estate with common concerns and aims'. BETRA continues to be a significant voice on the Boundary Estate representing the interest of the tenants.

LBTH/LAP initiatives

The Tower Hamlets Local Area Partnership, Consultation and Involvement Team, and Conservation Department have carried out ongoing consultation on issues including the 2005 CBA Feasibility Study, transfer of housing stock, and the Boundary Estate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines.

The consultation and engagement process for the forthcoming restoration works is currently being developed by the Parks and Open Spaces Department and the Consultation and Involvement Team. It is hoped that the consultation programme will be a model example, building on existing consultation, and involving the local knowledge and experience of FOAC.



Case Study: The Green Circus

- A group from Columbia Market Nursery School and every pupil at Virginia Primary School were invited onto Arnold Circus to Plant Bulbs or sow seeds.
- With the help of the Environment Trust, pupils from Years 5 and 6 were encouraged to explore the Circus, shaking the trees to discover what bugs lived in them. They made bird boxes, created photographs of the circus, made felt vegetables, wrote poems, and made bunting.
- *'The Results of the Green Circus exercise shows that involving children in a concerted effort, calling on their imagination and developing their practical skills does work. It is particularly important when it is a matter of re-establishing a sense of connection with a neighbourhood, seeding the idea of civic responsibility and introducing a realisation that individuals can input into change.'* Naseem Khan, Chair of FOAC

Outcomes

- The outcome for the pupils was a greater awareness of the natural world, and an increasing sense of Arnold Circus as a place they could explore and learn from

Case Study: Granville Cube

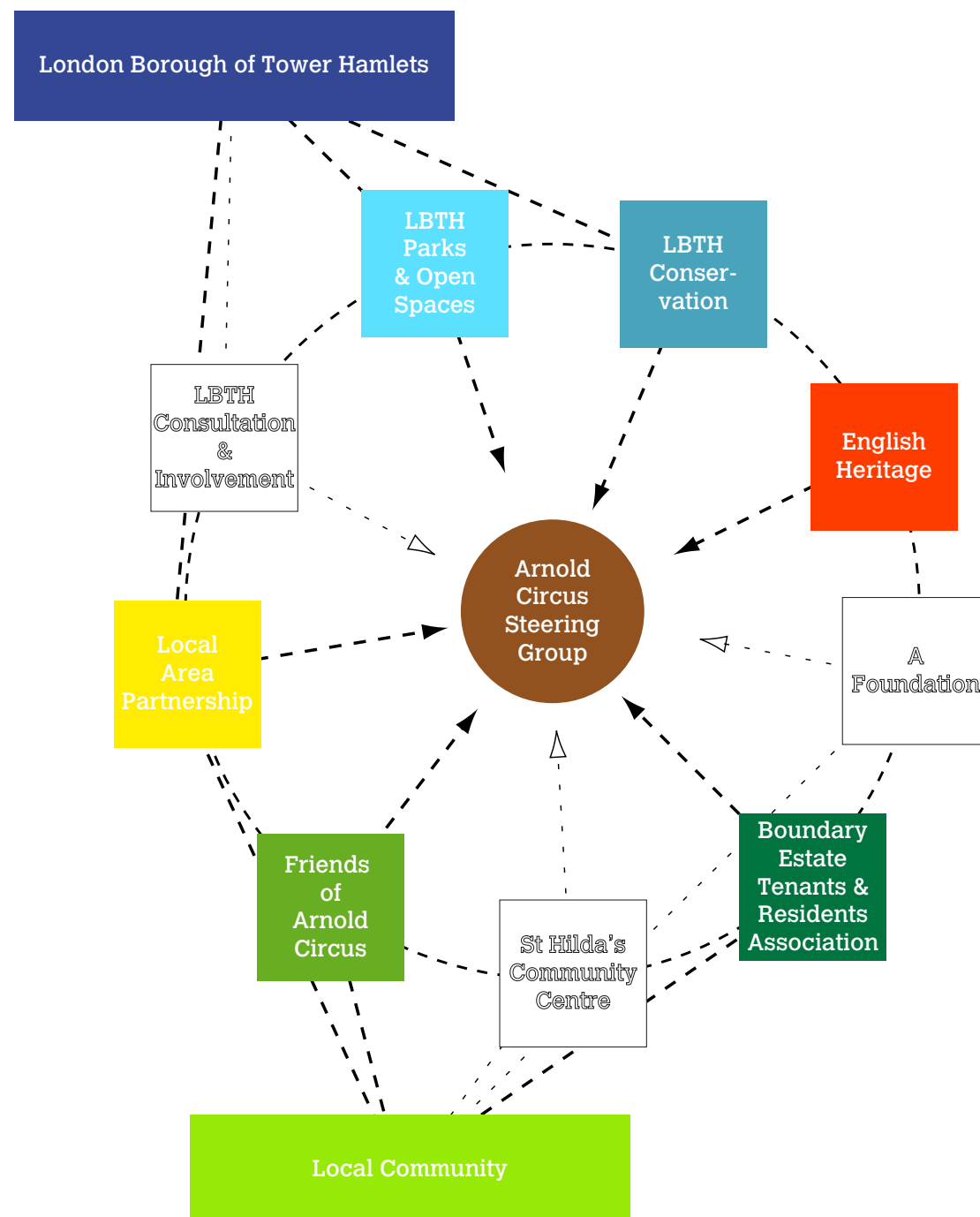
- London based art/architecture collective Public Works take a direct participatory approach to design, with dialogue between the architects and the community throughout the process to define, and subsequently redefine the future uses of a site
- Granville Cube constitutes the Public Art Programme that ran alongside the Granville New Homes Development in South Kilburn, by Levitt Bernstein Architects, between September 2005 and August 2007
- The Cube was a simple metal frame structure that travelled to various locations on and around the Granville New Homes site. The structure acted as a device to facilitate communication, host small-scale local events, and collect and stage ideas for the use of the public realm

Outcomes

- The weekly events hosted at the cube were collected as an archive of ideas for the future use of public space in the area, and fed into proposals for a temporary 'pocket park' and re-housing the Talbot Youth Centre



4.3 Arnold Circus Steering Group



The Arnold Circus Steering Group was set up in December 2007, to guide the work of the ACCS. The role of the steering group was initially identified as a forum to guide the study, with the potential to subsequently form the ongoing basis for a working partnership between LBTH, FOAC, and local stakeholders with an interest in Arnold Circus. The attendees to date are:

- Boundary Estate Tenants & Residents Association: Gail Burton, Rob Allen, Pia Khan
- English Heritage: Sarah Green, Kate Emmerson
- Friends of Arnold Circus: Naseem Khan, Leila McAlister, Jean Locker
- LBTH Parks & Open Spaces: Ros Brewer, Colin Stuart
- Local Area Partnership 1: Saheed Ullah, Louise Vallance

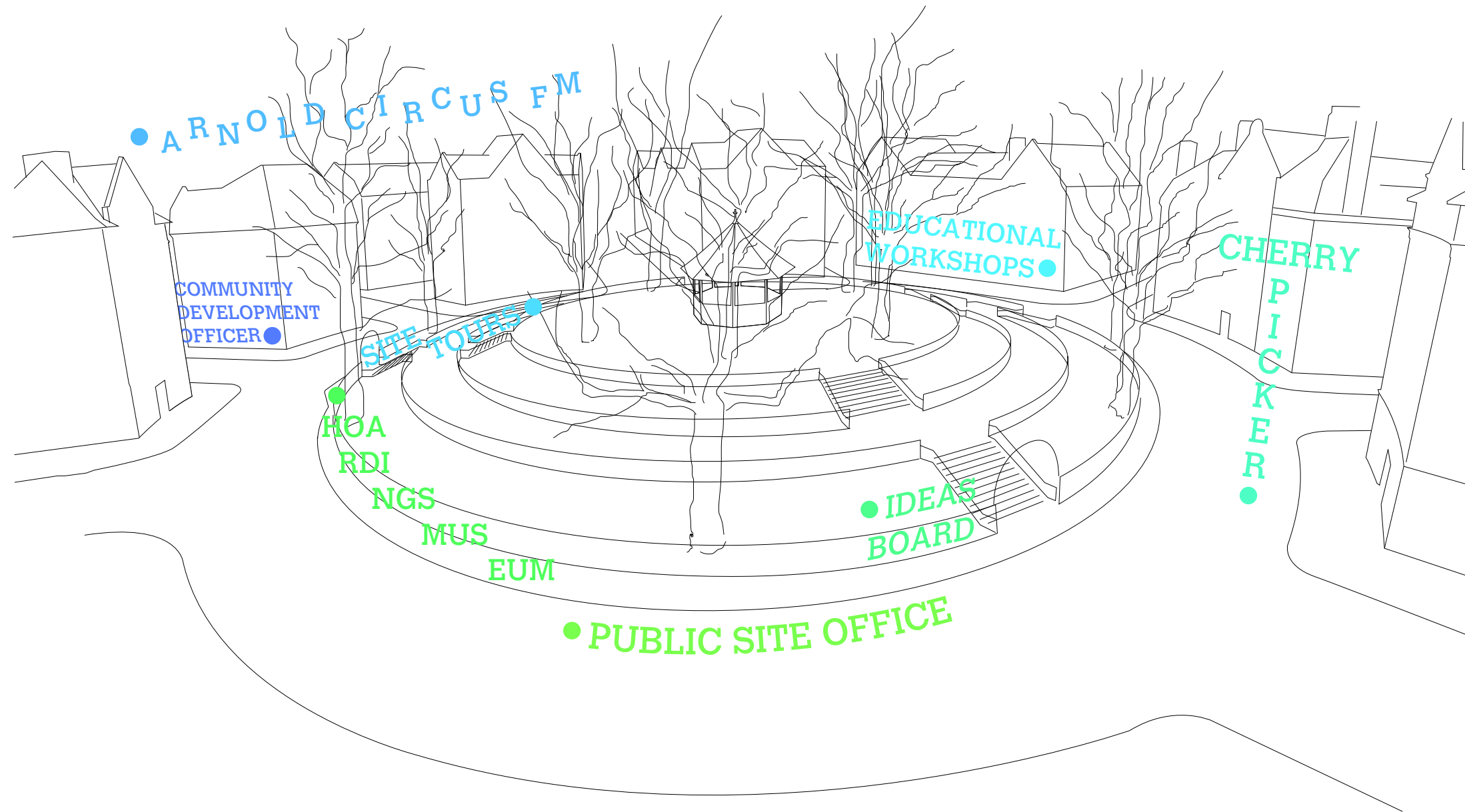
The steering group has provided valuable guidance for the initial work of the ACCS, and created a forum to monitor all parties' ongoing involvement in the management of Arnold Circus. Discussion in previous meetings established that it would be beneficial to continue the steering group beyond the completion of the ACCS:

- As a community/council forum for the initial LBTH restoration works, and ongoing management of Arnold Circus
- To continue as an open forum at which all represented groups and individual members of the community feel able to contribute their opinion
- To ensure that all members of the local community, including non-FOAC members, were fully represented in decisions made about Arnold Circus
- As a forum for English Heritage to exercise an input into managing Arnold Circus as a Heritage site

Recommendation 4.3: Continuation of the Arnold Circus Steering Group

The Arnold Circus Steering Group has agreed that it should continue to meet on a regular basis throughout the duration of consultation and construction surrounding the forthcoming LBTH restoration works. Following 'completion' of the works, the group should collectively assess whether it will continue, and on what basis. Up until that point, the Steering Group should follow the following format:

- Meet bi-monthly, on the first Thursday of the month at 5pm
- Scheduling, invitations, and circulation of minutes and agendas to be organized by FOAC
- Meetings to be held at the Tab Centre, Godfrey's Place, unless otherwise specified
- The core members of the steering group are those that have already attended the initial three meetings
- Further interested parties (such as LBTH Consultation and Involvement, St Hilda's Community Centre or the A Foundation) would be welcome on a come and go basis
- Maximum two representatives from any one organization
- Act as a forum to facilitate and focus communication between the council and the community, in order to minimise pressure on officers' time
- Continuously reflect on how open it is being, and be prepared to act on any failings which are identified
- Aim to find ways of moving forward based on an acceptance of difference, rather than relying on compromised solutions acceptable to all



4.4 Framework for Participation

'We believe that by action at the neighbourhood level, people everywhere can make a significant difference to the quality of our country's public services. In this way, local people can play their part in creating sustainable communities where it is good to live and work.' Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter (ODPM, 2005)

The process of reviving Arnold Circus through community participation is already underway. The question now is how to maintain this involvement during a period of significant change.

