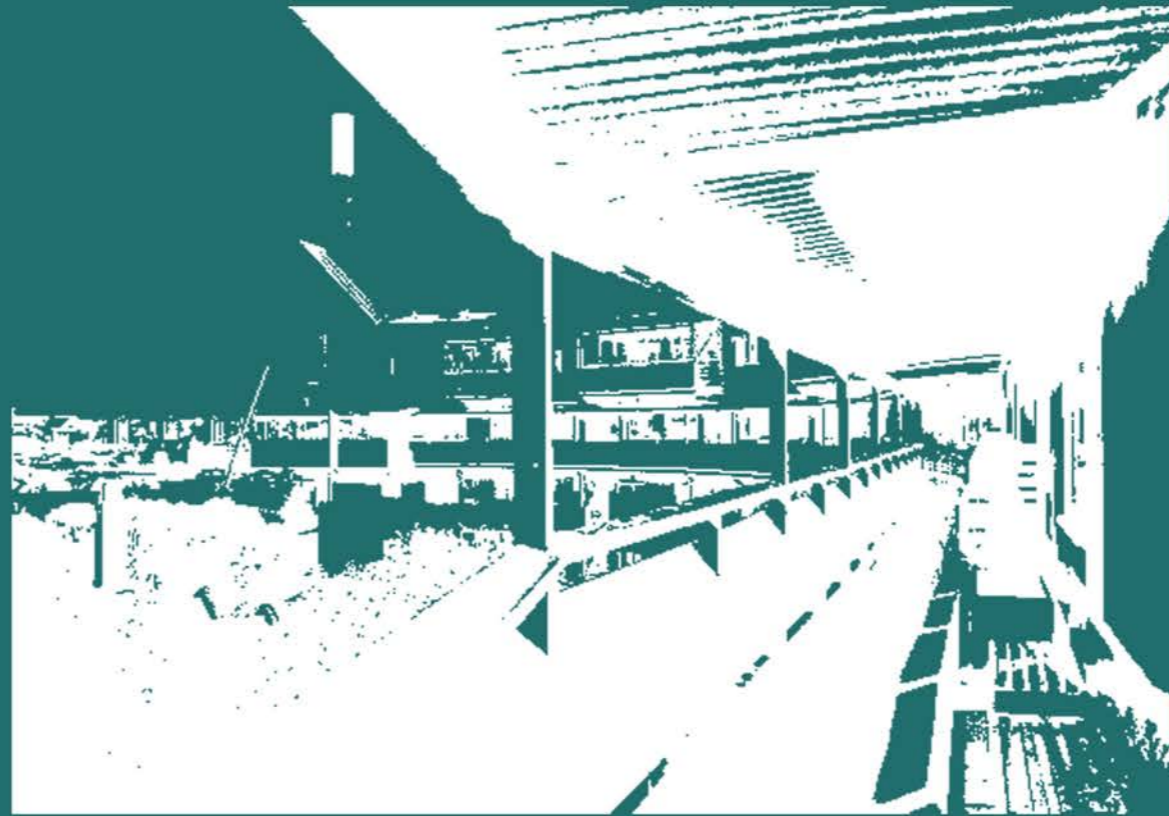
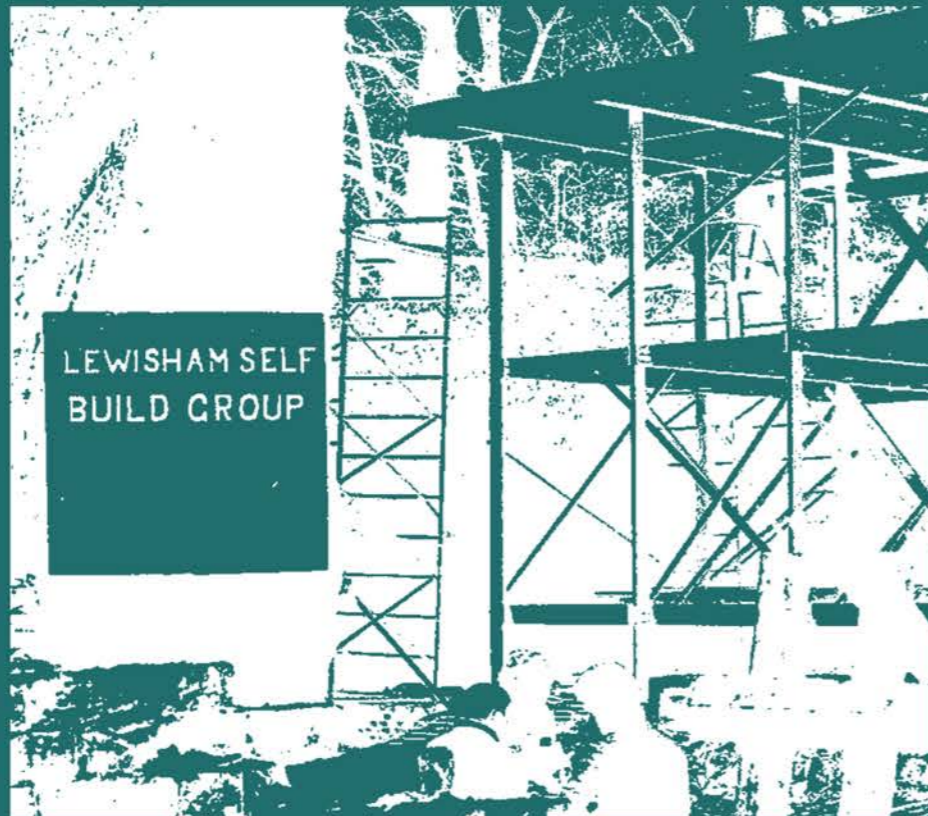


PART I | Developing community interaction through
social housing

Illustrated Thesis

Western Community Newspaper