The community has gained both enjoyment and knowledge through practical involvement in the use and upkeep of Arnold Circus. It is important that the increasingly positive perceptions amongst local residents and the momentum of community activism are not lost during the LBTH restoration works.

The restoration of Arnold Circus presents an opportunity to enrich the lives of the community that surrounds it during the process of change, not just after it. The ACCS proposes a Framework for Participation in the physical changes where the commencement of building works rather than the completion date mark the start of a renewed civic involvement in the site.

The Framework for Participation will focus on creative ways to maintain perceived accessibility to Arnold Circus during the planned restoration works, by relocating existing uses, finding new opportunities in the surrounding area, and rethinking the role of the construction site within the community.

Recommendation 4.4a: The Site as a Place of Communication

Arnold Circus should continue to be perceived as accessible throughout construction via a scheduled programme of events related to the works:

- **Supervised Access:** Tours of the site and lifts in a 'cherry picker' to be given at different stages of construction
- **Visibility:** Rather than obscure the site behind

painted hoardings for the duration of the works, areas of the space should remain visible, by creating openings in the hoardings, using mesh fencing, or even building a 'lookout' (see Case Study X Superconductor)

- **Ideas Board:** Consider how the existing notice board could be temporarily relocated to the hoardings, and/or extended to the community launderette. It could display and update the plans for Arnold Circus, timetable, and ways to find out more in a format that allows for comment and discussion
- **Hoardings Museum:** Possible use of site hoardings to exhibit the products of consultation and ongoing outreach
- **Public Site Office:** A temporary site office to provide controlled facilities for the public, as well as contractors. It could provide a meeting space for the local community, or be partly usable as a performance space at weekends. As there is little suitable space for a site office on Arnold Circus, alternative locations such as the adjacent courtyards or radial streets (i.e. Palissy St or Rochelle St) of the Boundary Estate could be investigated
- **Arnold Circus FM:** FOAC propose to set up an internet 'radio station' as an open platform for views, news, interviews etc... Instead of a live station requiring base and equipment it will be a set of pre-recorded and edited podcasts, offering a dynamic, non-physical medium of communication with the wider community for periods when access is limited
- **Community Development Officer:** FOAC aim to employ an individual to strengthen links with the local community, liaise with the Council to facilitate a positive input into the restoration works, and plan and organize outreach and events

The 2005 CBA Report suggests that 'any improvements to the gardens could also provide an opportunity for educational programmes and wildlife conservation'. In an area where there is an acknowledged 'skills gap' between locals' training and available jobs, the restoration of the gardens could be an opportunity for education and training. The recent reaction to the potential closure or relocation of the Bethnal Green Centre proves there is substantial appetite for adult learning classes in



Case Study: Bridging the Gap

- Bridging the Gap - a groundbreaking 2012 architecture and built environment education programme funded by Newham Council, coordinated by Fundamental Architectural Inclusion
- Over two days, seven pupils from Brampton Manor Secondary School mapped a section of the Greenway – that will be the main walkway through the heart of the Olympic park – taking photographs, recording interviews with users and collecting samples.
- The children created a 3½ m drawing mapping their observations, and designed an enormous 6m long three dimensional architectural model filled with visionary and insightful design ideas to transform the Victorian sewer pipe into a welcoming, multi functional route into the Olympic park

Outcomes

- The pupils' proposals were presented to the 2012 design team at an early stage to maximise the possibility of them influencing the final design
- One pupil commented 'I could have a job in the Olympics, as an architect, a designer; I could help others to get a job. I have got new aims for myself, goals that I could try to reach.'

Case Study: La Vie, Patrick Bouchain

- The work of French architect Patrick Bouchain makes the experience of change one that is shared with people living and working in the city, rather than one that temporarily inhibits people's access to the built environment
- His approach aims to resolve conflicts between a building process and the needs of the surrounding community by opening the process of construction as a forum for involvement
- Bouchain believes that every public site should be the opportunity to transmit public knowledge; *'It should be possible for everyone who is interested, and obligatory for all those learning about building to come and observe the way the work evolves, as knowledge is acquired through experimentation and mimicry'*
- 'La Vie', a project to redevelop an old abattoir as an extension for the Channel National theatre of Calais, is an example of the way restoration works can be conducted to accommodate and involve the lives of the community it affects
- The building process was treated as an integral part of the programme of cultural events at the Channel; where 'life is not going to stop while the site is under construction. On the contrary, the Channel will support the site, live with it and make it live for its public by sharing it with the contractors and labourers'

Outcomes

- Normal patterns of use were maintained as far as possible, presenting the redevelopment works as a phase in the life of the Channel rather than a period when the theatre was closed to the public





Case Study: Ballymore Development

- Ballymore, developers of large mixed residential and commercial developments, responded to a growing problem of young people breaking onto construction sites in an innovative way
- Rather than attempting to further secure sites against intrusion, Ballymore choose to educate and inform the young people living in close proximity to what are often large sites
- Ballymore have established an education programme as part of the Considerate Constructors scheme designed to run in conjunction with the construction process
- By going into local schools and running health and safety workshops with children and young people, Ballymore have found a way to inform of the potential dangers encountered on a building site, in a beneficial, and non-exclusive way
- The pupils are invited to try on hard hats and safety boots, and are taken for guided tours of the site
- Competitions are initiated to design 'Health and Safety' posters informing others of the dangers of entering the site

Outcomes

- Offering young people the opportunity to learn from the construction site has proved a viable way of reducing vandalism and crime
- By inviting young people onto the building site under supervision Ballymore have experienced a significant reduction in breakage and entry
- By displaying 'Health and Safety' posters designed by local children on the hoardings of a site, Ballymore have given the community most effected by the construction process a sense of involvement, and a more developed understanding of the process

the area. The project should encourage learning from the act of change, as much as physical change to enable better conditions for learning.

The Weavers ward and Tower Hamlets as a whole has a high proportion of young residents. The FOAC 'Environment for All Programme' has already involved schoolchildren from the neighbouring Virginia Primary School and local mosque madrassas on Redchurch Street in workshops to reconsider their relationship to Arnold Circus, exploring the twin themes of environmental awareness and social change on the gardens. This programme of workshops should be extended onto the construction site around specific themes related to the redevelopment:

Recommendation 4.4b: The Site as a place of Learning

- Programme a series of workshops for local children and adults to cover techniques of restoration or traditional construction methods
- Provide the opportunity to participate in hands on building work
- Workshops to be both knowledge-based (e.g. the history) and results-focused (looking to consider specific aspects – e.g. benches or recycling – of the restoration)
- Specific workshops to engage targeted groups within the community to address the issues of health and safety risks on site (see Case Study: Ballymore Developments)

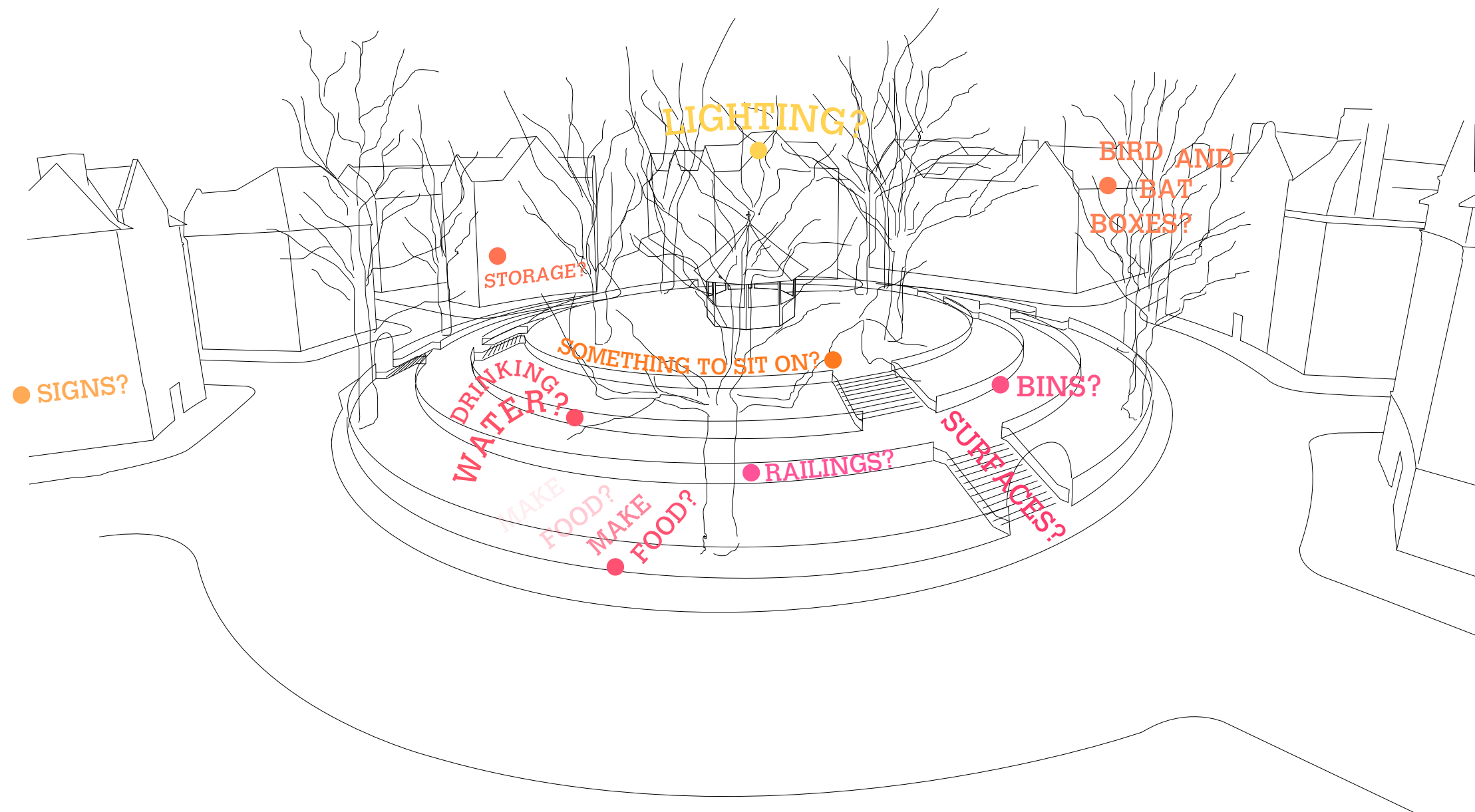
Challenges

- LBTH Parks and Open Space department, as the authority responsible for carrying out the restoration works, have a responsibility to comply with the CDM Regulations 2007 for the management of Health & Safety risks on site
- All the events scheduled during the restoration, must be done with due compliance with these regulations
- Any Planned visits to the site will have to be carefully planned to allow for continuing effective functioning, and logistics including the storage and delivery of material.

- The proposed schedule of events must remain viable within the allocated budget for the works, and minimise extra complications for contractors in terms of site safety and security, or additional costs
- This extra dimension of community participation can be partly self-initiated, managed, and fund-raised. However all proposals relating to the site itself will require the cooperation of LBTH, some of which may need to be incorporated into the capital works contract
- The events should specifically aim to engage sections of the community most likely to engage in anti-social behaviour and vandalism in response to the restoration works. It is acknowledged that these are often the hardest groups to reach, and the ongoing programme of outreach and consultation should engage in an effort to reach these often alienated sections of the community

Recommendation 4.4c: Next Steps for a Framework for Participation

- A more detailed programme of possible events surrounding the forthcoming construction works should be planned in discussion with the Tower Hamlets Development & Renewal team responsible for implementing the restoration project, once the scope of works becomes clearer
- The team are due to start planning the project in April 2008. A meeting between the Tower Hamlets Development & Renewal team, ACCS team, and FOAC should be scheduled within the following two months.



4.5 Predictive Infrastructures

Although it is assumed that the sum of funding currently available for restoring Arnold Circus will be spent in a single programme of works, there is a significant possibility of further funds becoming available either through subsequent section 106 agreements, or via the fund-raising efforts of the local community. Early intelligent infrastructural planning of the forthcoming LBTH works can maximise the possibilities for these future adaptations by giving the space an inbuilt flexibility.

The ACCS proposes three methods to enable the delivery of incremental change within a coherent physical structure.

Enabling Utilities

- A network of utilities laid at strategic positions within the ground works to anticipate the possible future needs of the site
- Possible utilities to include mains water (for gardening, a drinking fountain etc...) and mains electricity (for lighting, events etc...)
- Arrangements for the payment of water and electricity charges should be established prior to installation. The costs of electricity for regular lighting and water for a drinking fountain could be expected to be covered by the Council
- Installing prepayment meters for any further supplies of water and electricity would allow the costs of services to be incorporated into the budgets of community programmes and one off events

Opportunity Areas

- Opportunity Areas are essentially a physical gap in a hard surface which people can lay claim to at a later date, through for example installing planting, artwork, or seating
- Opportunity Areas facilitate further improvements after the conclusion of the building contract, delivered through funding that may only be available at a later stage

Robust Fixings

- Essential elements such as seating, bins, and lighting will have to be at least provisionally in place when Arnold Circus reopens following the restoration works
- However, there is potential for a number of these elements to be replaced over time by bespoke site furniture developed in conjunction with the local community
- The armatures of the provisional elements should be robustly designed to allow for the subsequent installation of different fixtures
- As far as possible, any provisional elements should be reusable elsewhere or recyclable

Recommendation 4.5: Predictive Infrastructures

- Assess the feasibility of incorporating mains power supply into the Restoration works, with secured output at the bandstand and potentially at the base of each of the 7 trees on the upper plateau
- Assess the feasibility of incorporating mains water supply into the Restoration works, with at least one secured output allowing for the future installation of a tap or drinking fountain
- Consider incorporating a number of 'opportunity areas' in hard landscaping
- Armatures for benches, bins, other furniture and signage designed to allow for future replacement of fixtures
- Fixings for future equipment to be designed to connect with existing armatures

Case Study: Superconductor

- Scaffolding and high visibility mesh, two materials readily available in the urban landscape, were used to form a temporary maze on a site destined for major redevelopment on the Isle of Sheppey
- Gaia Alessi and Richard Bradbury's installation, commissioned for Architecture Week 2007, gave the local community an opportunity to explore the site, in a playful and interactive way ahead of planned redevelopments
- Superconductor became a meeting place both physically and conversationally, raising questions about architecture and the built environment
- Sessions were run inspired by the installation, inviting the local community to suggest public art projects and schemes for key spaces within the regeneration site

Outcomes

- The outcomes were used to genuinely inform the commissioning of public art projects in the area, placing public art at the centre of the redevelopment process



4.6 Packages

Community involvement in the way Arnold Circus changes should not only go beyond the initial consultation period to influence and learn from the process of construction, it should also go beyond the official ‘completion’ of works, to continue to cultivate engagement and ownership.

Packages is a phased programme of discrete but corresponding community projects that maximise the potential for participation & ownership, achieving transformation incrementally, rather than via a single overhaul. The scheme provides the framework for a series of self-sufficient, independently funded packages (such as seating, lighting, a drinking fountain, or signage) that would be developed in collaboration with local designers, artists, and architects over the course of the next 5 years, as funding becomes available. Each of these packages would be based on a process of public participation, physical testing and prototyping onsite.

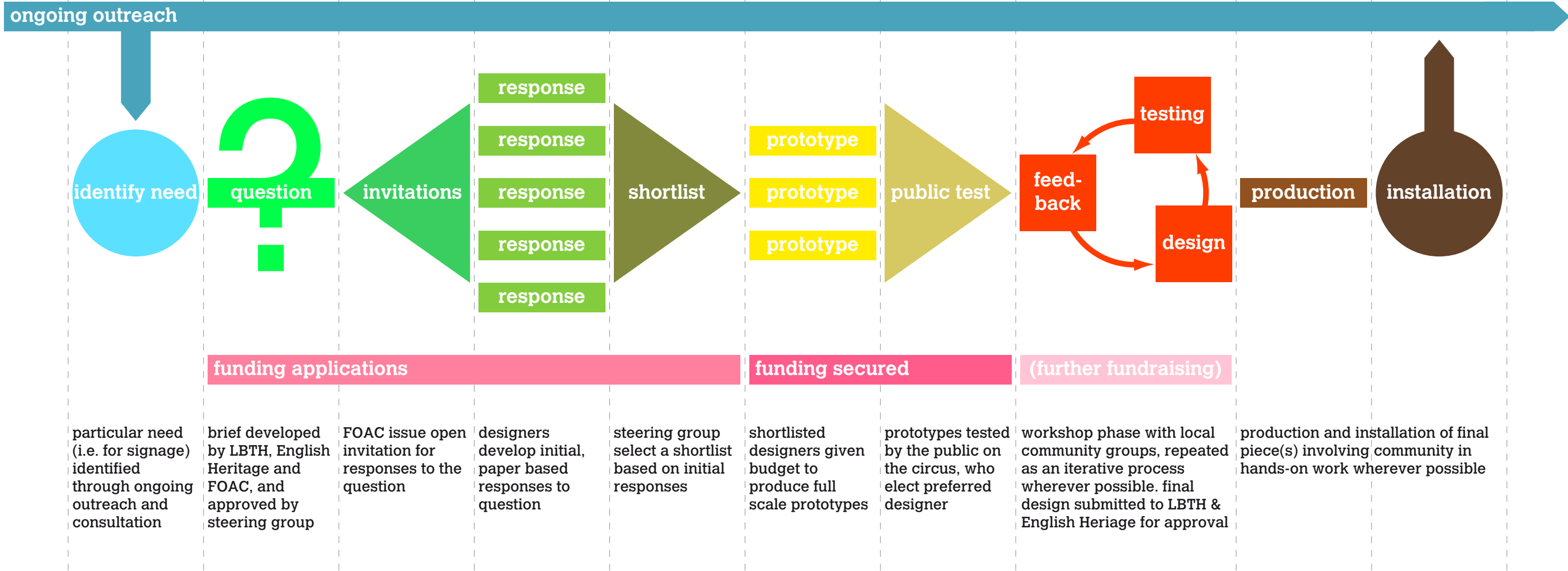
Process

The scope of each package would be established by identifying the needs of users through the ongoing outreach programme (see 4.?), or incorporating similar, independent projects. Each package would be initiated by a brief in the form of a question, including background information, budget, timing etc... drawn up by LBTH, English Heritage, FOAC and approved by the Arnold Circus Steering Group (see 4.3). Rather than specifying a product, the question should be provocative but open, encouraging responders to challenge any assumptions.

Local ‘experts’ (usually designers, artists or architects) would be invited to form a response to the question. In principle the Steering Group would then select a shortlist of experts, who would each be invited to develop their response into a prototype.

Prototypes, materials or finishes would be tested on site by Arnold Circus’s users. The users would elect which prototype to take forward, and work creatively with the chosen expert to adapt and develop the project. The steps of initial question, expert response, and physical testing should

Indicative Packages Process



be repeated as an iterative process. Similarly, the design would be modified to satisfy the requirements of LBTH and English Heritage.

Each package should develop alternative methods of participation, wherever possible involving locals in hands-on building work. Projects should look to engage a range of local groups such as pupils from Virginia Primary School, so that the scheme as a whole involves multiple users, multiple desires, and multiple responses; a pluralistic and inclusive approach.

The final design would be submitted to LBTH and English Heritage for approval. During consultation both English Heritage and the LBTH Conservation Department have supported the principle of Arnold Circus as a testing ground for good modern design. Further advice will need to be taken from both to establish whether necessary applications such as listed building consent could be phased.

Cultural Context

- Arnold Circus lies at the north-western edge of the City Fringe Cultural Quarter, which the LBTH Employment and Economy Policy CC 3 identifies as an area to:
 - a) Encourage the development of a mutually supportive range of uses that foster creative industries production, arts and entertainment activities; and
 - b) Seek to enhance the quality of the local environment through the use of contemporary public art works.
- Packages can provide a means for the community to engage with and benefit from the growth of cultural activities around Bethnal Green and Shoreditch
- It can also offer opportunities for local artists to produce commissioned work for the public realm within an extraordinary social context
- The programme should investigate the possibility of collaboration with local art organizations, such as the A Foundation, Whitechapel Gallery or Iniva

Physical Prototyping

- Participation often happens on the terms of the 'expert', rather than the user. By basing participation around tangible full scale physical prototypes rather than drawings, the project aims to reduce the gap between the designer, builders, and users
- Prototyping can offer a sustainable approach that reduces 'wastage' and in fact limits risk by testing possible design options or scenarios of use
- Testing and questioning should be invested with time and funding; the very process can help the community regenerate as much as the final product

Arnold Circus Standards

Although the brief for each package will be open to alternative responses, designers will need to observe a set of standards to ensure the final products are resilient and sustainable:

- Be safe and usable by all
- Be robust and able to withstand vandalism
- Be easily maintained
- Adopt a clear attitude towards dealing with graffiti
- Be replaceable
- Allow installation/construction by unskilled volunteers
- Have a clearly specified lifespan and consider eventual reuse/ recycling/ replacement
- Procure and specify sustainable materials and procedures
- Be unique to Arnold Circus

Potential Questions for Experiments

The following questions and images illustrate initial ideas for possible packages, to be considered at a later date:

- Where could we store things on Arnold Circus?



- How could we make food on Arnold Circus?



- How could we see Arnold Circus at night?



- How could we drink from Arnold Circus?



- Where could we put rubbish on Arnold Circus?



- What could we stand on at Arnold Circus?



- What could go in-between Arnold Circus's flower beds and paths?



- How could we find our way around Arnold Circus?



Recommendation 4.6: Packages

- Source funding to initiate a phased programme of Packages
- Agree on the framework and process via the Arnold Circus Steering Group
- Identify priority projects through ongoing outreach
- FOAC, LBTH & English Heritage to draw up initial briefs and issue invitations for responses

5. Management & Maintenance



5.1 Key issues & opportunities

A well-planned and robust strategy for the management and maintenance of Arnold Circus will be essential to sustain the benefits of the initial investment made in the forthcoming LBTH restoration works.

Without establishing an arrangement that safeguards the upkeep of the gardens over the long-term, Arnold Circus runs the risk of falling back into the state of disrepair that saw it listed on the register of Buildings at Risk.

The ACCS proposes a viable arrangement for the long-term management and maintenance of Arnold Circus that involves:

- A Clear Division of Responsibilities (see 5.4)
- A Group Effort to maintain Arnold Circus (see 5.5)
- New Employment in the Community (see 5.5)
- Monitoring and evaluating current maintenance arrangements (see 5.6)
- Establishing Clear Lines of Communication (see 5.7)
- Commissioning a Conservation Management Plan for Arnold Circus (see 5.8)



5.2 Current Maintenance Arrangements

Existing arrangements for the management and maintenance of Arnold Circus and the surrounding areas are carried out through the following initiatives.

LBTH Grounds Maintenance Contract

Standard council-funded maintenance carried out by contractors Fountain. The contract specifies the following schedule of work:

- Remove litter daily (including weekends and Bank Holidays) across the entire site. Litter is 'anything whatsoever which is thrown down, dropped or otherwise deposited (including dog faeces)'. Broken glass should be given priority. Large items which require two or more people to lift will be treated as fly tipping
- Empty litter bins (8 in total) daily, and at a frequency sufficient to ensure that they do not overflow
- Remove leaves in the Autumn/ Winter across the entire site. Leaves, twigs etc... must be cleared from grass and planted areas with sufficient regularity to prevent damage to the turf or underlying plants
- Weed treatment on all hard surfaces (preferably not using herbicides)
- Cultivated shrub maintenance for all beds. A guideline minimum of 12 visits per year to; remove all fallen flowers, leaves and other debris; cut back shrubs where necessary to prevent obstructions and allow access; prune plants to encourage growth; remove all weeds (preferably not using herbicides); remove dead plants and replace as specified by the Area Park Manager
- Sweep daily (including Bank Holidays) all hard surfaces. Dispose of all arisings at the end of each period.

The full contract is included in Appendix G

FOAC Gardening Subcommittee

Run as part of the 'Environment for all Programme', and consisting of three FOAC volunteers. It employs

Andy Willoughby as a professional gardener for 3.5 hours a week, and runs gardening sessions twice a week with a number of voluntary groups including Headway House, Shoreditch Church Gracechurch congregation and the Boundary Estate. Work carried out includes:

- Horticulture including planting and pruning
- Shrub maintenance
- Weeding of beds
- Removal of leaves on paths and beds
- Removal of litter twice a week
- Removal of dog faeces

BETRA planters programme

Boundary Estate Tenants and Residents Association have installed planters on the interior courtyards of the Boundary Estate

Virginia Primary School in Conjunction with the Environment Trust

Run a planting programme on Arnold Circus

Community Voluntary Service's 'Wonder Garden'

The Wonder Garden on the corner of Rochelle Street, has a coordinated group of volunteers, including a number of women from the Bengali community, who have planted an edible garden.

A Foundation/Rochelle School

Fund a part-time gardener for 4 hours a week, to work on both the Wonder Garden and Arnold Circus

North Brick Lane Residents Association

Care for both Rhoda St Green and Shacklewell St garden, and have developed links with the other community groups working in the area.

Disadvantages of Current Arrangements

- There is an informal agreement between LBTH contractors Fountain and the FOAC Gardening Subcommittee that FOAC will maintain the upper tier of beds, and Fountain will take care of the lower. On the whole this seems to work fairly well. However there are a number of tasks where responsibilities overlap, making the general provision of maintenance inefficient.
- Although the Ground Maintenance Contract specifies that litter removal should include dog faeces, the contractors are currently unable to perform this task as their equipment cannot be used on the steps and slopes of the gardens
- After years of insufficient pruning, some shrubs have gradually become small trees, and are now not classified as needing pruning



Case Study: Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park formed in 1990, and now take full responsibility for the management and maintenance of the park. Kenneth Greenway is employed, by the Friends Group as a full time park warden, looking after the day to day running of the park. Based at the Soanes Centre, a small building near the entrance to the Park, Kenneth is a constant presence, able to deal with visitors enquires and monitor the overall upkeep of the site ensuring:

- Litter is regularly cleared and bins are emptied
- The grassland habitats are regularly maintained and developed
- Access to the park is maintained and improved over time
- The parks wildlife habitats are maintained in a way that encourages Biodiversity

Kenneth also runs a programme of events to encourage the park to be well used and facilitate the maximum benefit to its users.

- Practical Nature Conservation
- Guided History Walk



- Spring Bulb Walk
- Wild Food
- Weekly 'Drop in' volunteer days
- Monthly Committee meetings
- Beasties wildlife watch club

Kenneth first became involved with Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in 1992. In his current role as park warden he has built up an in-depth understanding and thorough knowledge of the site through regular and ongoing involvement.

The Friends of THCP feel that it is the consistency of Kenneth's work that is the key to successful management. Having a park warden brings a quality to the programme of upkeep that is much harder to develop with a contracted workforce. This programme both allows for volunteers to get involved and facilitates an understanding of the space for people who simply want to use the park as an escape from busy city life. In addition to ensuring the Park is kept clean, accessible, and safe, Kenneth works to develop longer term plans to improve its habitat.

5.3 Community & Council

The ACCS aims to clarify arrangements between the council and community for the long term management & maintenance of Arnold Circus, building on the following two recommendations of the CBA Report:

- *'Future management of the gardens should involve the developing of a partnership approach between the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and FOAC who have a vested interest in the gardens.'* CBA Report, 2005, Pg 9
- *'Currently the Housing Estate and Tower Hamlets are two separate entities. [There needs to be] a level of cooperation and communication to ensure long term success of the project in conjunction with management and maintenance of the gardens.'* CBA Report, 2005, Pg 8

The relationship between LBTH, FOAC, the community of the Boundary Estate, and the wider partnership will be clarified using the protocol set out in the Tower Hamlets Compact Working Together: an agreement of shared principles to support effective relationships between statutory and third sector organizations.

Future collaboration should be underpinned by the shared principles of mutual respect, quality services, independence, responsibility and joint working set out in the Compact. This will rely on the third sector maintaining high standards of governance, clear representation and good services, and the statutory sector continuing to give support in terms of funding and involve the third sector in policy development and consultation. Effective communication between both is crucial.

The ACCS aims to develop a working arrangement between the council and community in line with the terms of the compact by:

- Clarifying the existing relationship between LBTH and local groups including FOAC (see 5.4)
- Establishing clear lines of communication on both sides (see 5.7)
- Establishing the Arnold Circus Steering Group as an ongoing forum to develop working relationships between the council and key stakeholders (see 4.3)

5.4 Future division of responsibility

The ACCS team carried out detailed consultation with FOAC to establish what level of involvement the group aims to have in the future management & maintenance of the gardens. The outcomes of the discussion (summarised in Appendix H) are reflected in the recommendations of this chapter. It was agreed that FOAC would seek to consolidate their current role, but could discount taking on further responsibility (such as a Service Level Agreement) for the foreseeable future.

The FOAC Gardening Subcommittee currently undertakes work that involves not only horticulture, but also a proportion of sweeping, leaf and litter clearance in addition to that carried out by the council contractors. The contractors continue to occasionally work on the bed areas, however this can be a problem when it results in the damage of new bulbs and flowers. It emerged from consultation that FOAC would favour focusing their resources on the horticulture of the beds, and rely on the council contractors to carry out their maintenance responsibilities to an acceptable standard.

There are precedents within Tower Hamlets where the responsibilities for maintaining an open space have been simply shared on an 'in kind' basis between two sets of contractors, resulting in overall higher standards of maintenance. At Trinity Square Gardens the City of London carries out a share of maintenance duties including cleansing in return for a higher specification of horticulture by LBTH. A similar rebalancing of responsibilities between the contractors and community at Arnold Circus could result in higher standards without demanding extra resources.

Recommendation 5.4: A Clear Division of Responsibilities

- Establish a clear agreement, for a provisional trial period of 6 months, whereby the council contractors continue to perform all tasks set out in the Ground Maintenance Contract, with the exception of 'cultivated shrub maintenance for all beds'.
- During this period the local community, through the twice weekly volunteering sessions and part-time gardener would assume all horticultural responsibilities set out in the specification under the section 'Shrub Maintenance' for both lower and upper tiers of beds (see Appendix G)
- In this case, the council contractors would be required to continue to remove litter and leaves from both beds, but would have freed-up resources to enable a higher standard of maintenance across the remainder of the site



Case Study: Bonnington Square Gardens

- The Bonnington Square Gardens Association (BSGA) was formed by local residents to lay claim to an area of Lambeth Council owned 'wasteland' resulting from WW2 bomb damage
- As a consequence of the work of the BSGA, a joint Government and Local Council scheme began in 1994 to transform the space into a pleasure garden
- The gardens were designed by committee, including local residents and an architectural firm, as a play space for kids, a sanctuary for adults, and a place of pilgrimage for many more

Outcomes

- The garden is never locked; it remains open to everyone, lit up at night, and maintained exclusively by the residents without any ongoing funding
- The BSGA now work to extend the garden's philosophy into the neighbouring area, by planting trees and creating street gardens in every available space





Case Study: Place Leon Aucoc, Bordeaux

- French Architects Lacaton & Vassal were asked to propose ‘embellishments’ for Place Leon Aucoc, a seemingly unremarkable square in a working class quartier of Bordeaux
- After a period of detailed observation and conversations with local residents, they realised the square was already beautiful because it possessed the ‘the beauty of what is obvious, necessary, adequate’. A radical intervention would not make sense because the square’s quality was its authenticity
- Lacaton & Vassal allocated the entire budget to a simple programme of maintenance – trimming the trees, changing the gravel, and more regular cleaning
- As it happens, just 10% of the budget for the forthcoming restoration works at Arnold Circus could employ a full time park keeper for 2 years. The entire budget could guarantee their benefits for the next 20 years!

Outcomes

- A simple redistribution of the budget for capital works ensured the quality and upkeep of the open space over the long-term

5.5 Resources & Employment

Resources

The ACCS aims to develop a management & maintenance arrangement that can achieve higher standards of maintenance by redistributing resources, without placing extra demands on Council time or funding.

Between the current initiatives and agencies working to maintain Arnold Circus (listed in 5.2) there is already a significant amount of resources being directed into the maintenance of the gardens. In addition, a number of new initiatives and related resources could be directed to contribute to a multi-agency ‘group effort’; combining existing council services and greater input from the third sector. This group could include:

- LBTH Grounds Maintenance Contractors
- LBTH Community Park Rangers
- Local Area Partnership Officers
- Community Voluntary Service
- FOAC Gardening Sub-Committee
- FOAC Volunteers
- FOAC funded part-time Gardener
- A Foundation funded part-time Gardener
- BETRA
- Virginia Primary School
- North Brick Lane Residents Association
- Environment Trust
- LBTH Consultation & Involvement Team
- Proposed Housing Community Support Officer
- Proposed FOAC Community Development Officer

Recommendation 5.5a: A Group Effort to maintain Arnold Circus

- Arnold Circus Steering Group to coordinate emerging resources available for maintaining aspects of the space
- Maximise cooperation and minimise overlaps between various groups
- Advocate greater funding and independence for third sector initiatives
- Prioritise creation of employment in the community

Case Study: My Dream Today: Your Dream Tomorrow

- Muf Architecture/Art was commissioned jointly by Broadway Residents and Tenants and Thurrock Council to develop a community garden on the Broadway Estate in Tilbury
- The brief acknowledged that the garden needed to be a space that accommodated both the diverse and contradictory demands of the estate's residents, and celebrated the unique culture of the space
- Muf's year long research project, included first person narratives young people and focused on the unique role that horses played in the life of the Estate
- Through this process an outcome for the design of the garden was developed that accommodated horse riding, robust play and sitting areas, and under 5s, in a landscape that is both secure and openly available to use

Outcomes

- The garden was developed in stages; a horse arena was completed ahead of the rest of the gardens, the key to the arena was kept by the caretaker of the Broadway Estate
- The youths involved in the project were able to recognise the lack of available play space for the younger children on the estate, and accept that the next stage of the project would see the development of a space that accommodated their needs
- Recognising the integral role of the caretaker in securing the safe and appropriate use of the arena helped develop the eventual employment of a park keeper to help maintain the community garden as a space accessible to all



Employment

Arrangements for future maintenance should be seen as an opportunity to balance voluntary support with creating employment for local people. As far as possible, any new initiatives should prioritise the funding and structuring of new jobs, rooting the maintenance programme in the community over the long-term.

There are currently a number of different groups helping maintain Arnold Circus whose presence theoretically amounts to 20 hours a week (see the table below). Proposed FOAC and Housing Community Development Officers could increase the total to over 50 hours. In practice, perceptions amongst the local community are that the space is often neglected. There was a strong feeling from consultation that the consistent presence of a 'guardian' or park keeper would dramatically improve the safety, familiarity, and usage of the space.

In 2002, the government's Urban Green Spaces Taskforce recommended bringing park rangers and dedicated gardening staff back into parks. CABE Space's Parkforce initiative observes that contracting out different aspects of park management has resulted in loss of sense of

ownership amongst the employed work force. Their 'Parks Need Parkforce' guidance makes the case for the reintroduction of onsite staff who can reconnect with the responsibility of management in a more involved way, as well as addressing the public's immediate concerns about safety and maintenance. This role of a modern park keeper could encompass:

- Ecologist, environmentalist, gardener
- Community warden
- Planning and coordinating events
- Helping with education and even construction during the restoration of the site
- Liaising between council, and community workers/ volunteers
- Strengthening and developing links with local institutions

Given that current arrangements bring together a number of groups and funding streams, it is not feasible to combine all the services within a single role of full-time park keeper. However, by carefully integrating the roles of the proposed housing and FOAC community development officers with existing provision, and pooling resources where possible, it may be feasible to create a significant new job in the community.

Similarly, Arnold Circus alone may not be large enough to warrant a full time park keeper. However a full time role could be feasible if responsibilities span a number of local spaces, such as the 'Shoreditch Green Umbrella' (see 3.6). The positive impact of a park keeper can be due to public perceptions of their presence as much as their actions. Particular importance should be given to their visual presence on site, how they are identifiable, and the form of their accommodation (see 4.6)

The Government's new Working Neighbourhoods Fund may provide an opportunity to source further funding for such a role. The Working Neighbourhoods Fund is an element of the new Area Based Grant; a non-ringfenced general grant providing maximum flexibility to local authorities to design local programmes to meet local needs. The fund provides resources to local authorities to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise in their most deprived areas. It supports innovative, locally tailored approaches on a community wide basis.

Recommendation 5.5b: New Employment in the Community

- Look into the feasibility of coordinating the roles of Housing Community Support Officer, the FOAC Community Development Officer, Gardeners, and possibly Community Park Rangers, to provide a single full-time job in the community
- Reduce the number of different individuals working on the gardens, in return for more consistent presence of individuals for longer, regular periods
- Coordinate presence of maintenance groups not to coincide, to provide a more even distribution of presence on the gardens throughout the week
- Consider the employment of a full time park keeper with responsibilities for a number of local spaces
- Visually emphasize the presence of individuals or groups working to maintain Arnold Circus
- Look into the feasibility of using the Working Neighbourhoods Fund to support the creation of employment

Indicative Maintenance Rota	When (days)	How Long (hours)	Weekly Total (hours)
Current Arrangement			
Fountain (Contractors)	Daily	0.5	3.5
Community Park Rangers	Mon-Fri	0.5	2.5
FOAC Gardener	Thursdays	3.5	3.5
A Foundation Gardener	Thursdays	3.5	3.5
FOAC Volunteers	Thurs & Sun	3.5	7
Possible Additions			
FOAC Community Development Officer	Mon-Fri	4	20
Housing Community Support Officer	Mon-Fri	2	10
Further Community Park Ranger input	Mon-Fri	0.5	2.5
Estimated Total			52.5

Case Study: Discover – The Story Trail

- Discover is a charity established in 1998 to deliver an extensive community and education programme reaching some of the most disadvantaged children in East London
- The Story Trail was opened in 2003 after Discover engaged in a major capital programme, to reclaim a piece of derelict, and contaminated land in Stratford, and turn it into an unique and magical indoor and outdoor playspace for children age 0-11
- Developing the plans for the ‘Story Trail and Gardens’ involved extensive consultation with local children and their carers
- Sculptor Andy Frost and landscape designer Vanessa Barker were employed to work with local school children and volunteers to plan and create the garden
- A secure fence designed by a local artist in collaboration with local kids was built around the perimeter of the garden to enclose the space at night
- The planting scheme was designed to encourage hands on work by local children. Discover has cultivated relationships between local nurseries and schools to develop a programme of gardening work for the children, giving them a sense of responsibility to the space

Outcomes

- The garden has been open since August 2002 and has suffered very little vandalism. There is a strong sense amongst the community that it belongs to them, encouraging care of the space
- To support the ongoing upkeep of the gardens the ‘Discover Children’s Forum’ has been establish to involve children age four to eleven to feed ideas into the management of the discovery gardens



5.6 Monitor & Evaluate the Current Arrangements

Concerns regarding the fulfilment of the current Grounds Maintenance Contract, and problems arising from dog fouling on the Circus were both raised as major issues in consultation.

FOAC have determined to keep a 'maintenance log' to monitor the terms of the current contract, and 'dog log' to track recurring problems with dog owners. It was also suggested that FOAC and the local community raise awareness of dog fouling on Arnold Circus through a local campaign, or work with the council to organize a 'dog fun-day' to inform and educate dog owners.

Recommendation 5.6a: Maintenance Log to be kept by Leila McAlister (Vice Chair) covering:

- How frequently litter is cleared from the site, and bins are emptied
- Standard to which contracted schedule of works is being carried out under fountains maintenance contract (see Grounds Maintenance Contract, in Appendix G)

Recommendation 5.6b: Dog Log to be kept by Clarissa Cairns (Gardening Co-ordinator) covering:

- Incidences of dog fouling
- Incidences of dogs damaging planting/ beds
- Frequencies at which dog mess is cleared

During the monitoring of the current contractual arrangements, FOAC will relay results to the council at suitable intervals through the agreed lines of communication (see 5.7)

5.7 Forms of communication

Communication between the community, particularly FOAC, and the council has been workable in the past but the current arrangements are far from efficient and have a number of disadvantages. Problems with existing lines of communication have been identified as:

- Overlapping. At times a number of emails are sent to the council by members of the community regarding the same matter
- Indirect. Certain members of the council and community have established productive correspondences. However, as a whole, it remains unclear for both sides which individuals should be contacted regarding which issues
- Inconsistent. Emails or phone calls regarding one particular issue (such as littering) are sometimes made by various individuals. This makes responses difficult to coordinate
- Unrecorded. Phone calls to /from the council have the disadvantage of being unrecorded and cannot be copied/shared/traced

Recommendation 5.7: Establish Clear Lines of Communication

- Communications to the council about a specific issue i.e. dog fouling should come consistently from the agreed FOAC representative, and as far as possible relate issues to the terms of the current maintenance contract
- Correspondence from the Community to LBTH regarding maintenance should be directed to one of the following individuals, (all correspondence to be in writing or by email):

Trees

- Peter Thorogood (Tree Officer)
peter.thorogood@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Terry Pulham (Tree Officer)
Terry.Pulham@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Dogs/Animals

- Dawn Sammons (Head Animal Warden)
Dawn.Sammons@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Maintenance

- Raph. O'Keefe (Area Parks Officer)
raph.o'keefe@towerhamlets.gov.uk

- Keith Woodard (Area Parks Officer)
keith.woodard@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Ron Cain (Area Parks Officer)
ron.cain@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Ola Rug (Senior Community Park Ranger)
arug@wildlondon.org.uk

Physical Damage (including vandalism)

- Ros Brewer (Landscape Development Manager)
rosalind.brewer@towerhamlets.gov.uk

All correspondence from LBTH to FOAC should be copied to all three of the following, on all issues covered:

- Leila McAlister (Vice Chair)
breshka@easynet.co.uk
- Clarissa Cairns (Gardening Co-ordinator)
cjcairns@hotmail.co.uk
- Naseem Khan (Chair)
naseem@xanadu5.demon.co.uk



5.8 Conservation Management Plan

The Arnold Circus Steering Group have agreed that a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) will be essential to govern the long term management of the space and support applications for funding.

'A conservation Plan sets out why a place is significant and how that significance will be retained in any future use, alteration, development or management.' English Heritage, Conservation Plans in Action, 1999, Pg xxiv

The ACCS addresses many of the issues relevant to the production of a CMP, and should be taken as a key reference for the document. However, it is important that the document is put together in conjunction with, or shortly after, the forthcoming LBTH restoration works, so that proper provision can be made for the maintenance of specific built elements and materials.

The CMP should include a Maintenance Handbook identifying frequencies for aspects of maintenance including repainting, resurfacing, tree surgery etc... and listing specifications of original materials and those used in the restoration works. To facilitate involvement of the local community the Maintenance Handbook should be clearly comprehensible and widely available, possibly in digital format via the FOAC or LBTH website.

Similarly, the design of the restoration works and any new elements should carefully consider how the infrastructure of the Circus will be maintained in the long term. As far as possible, designs should capitalise on the potential for community/ volunteer maintenance. For example, installations can be specified with a surface treatment that allows graffiti to be removed with soap and water (as at Mile End Park), rather than relying on specialist equipment.

Recommendation 5.8: Commission a Conservation Management Plan for Arnold Circus

- Develop a brief based on the findings of the ACCS, to be agreed amongst all stakeholders
- Source funding for the production of the plan and commission consultants
- Include a simple and accessible Maintenance Handbook that relates to the day to day workings of the site
- Use Steering Group as a forum to monitor the ongoing evolution and implementation of the CMP
- Structure the CMP so that it can be updated over time as the factors effecting the site change

The following documents should form key reference material:

- CABI Space - A guide to producing park and green space management plans, 2004
- Heritage Lottery Fund, Conservation Management Plans
- English Heritage, Conservation Plans in Action, 1999

6. Summary of Recommendations

6.1 Schedule of Recommendations

Reference	Recommendation	Responsibility	Indicative Description	Timing	Funding
Chapter 3.	Visions for the Future of Arnold Circus				
3.4	The Third Tier	LBTH/TfL	Remodel the surrounding streetscape to provide an accessible hardscaped extension of public space at street level	Long Term	TfL?
3.5	Traffic Management	LBTH/TfL	Develop a Traffic Management Strategy to address buses, parking, and feasibility of temporary pedestrianisation	Med-Long Term	TfL?
3.6	Wider Area Strategy	FOAC/SGU	Audit of local public space, and strategy to pool resources and offer complementary uses	Med-Long Term	DfL?
3.7	Long-Term Landscaping	LBTH/FOAC	Agreement between council and community over continuing gardening after the restoration works	Short Term	n/a
3.8	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	LBTH	Consideration of SUDs	Short-Med Term	S106?
Chapter 4.	Participation and Ownership				
4.3	Arnold Circus Steering Group	Steering group	Continue to meet bi-monthly throughout the duration of the forthcoming LBTH restoration works	Ongoing	n/a
4.4a	The Site as a Place of Communication	FOAC/LBTH	A scheduled programme of events related to the works to increase perceptions of accessibility	Short-Med Term	LBTH?
4.4b	The Site as a Place of Learning	FOAC/LBTH	Use the restoration works as an opportunity to encourage child and adult learning	Short-Med Term	LBTH?
4.4c	Next Steps for a Framework for Participation	LBTH/FOAC	Plan a detailed programme of possible events surrounding the construction works in discussion with LBTH	Short Term	LBTH?
4.5	Predictive Infrastructures	LBTH	Intelligent planning to enable the delivery of incremental change within a coherent physical structure	Short Term	S106
4.6	Packages: Phased program of independent sub-projects	FOAC	A phased programme of self-sufficient, independently funded commissions developed through community participation	Med-Long Term	Various
Chapter 5.	Management and Maintenance				
5.4	Future Division of Responsibility	LBTH/FOAC	Unambiguous redistribution of responsibility for more efficient use of resources	Medium Term	n/a
5.5a	A Group Effort to Maintain Arnold Circus	Steering Group	Practical coordination of various staff, volunteers and agencies who maintain Arnold Circus	Ongoing	n/a
5.5b	New Employment in the Community	LBTH/FOAC	Root the upkeep of the space in the community by providing new employment for local people	Long Term	WNF?
5.6	Monitor and Evaluate the Current Maintenance Arrangements	FOAC	Log frequency and quality of existing maintenance provision	Short-Med Term	n/a
5.7	Forms of Communication	Steering Group	Establish clear lines of communication between all parties	Ongoing	n/a
5.8	Conservation Management Plan	LBTH	Commission a Conservation Management Plan for Arnold Circus including an accessible Maintenance Handbook	Medium Term	LBTH?

Appendix A - Assessment of Historical Character and Statement of Significance

Taken from the Chris Blandford Associates feasibility study, 2005

1. Introduction

An understanding of the historical development of the Boundary Gardens site and its significance is vital in order to fully appreciate the asset currently the focus of a feasibility study exploring the question of its restoration and upgrading. The following is an analysis of the character of the site and its value and is based on site visits, research in local and regional libraries and archives and in consultation with English Heritage.

2. Description Of Site

Location

The Boundary Gardens, which cover just 0.25 hectares in area, are the centrepiece of what is widely acknowledged as a unique experiment in late 19th century social housing design and, as a result, are also at the heart of the Boundary Street Conservation Area. Delineated by Arnold Circus, the Gardens are the focus of a radial street plan, providing a hub at which the seven main streets of the Estate meet. Blocks of housing follow the curve of Arnold Circus, their windows providing an outlook to the small open space at the heart of this model housing scheme.

General Description

Although relatively small in area, the Gardens occupy the most prominent site on the Estate and their visibility is strengthened by their design. Laid out over a two-tiered mount, the Gardens rise above the street to be a level height with the second-storey of the surrounding buildings. Contemporary plans illustrate the original form of the Gardens which can still be seen today: three concentric rings of alternating planting and terrace rising up to a plateau at the summit of the mount upon which is set a bandstand (see figure x.1 above).

Access and Entrances

Access to the Gardens is problematic in that they now sit at the centre of a fairly busy traffic island. There are no crossing points to the Gardens and the immediate area around the site boundary is given over to parking bays. The pathway that surrounds the garden is narrow and in poor repair and pedestrian barriers limit the accessibility to the site's entrance points. There are four main entrances to the Gardens which are aligned with four of the seven main streets leading off from Arnold Circus, almost corresponding to the cardinal points and providing breaks in the iron railings that encircle the gardens. Steps lead up from the street at all four points, taking the visitor up under the iron overthrows, onto the first perambulatory terrace. A second flight leads up to the plateau and bandstand.

Folding iron scissor gates once locked off the entrances but these only survive in part and in poor condition.

Designations

The Gardens are listed on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England at Grade II and the bandstand, railings and overthrows are all listed structures, also at Grade II. The Bandstand and railings are currently a fairly high priority on English Heritage's Building at Risk Register because of vandalism and decay of the bandstand and corrosion of the iron railings. The Gardens are also within the Boundary Street Conservation Area and this designation confers a level of protection to the Trees within the Gardens.

3. Historical Development

Prior to the construction of the Boundary Street Estate, the area on which it now stands was the site of the Old Nichol, a terrible slum characterised by cramped, low quality and aged housing, an extremely dense population, high mortality rates, and appalling sanitary conditions. In 1890, the newly formed London County Council (LCC) proposed that the slum be cleared to make way for a new housing scheme that could offer people of the working classes a much improved quality of life.

The new scheme was to be delivered by the LCC's Housing of the Working Classes Branch and would be led by the young, empathetic architect Owen Fleming who was bursting with social ideals and dedicated to the cause of improving conditions for the people of the East End of London. An initial design for the new housing, based on a more standard grid pattern of streets with buildings arranged in parallel rows, was abandoned early on in the development of the scheme and the radial street plan with integrated architecture and a central open space was instead adopted.

Here, really for the first time, was a design for working class housing that was based on a radial street plan with the architecture designed for and around it rather than the plan and open spaces being determined by building design. The LCC itself regarded the project 'as an experiment'. Broad and leafy streets and a central garden were obviously vital elements of the scheme from the very beginning and the nineteen blocks of housing, located around the Circus and along each of the Estate's main streets, fitted around this, the architecture integrated closely with the other elements of the design. The Gardens were to have a clear role: to unify the scheme visually, physically and culturally, making it a community rather than a collection of individual buildings, in much the same way as the squares of Georgian London were intended to do.

The aim was that the newly-accommodated community would be largely self-serving with schools, shops and a laundry on site. The creation of the Gardens complemented this, providing a green lung in what had previously been a cramped and squalid place as well as a space for relaxation, recreation and

the social activities of the Estate's inhabitants. It strengthened the overall intention to provide a higher quality of life, as well as higher quality design, for the people of the Boundary Estate. Fleming felt very strongly about the inclusion of a garden in the scheme, imagining courting couples wondering around it on a summer's evening while music drifted from the bandstand, although allegedly had to do battle in order to ensure that the open space was provided for and constructed.

Minutes of a meeting of the LCC's Housing of the Working Classes Committee (HWCC) in July 1896 record a discussion of the development of the Gardens and state that the architects of the scheme proposed that 'elevated terraces should be formed upon this open space, and that they should be made into a garden'. It became 'necessary to carry out the work of shaping and consolidating the terraces. The cost of the necessary work, including the layout of the garden as estimated by the Architect, is £1,000.' It is known that the mount was already formed at this point, having been constructed from the material excavated from digging the foundations of the surrounding housing blocks.

As stated above, it is evident that the Gardens were intended to be the focus of the scheme and further minutes of the LCC record that the open space complemented the wide avenues that were features of the overall design. Together, the streets and garden tied the design together, an 'advantage to the health of the whole neighbourhood' and the HWCC was advised 'to make the most of this open central space, which would practically be visible from all points'. Later, in 1897, the minutes record that 'the open space will be directly in view from the ends of the radiating streets, and being visible from almost every block of dwellings in the area, the shrubs on the elevated terraces will afford a pleasant relief in the tenant's outlook.'

By November 1896, the Chief Officer of the Parks Department had been instructed to form the layout of the gardens upon the mount according to plans submitted by the architect. The arrangement consisted of raised terraces planted with ornamental beds of shrubs and grass, and approached from the pavement by means of flights of steps.' Photographic evidence from the 1900s shows that the outer landscape ring was planted with trees and grass while the inner was used for formal planting with beds arranged geometrically and separated from each other and the pathways by ivy. Instructions were also given for the 'provision of a wrought iron railing and gates to surround the open space.' The pathways around the Gardens were to be constructed in hard-core and gravel and garden seats would be placed around their perimeter.

The development of the Gardens was well underway by the late 1890s, but the bandstand, designed to be a further visual focus within the gardens, was finally constructed much later and appears to have been a contentious issue. In October 1897, tenders were received 'for the erection of a bandstand' and later that month Messrs Yerbury's estimate was accepted. Despite this, the bandstand did not get built. The 1900 plan of the Estate does not depict it and photographs from the 1900s

show that while low iron railings around the bandstand site had been erected and deckchairs occupied the space within, no progress had been made on its construction.

Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee (POSC) record that by early 1897 the laying out of the Gardens was reaching completion and that the HWCC had asked for the Gardens to be formally transferred into its care so that arrangements could be made for their maintenance. They also record that in November 1897, the HWCC had ‘accepted an offer from Mr G T Pense-Duncombe of £60 for the erection of a fountain in the Boundary-Street-Garden’ and asked the POSC for their views ‘upon the proposal to erect a band-stand upon the summit of the mound...and that the HWCC do not consider the summit of the mound would be a suitable place for the erection of a bandstand.’ Perhaps this goes some way to explaining the delay in the building of the bandstand and why the architect had to fight for its construction.

It wasn’t until 1909 that the issue of the bandstand came up once again. In April of that year, the POSC minutes record that ‘At present a temporary platform is used as a bandstand in the Boundary-Street Garden, Bethnal Green, but, after giving the matter very careful consideration and inspecting the garden, we think it desirable that a bandstand shelter should be provided, which, in addition to providing suitable accommodation for the bands, would also afford shelter for the public, especially children, who use the garden.’ Tenders for its construction were invited once more and in May 1909, Mr Pike of Ponders End was awarded the work. By December 1909, preparations were being made to tile the roof and it seems likely that the bandstand was completed in 1910. The earliest photographs that show the bandstand in place date to 1912.

The 20th century history of the Gardens is less precise. It appears that the gravel pathways were tarred over in 1912 and minutes of the POSC record general maintenance and the employment of staff to care for the Gardens throughout the early part of the 20th century. Clearly, the tarring of the pathways was part of an economy drive as prior to this date, year on year, expenditure was sanctioned for additional gravel to patch up the paths. The Bandstand remained a popular feature well into the 20th century and one source records that a brass band played there on Tuesday evenings during the summer: ‘Everyone called it the bandstand though the street plate said Arnold’s Circus. Structurally it was like a giant wedding cake, with two levels of promenade linked by several flights of stone steps. The bandstand itself was perched on top and had a roof like an oriental sunshade. An hour before the performance started every seat was taken, and the crackle of peanuts combined with the shrill screams of kids, flowed through the throng like a stampede of wild buffalo.’

This atmospheric account describes a period of different cultural patterns and social activities that are much different to those of the 21st century. In the early 1900s, a budget was set aside by the LCC for bands in public spaces, a demonstration of their importance in society. As time moved on, this form of entertainment died away and eventually, the Boundary

Gardens bandstand became redundant. Photographs of the 1960s and 70s show the bandstand and the gardens as a whole in good condition but by the 1980s, the bandstand had fallen into disrepair and now suffers badly from vandalism, functioning as hostile space, a far cry from its original purpose as the heart of the community’s social life.

Today, the Gardens are suffering. Mature trees and shrubs block out light and no longer promote the feelings of well-being as originally intended. Other planting is patchy or overgrown. The ironwork around the Gardens is corroded, the gates have largely disappeared, as have the once plentiful benches, and the bandstand is now a building at risk.

4. Statement of Significance

An understanding of the cultural significance of the site has been developed through an exploration of its history and character and the values associated with these elements.

Overall Significance

The importance of the Boundary Estate as a deliberate and experimental break from the norm of Victorian working class housing to a well planned and integrated site with people as a community at the heart of its design has been acknowledged by its Conservation Area status. The Gardens, as the centrepiece of the scheme, unify the separate elements of street, building, landscape and planting to create a focus to which the architecture, street layout and the Estate’s inhabitants were directed.

The ready visibility of the Gardens and the Boundary Estate expresses not simply a desire to create a space for living for the inhabitants but to also demonstrate an outward-looking approach to the wider community. The slum that was cleared to make way for the new housing was insular, a frightening place day and night that no one should want to enter for fear of never leaving. The new radial street plan drew the eye into the Estate from the various surrounding roads, inviting people in, and the Gardens were at its heart.

It is understandable that the architect leading the scheme fought for the provision of this open space and also the bandstand. This strong desire for the approval of his design on one level and for the benefits the Gardens and bandstand would bring to the inhabitants of the estate on another should be respected.

Despite vandalism, under-use, and lack of maintenance, the Gardens have survived remarkably well in form and much of its historical character, albeit in need of some restorative work, has been retained. Its role as a physical and visual unifier has continued although its role as a community facility has been undermined by safety concerns and its run-down appearance.

Architectural Significance

The one built structure within the Gardens is the bandstand,

although the ironwork is also a key architectural feature. All are Grade II features and as such are recognised as being of national importance. The bandstand is a humble structure, fairly typical of its ‘Arts and Crafts’ origins and relates well to the housing blocks that surround the Circus and line the radiating streets. Despite redundancy and consequent vandalism, its form survives, helping to maintain its function of being the central focus within the garden, which in itself is the focus of the Estate. Redundancy is clearly an issue and it is suggested that a change of use is identified in order to revive this small building and bring it back into community life.

The iron railings, gates and overthrows are also integral features of the overall design, both protecting the gardens and embellishing them. The high quality of the ironwork reflects the significance attributed to the gardens and to the importance of quality of design, a rule seen elsewhere across the Estate.

The architect of the Gardens, Owen Fleming, not only embodied various significant social ideas but was also the author of a number of works, many executed under the auspices of the LCC. Heavily influenced by social philosophies of William Morris and the architecture of Philip Webb, the Boundary Estate was his first foray into social housing on behalf of the LCC and the precursor to other similar projects such as the Millbank Estate, Westminster.

Landscape and Ecological Significance

The design of the landscape is highly unusual spatially and in form. Open spaces in the centre of or related to housing schemes were rarely designed to have such physical prominence over their surroundings. It is interesting that the mound, that was later sculpted into two tiers, was constructed using the excavation material from the foundations of the surrounding housing blocks as not only is it a practical explanation for the form of the Gardens but also provides a firm historic and physical link between the Gardens and the neighbouring buildings.

The original planting scheme has largely disappeared under the maturity of the vegetation and a general lack of maintenance. The neat Victorian beds have disappeared, although some ivy remains, to be replaced with patchy planting and overgrown shrubs. Most of the original Plane trees survive, most notably on the plateau, but these are mature and have the effect of blocking out light to the surrounding housing and prohibiting the visual link into the centre of the garden. This lack of visibility, exacerbated by overgrown shrubs and trees on the lower level, has both reduced the attraction of the Gardens to potential users and increased the attraction for anti-social visitors. However, the historic character of the Gardens is partly defined by its planting and the trees within its confines should be protected. As the original beds have largely disappeared, there is scope to recreate something akin to the Victorian model or to develop some creative planting more in line with the taste and desires of the local community.

Appendix B - Policy Framework

National policy directly relating to public open space is addressed by the Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17 on Planning, Sport and Recreation, and the Communities and Local Government's report Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2002). The Communities and Local Government action plan for shared community empowerment, Community Empowerment: Building on success (CLG, 2007), is also taken as an important consideration for the Arnold Circus Conservation Strategy.

All regional government policy directly concerning the site falls under the overarching amended London Plan (GLA, 2004). A series of GLA documents further expands policies outlined in the London Plan, most notably the Mayor's 100 Public Spaces Programme (GLA, 2002-). More detailed strategic guidance is given in Supplementary Planning Guidance documents including the draft East London Green Grid Framework (GLA, 2006) and Draft Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation (GLA 2006).

Arnold Circus falls within the Sub Regional Development Framework for East London (GLA, 2006): a non-statutory document designed to bridge between the broad policy of the London Plan and local implementation in each Borough. Within this sub region two separate 'Opportunity Areas' identified in the London Plan (Bishopsgate/Shoreditch and Whitechapel/Aldgate) have been grouped together with the wider eastern city fringe and treated as a single Opportunity Area covered by a non-statutory planning document: the draft City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework (GLA, 2006).

Although a small section of the Boundary Estate falls within the London borough of Hackney, Arnold Circus and the majority of the estate is covered by the emerging London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework (LBTH, 2006) which comprises a series of Local Development Documents including Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. The City Fringe Area Action Plan (LBTH, 2006) is a Development Plan Document that interprets the Core Strategy of the borough and applies it to the City Fringe.

Non-statutory guidance considered by the ACCS includes English Heritage publications Easy Access to Historic Landscapes (EH, 2005), External Lighting for Historic Buildings (EH, 2007), Conservation Plans in Action (EH, 1999) and Streets for All – A London Streetscape Manual. CABE Space documents consulted include, Decent Parks? Decent Behaviour?, Is the Grass Greener...?, It's Our Space and Parks Needs Parkforce (supported by the English Heritage leaflet The Park Keeper).

Appendix C - Policy & Guidance Consulted

National

- Communities Local Government/ODPM
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation 2006
 - Living Places Cleaner Greener Safer 2002
 - Living Places Caring for Quality 2004
 - The Action Plan for Community Empowerment 2007

DTLR

- Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Green Spaces May 2002

Regional

Greater London Authority

- The London Plan 2004
- SRDF East London 2006
- City Fringe Opportunity Area Framework 2006
- East London Green Grid Framework 2007
- Connecting with London's Nature: The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy 2002
- Play and Informal Recreation SPG 2006

Design for London

- 100 Public Spaces Programme
- Making Space for Londoners 2002

Local

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

- LDF Core Strategy 2006
- LDF City Fringe AAP 2006
- LDF Open Space Strategy 2006
- LDF Creative & Cultural Industries 2006
- LDF Core Strategy, 2006
- LDF Submissions Document Core Evidence Base Character Area Assessment 2006
- LDF Submissions Document Core Evidence LDF Central Area Action Plan 2007
- Community Plan, 2007-8
- Street Design Guide 2002

London Borough of Hackney

- LDF South Shoreditch AAP 2006

Chris Blanford Associates

- Boundary Gardens Feasibility Report 2005
- Initial Condition Report 2005
- Historical Assessment 2005

Guidance

English Heritage

- External Lighting for Historic Buildings 2007
- Easy Access to Historic Landscapes 2005

The Gardens are also a haven for local London wildlife in an area widely characterised by a dense urban fabric. This element of the Gardens should be respected as it has the potential to contribute to the Gardens recovery.

Community and Social Significance

The Gardens were once a focus of community life in the Boundary Estate and this was the concept that drove their delivery. Historically, the Gardens were a centre for social and recreational activities but this use has declined, as increasingly over the years, the Gardens have become a grim and depressing place for the local community. The space is badly lit and maintained and there is no incentive for local people to take pride and care for this local facility.

The restoration of the Gardens could be a real opportunity to mobilise and connect the community and to once again use this space as it was originally intended.

Educational Significance

There is great potential to use the Gardens as part of an education/interpretation programme(s). There are a number of themes that are of interest such as the Victorian and Edwardian philanthropic ideals behind the development of the Boundary Estate, the conditions of the Old Nichol Slum, the site upon which the Gardens and the Estate are built, and other themes such as gardens and gardening or wildlife.

Conclusion

The various elements that contribute to the character of the Gardens, and therefore to the wider area, are all significant in their own right. However, it is the combined roles of each within the overall design concept that is of the greatest value and together they form a highly significant landscape within an important area of urban design. There is scope for change and evolution particularly in regard to areas of planting and also perhaps in the re-use of the bandstand but the overriding aim should be to reunite the Gardens with the surrounding streetscape and community.

5. Further Research Required

Minutes of the HWCC from July 1897 record that plans, specifications and quantities for the development of the Gardens were submitted to the Committee but it has not been possible to locate this information. Clearly, the discovery of the material that was submitted in 1897 would be invaluable in informing our knowledge of the original design.

6. Bibliography

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- Capital Spaces 2005
- Climate Change and the Historic Environment
- Streets for All – A London Streetscape Manual 2000
- Conservation Plans in Action: Proceedings of the Oxford Conference 1999

CABE

- Is the Grass Greener? 2004
- Decent Parks Decent Behaviour 2005
- Parks need Parkforce 2005
- Paying for Parks? 2006
- Living with Risk 2007
- It's Our Space 2007
- Paying for Parks? 2006
- A guide to producing park and Green Space Management Plans 2004

Rowntree Foundation

- Community Participation Who Benefits? 2006

Heritage Lottery Fund

- Conservation Management Plans helping your application 2004

Countryside Agency

- Preparing a Heritage Management Plan 2005

Bisgrove and Hadley

- Gardening in the Global Greenhouse

London Biodiversity Partnership

- London Biodiversity Action Plan ()

Appendix D - ACCS Survey Methodology

It was agreed that for the survey to make a positive contribution to understanding the future role of Arnold Circus in the eyes of the community, it should both inform about the plans for a period of significant change, and take the first steps towards recording local visions for a future Arnold Circus, in a creative and engaging way.

To promote creative consultation:

The LBTH Consultation & Involvement team will be conducting community consultation during the lead up to the restoration of Arnold Circus as a matter of course. The ACCS survey was carefully planned to avoid pre-empting the forthcoming LBTH consultation exercise, or duplicating work done to date. The role of the ACCS survey was therefore:

- To bridge the gap between existing consultation work of key Local stakeholders and LBTH
- To start to unite the community by encouraging engagement in the process of determining change

To publicise the pending restoration works:

1500 flyers to inform of the pending restoration works and collect opinions were distributed to the local community:

- Within the March 10 edition of East End Life, delivered to 1,042 residences in the primary and secondary consultation areas
- Distributed in a cascading system via key local community centres and local businesses
- Distributed by hand from the community-run launderette on Calvert Avenue

To collect qualitative data:

Participants in the survey were invited to respond to a simple and inviting question; 'What's the Time Arnold Circus?' by drawing hands on a clock face to show their priorities for the future Arnold Circus.

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette was chosen as the collection point, because of its proximity to Arnold Circus, and its active role within the local community.

Over the duration of the survey a large 'clock', replicating the image on the flyer was displayed in the window of the laundrette, adding an interactive dimension to the survey. The clock was used by people living and working locally to physically demonstrate a time on the clock that best represented to their vision for the future of Arnold Circus.

Designing the Survey

What Time is it Arnold Circus? follows on from the FOAC outreach programme, inviting the community to communicate their changing relationship to Arnold Circus (see 4.2)

The themes of time, past, present, and future and the relevance of history to the potential future of Arnold Circus were

incorporated in the question "What's the Time Arnold Circus?" A clock face was used as a simple way of presenting a set of questions about the future of Arnold Circus in a visual, and playful manner. The survey addressed four key categories, identified through a process of:

- Interpreting data from existing consultation
- Meetings with key stakeholders
- Steering Group consultation and reviews
- Team brainstorming and design workshops

The four categories of use agreed upon were:

- Active
- Cultural
- Environmental
- Passive

Each of these categories was represented by three broad questions about possible ways of using Arnold Circus.

Choosing the Questions

Questions on the flyer needed to be specific enough to capture people's imaginations, but be open enough to cover the widest possible spectrum of uses. The questions were designed to be easily accessible, with the entire survey requiring just two strokes of a pen to complete. One question on the clock was left blank, to invite individual suggestions.

As the survey was conceived as the initial step of the forthcoming consultation for the restoration works, the questions were intended to gauge general feeling rather than gather detailed responses. The following questions were agreed upon for each category:

Active

- Time for our hobbies?
- Time to play?
- Time for.....?

Cultural

- Time for chatting?
- Time for performance?
- Time for a lunch break?

Environmental

- Time for more maintenance?
- Time for nature?
- Time for easier access?

Passive

- Time to sit and relax?
- Time for quiet?
- Time to feel safe?

Appendix E - ACCS Survey Long List of Questions

Active

Play

- Merrygoround
- Kids area
- Playground
- Play

Making and growing food

- Pizza oven
- Herb garden
- Kitchen
- Cooking
- Eating
- Growing things you can eat

Games

- Chess competitions
- Carrom
- Playing fixed board games
- Bingo

Community events

- Time for music
- Time to have more events
- Tea dance
- Time for a party
- Fireworks
- Bonfire
- Carnival
- Baishaki Mela

Sports/Exercise

- Boules
- Ball games
- Exercise classes
- Martial arts
- Mini Olympics
- Boxing
- Swimming/paddling
- Ice Skating
- Rollerskating/rollerdisco
- Trampolining

Passive

Reflection/Good old days

- Time for the good old times
- Memories/History
- Remembering
- A museum/displaying the past
- Excavations/archaeology
- Pet cemetery
- Tea dance/ceremony
- Time to reflect

Quietness/Being alone

- Quiet
- Reading
- Read the paper

- Being alone

Relax/Sitting

- Sit down/Benches
- Tables
- Sunbathing/Sunbeds
- Lie down

Doing nothing/slowing down/getting away

- Time to do nothing
- Leave it alone
- Time to slow down
- It as it is

Greenness/Nature

- Jungle
- Being hidden/hiding
- Gardening
- Make it greener
- Make it into a hill
- Allotments
- Pond/Water
- Fountain

Wildlife

- Biodiversity
- Watching wildlife
- Butterfly house
- Bugs/Insect Zoo
- Bird Hide
- Bird boxes
- Aviary
- Time to walk the dog

Cultural

Performance

- Theatre/plays
- Carnival
- Music
- Poetry readings
- Circus
- Circus practice rehearsals
- Amphitheatre/temporary seating
- Puppet shows

Hobbies

- Knitting/crochet
- Fishing
- Model railway

Sharing/consuming food

- Tea (rooms)
- Coffee
- Tuck shop
- Barbecue
- Time for a picnic

Learning/sharing ideas

- Speakers corner
- Smokers corner

- Speak to my neighbours
- Public noticeboard
- Outdoor school classroom
- Get local schools involved
- Community classes/learning/knowledge exchange
- Time for meeting people

Arts/exhibition/sculpture

- Exhibitions
- Sculpture park
- Commission artworks

Exchange

- Gambling
- Recycling
- Freecycling
- Honesty box
- Weekly Market
- Flea market

Environmental

Accessibility

- Remove boundaries
- Close road
- Make it more accessible
- To feel like I could go there whenever I want to
- Feel welcome
- Time to get rid of the traffic
- Remove fence

Safety/security

- Lighting/some lights
- Make it safer
- Lock it up at night
- More policing
- Lighting

Facilities

- Toolshed
- Gardenshed
- Storage
- Toilet
- Lock-ups
- Shelter/cover from the rain
- A pavilion
- Observatory/telescope

Self-sufficiency/sustainability

- Climate change
- Windmills
- Self-sufficiency
- Sustainability
- Composting/dog bog

Employment/community

- A guardian/gardener
- Employment
- Post office

Appendix F - ACCS Survey Results and Evaluation

Time for Performance15%

The history of Arnold Circus records the time when the Bandstand was used regularly, for brass band concerts as its heyday when the community met regularly on Arnold Circus to enjoy a performance, and the Circus was well maintained to facilitate this use. And the time when brass band concerts were no longer in fashion, is marked as the beginning of Arnold Circus period of neglect and decline.

In a contemporary context, the programme of events on Arnold Circus has illustrated a link between gathering the community for events on the circus and pride in its upkeep. In the lead up to each event volunteers have cleaned and made the gardens safe for the community to meet.

The relationship between sustaining maintenance and a programme of performance should be explored to determine:

- What is the capacity for performances?
- At what frequencies?
- What improvements to the circus could facilitate its use as a venue for performance?

Time to Sit and Relax14%

‘Sitting and relaxing’ could imply a quiet time, time spent alone, time with friends, or time being entertained.

The conditions under which people feel most inclined to ‘sit and relax’ should be explored. What is it that determines when, how, and with whom you sit and relax?

- What is available to sit on – a seat or the ground?
- The quality of the surrounding environment –is it clean or badly maintained?
- A sense of wellbeing – how safe do you feel?

Time for Nature14%

Space for nature within the city, and in particular the city fringe, is scarce and there is an understandable priority to conserve these natural habitats for their own sake.

Nature also invites human interaction; gardening is one of the key activities that involves the community in the care of Arnold Circus. Similarly biodiversity and bug-life has been an important way of engaging schoolchildren with the space.

The current state of the gardens maintain a dual position; reflecting the history of the Victorian plans, and having not been maintained, now also house a different sort of nature. As a result nature conservation will be a balance between leaving alone - allowing to flourish, and hands on intervention and care.

Time for more Maintenance8%

Understanding the role of Maintenance over the long term is a key objective of the ACCS report. Maintenance in this context is not understood as an end in itself, but a process of sustained involvement and the broadening of a sense of care within the community.

The role of Maintenance is to facilitate possibilities by ensuring a user orientated space that is safe and clean.

Time to Play7%

In talks with local Bengali women one message comes out over and over - they would use Arnold Circus only if they could come and sit there while their children have things to do. Naseem Khan, Chair of FOAC

In addressing the needs of children and young people, access is broadened to include the whole family

Making Arnold Circus into a ‘Playable Space’ should be seen as an opportunity to explore its potential to meet the multiple needs of the community. Making space playable also relies on a space that feels safe, has easy access, and is well maintained.

By exploring opportunities for informal play as much as planned play provision, improving access for young people shouldn’t be seen as conflicting with other demands on open space.

Time to Feel Safe7%

Time to feel safe, like ‘Time for more maintenance’ is understood in this context not as an end in itself but as a means of facilitating the full potential for Arnold Circus to contribute to the long term sustainability of its surroundings and the well being of its community.

Tiesdell and Oc (1998) suggest that making public space safer (or making it feel safer) is a necessary precondition for its revitalisation. They argue that concerns for city centre safety have led to planning and urban design responses that impinge upon the ideals of public space that can make it oppressive, socially divisive, and exclusive. These approaches are characterised by segregation in the public realm and explicit policing and CCTV.

Improvements in the perception of safety in Arnold Circus may be able to be achieved by lighter, social measures, such as more regularly and popular use of the space. Equally, improvements in the physical condition of the gardens, including painting out graffiti and pruning dense foliage may have a significant effect.

Time for a Lunch Break5%

The potential for daytime use of Arnold Circus is affected by the changes to the demographic of the working population in the area. The emergence of a number of SME’s in close proximity to Arnold Circus brings more non-residents into the area during working hours. However there is no reason for these day-time uses to conflict with its position within the predominantly residential area of the Boundary estate.

Time for a lunch break, is subject to the same concerns as:

- Time to sit and relax
- Time to feel safe
- Time for more maintenance
- Time for quiet

For the influx of day time users to contribute Positively to the upkeep of the circus, provisions that will encourage thoughtful use of the space could include:

- Litter Bins
- Signage
- Seating
- Access

Time for quiet4%

A small percentage of people identified Arnold Circus as a place for a ‘quiet time’, whereas ‘time to sit and relax’ ranked amongst the most popular choices.

Previous consultation with residence on the Estate has however indicated that the Arnold Circus is valued as a space that is seen and not heard. A common use of Arnold Circus seems to be one of quiet contemplation, as a visual space within the buildings of the Boundary Estate.

Residents who prefer the gardens to remain ornamental and peaceful should be encouraged to understand that a balance of active uses such as play can help discourage vandalism and anti-social behaviour - therefore safeguarding the quality of the gardens as a sanctuary within the Boundary Estate.

Time for chatting4%

Owen Fleming designed Arnold Circus at the centre of the Boundary estate to provide a focus, and unite the community. Its intended role at the centre of the community also provides an outward looking face to the area of the ‘Old Nichol’ that had previously been perceived as inward looking and uninviting place.

Arnold Circus is both a place to meet and talk, and a place to talk about. The need to keep talking on and around Arnold Circus is subject to finding ways to keep all the divergent interests expressed and central to the concerns of an ongoing consultation strategy

- Notice boards
- Signage
- Public meetings
- Radio

Time for easier access 3%

The issue of ‘access’ has been identified as a key issue in the ACCS, based both on the findings of the CBA Report, and surmised from current policy drives relating to open space provision.

‘Time for easier Access’ was not however widely identified amongst participants in the Survey.

Lighting and Shelter were popular choices in the category ‘other’ which potentially points to a desire to expand types of access.

- Night time Access
- All weather Access

The potential to address the question more directly, particularly in relation to physical street level access to the circus is still an area that should be explored. Possible strategies for improvements to accessibility could include:

- Removal of street clutter pedestrian barriers
- Assessment of the effect of buses using the circus as a roundabout
- Temporary road closures
- Enlargement of the bottom tier, or creation of a ‘home zone’ around the circus

(Home zones are discrete areas where pedestrians are given priority over traffic, although cars are not excluded. This is achieved by landscaping techniques such as removal of kerbs and the use of street furniture to calm traffic and define parking spaces.)

Time for our hobbies 2%

Time for our hobbies was a deliberately broad ranging category. In understanding that each person’s hobby will be different, ‘Time for Our Hobbies’ was included to imply an accommodating space that can be accessed by all sorts of people while doing all sorts of different things.

The diversity of possible uses became most clearly expressed by participants’ personal responses to the survey, written on the blank hand of the clock.

Time for 17%

The largest proportion of participants in the survey chose to share their own vision for the future of Arnold Circus by filling in the blank hand of the clock. The polarity and breath

of responses, and people’s keenness to contribute their own views is indicative of the strength of opinion about future of Arnold Circus. It also reinforces the need for a space that can accommodate a variety of uses, including those that are unforeseen or impossible to predict.

Evaluation

The number of responses to the survey was 14% of the total distributed leaflets. As a result, the responses can only be taken as an insight into local opinion, and not a comprehensive record.

The dual role designed for the leaflets of informing about the forthcoming restoration works, and asking for a direct response to the question ‘What’s the Time Arnold Circus?’, means that the wide distribution of flyers into the Boundary Estate served as an introduction to the forthcoming consultation strategy without exhausting enthusiasm for further involvement. Locating the larger image of the clock in the Community Launderette’s window similarly acted as a visible, but unintrusive introduction to the forthcoming works.

The presence of the ACCS consultation team outside the launderette during the week long consultation exercise was considered to be one of the most positive outcomes of the process. Engaging passers-by in an informal, but focused discussion about Arnold Circus, demonstrated how involved in thinking about Arnold Circus many people already are.

It was concluded that it would have been a more successful exercise if this form of direct engagement had been extended to other key meeting points in the local area. One potential option would have been to have a mobile clock that could be relocated from the launderette to neighbouring locations at strategic times;

- Virginia Primary School
- St. Hilda’s East Community Centre
- Redchurch Street mosques

Appendix G – Grounds Maintenance Contract

Maintenance Items at Arnold Circus are as follows:

- EL3G Litter Removal - 2488 sqm
- LB01 Empty Bin - 8 number
- M102 Remove Leaves - 2488 sqm
- PE01 Weed treatment - 1455 sqm
- SHA1 Shrub Maintenance – 1033 sqm
- SP05 Sweeping – 1455 sqm

EL3G Remove litter daily (including weekends and Bank Holidays)

The Contractor must maintain all sites and all areas covered by the Contract to a clean and litter free standard by removing all litter on the frequency detailed.

‘Litter’ is anything whatsoever which is thrown down, dropped or otherwise deposited (including dog faeces), in or onto any place in the open air to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access and left there, unless otherwise by law or done with the written permission of the AO.

In addition to the provision set out in specification 29: Sweeping – Hard Surfaces, the Contractor should allow in its Litter Collection rates to pick or sweep as necessary any broken glass found or reported as a prioritised activity.

Large items such as discarded furniture and household effects, mattresses etc. which require two or more people to lift and deposits of rubble, tarmac or similar will be treated as fly tipping. The Contractor must inform the AO as soon as possible after discovering the tipping. The AO will, in appropriate circumstances, issue instructions to the Contractor to remove the waste material.

LB01: Empty litter bins daily

The Contractor will empty litter bins on a regular basis and at a frequency sufficient to ensure that they do not overflow. In most parks and open spaces a minimum standards of a daily emptying is required, whilst in principal parks additional emptying is likely to be required during peak periods of use.

MI02: Remove Leaves Autumn/ Winter

The Contractor is required to clear leaves, twigs etc., from all areas as specified in the Bills of Quantities. Leaves must be cleared from grass and planted areas with sufficient regularity to prevent damage to the turf or underlying plants.

PE01: Pesticide Application

Where practicable, the Council favours use of cultural methods over the use of herbicides in order to control weed growth. This specification provides for the control of weed growth on hard surfaces, and for additional works relating to woody

or pernicious weed growth requiring (in part) the use of herbicides in order to achieve cost effective control.

SHA1: Cultivated Shrub Maintenance

The Contractor must visit each shrub bed identified for Regime A maintenance, on a regular basis. A guideline minimum frequency of 12 visits per year is suggested. At each visit, the Contractor must undertake the following operations:

Remove, using correct horticultural practices all fallen flowers, leaves and other debris. All cultivated areas will be cleared of litter and other debris.

The Contractor must allow in their rates to cut back shrubs when necessary to the previous year's growing point, in order to prevent obstructions to paths, roads, signs, steps, sight lines, windows, doors and other similar situations and to allow access as specified by the AO.

The Contractor must remove all dead, damaged, infested, reverted or diseased branches and stems using correct horticultural practices. At appropriate times of the year and in accordance with good horticultural practice prune plants to encourage strong, healthy and floriferous growth. Any plants grown for winter stem colour or similar effects as specified by the AO will be pruned at the optimum time to provide the optimum display (see pruning guidelines below).

Remove all weeds by pulling by hand, hoeing and raking, avoiding damage to stems, branches and plant roots leaving a clean weed free surface cultivated to a medium tilth. Herbicides must not be used for general weed control, however spot treatment can be undertaken to control pernicious weeds or woody perennials by agreement with the AO.*

Report to the AO, and remove completely any dead plants, grub out roots and level the bed; the AO may instruct the Contractor to supply and plant new plant material in accordance with General Conditions 3 and S28.10, at the same time as the plant material is removed or as specified by the AO within the planting season.

*Spot treatment of woody or pernicious weeds with an approved herbicide is acceptable (General Specification 1 applies). The Contractor will ensure that no damage is caused to the cultivated plants, or the immediate surrounding area. Should such damage occur, it will be made good at the Contractor's expense and to the complete satisfaction of the AO.

SP05: Sweep daily Bank Holidays included

In the areas specified the Contractor will be required to sweep by manual or mechanical means, paved/hard surfaced areas clear of litter, twigs, leaves, glass, debris and similar. Particular attention must be paid to the prevention of detritus accumulations in gullies and path edges. For the purposes of

this Specification the term "sweeping" is deemed to include the raking of hoggin/gravel or similar surfaced paths with a Springbok rake or similar implement approved by the AO.

The Contractor must sweep the full width and length of the area in a methodical manner. Where glass or a similar hazardous material has also fallen onto the adjoining soft landscaping, the debris must be removed to ensure that the site is left safe and tidy. All arisings must be removed from site at the end of each work period and taken to the designated location for disposal.

Appendix H - Potential Levels of Involvement

The ACCS team held a detailed consultation meeting with FOAC on March 11 2008 to establish what level of involvement the group aims to have in the future management & maintenance of the gardens.

The range of possibilities (to be considered in combination or as alternatives) discussed were as follows:

- a) Monitor Current Arrangement
Know & monitor specifications of the current maintenance contract
or
- b) Establish Clear Lines of Communication with the Council
or
- c) Become "Commission-Ready"
Work with LBTH Community Organizations Forum to become accredited as a LBTH preferred service provider to be able to tender for public service contracts
or
- d) Write a Conservation Management Plan
or
- e) Apply for Awards
Such as the Civic Trust Green Pennant Award
or
- f) Aim to take on a Service Level Agreement
or
- g) Develop a wider area of Influence
Make links with neglected green spaces in the surrounding area

The viability and implications of these various options were discussed at length. FOAC came to the conclusion that the recommendations for future management & maintenance arrangements should further investigate a combination of options a), b), and d). It was agreed that options c), e) and g) could be considered over the longer-term, but that f) could be discounted for the foreseeable future.

These decisions are reflected in the ACCS recommendations for improving future management & maintenance arrangements.



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TOWER HAMLETS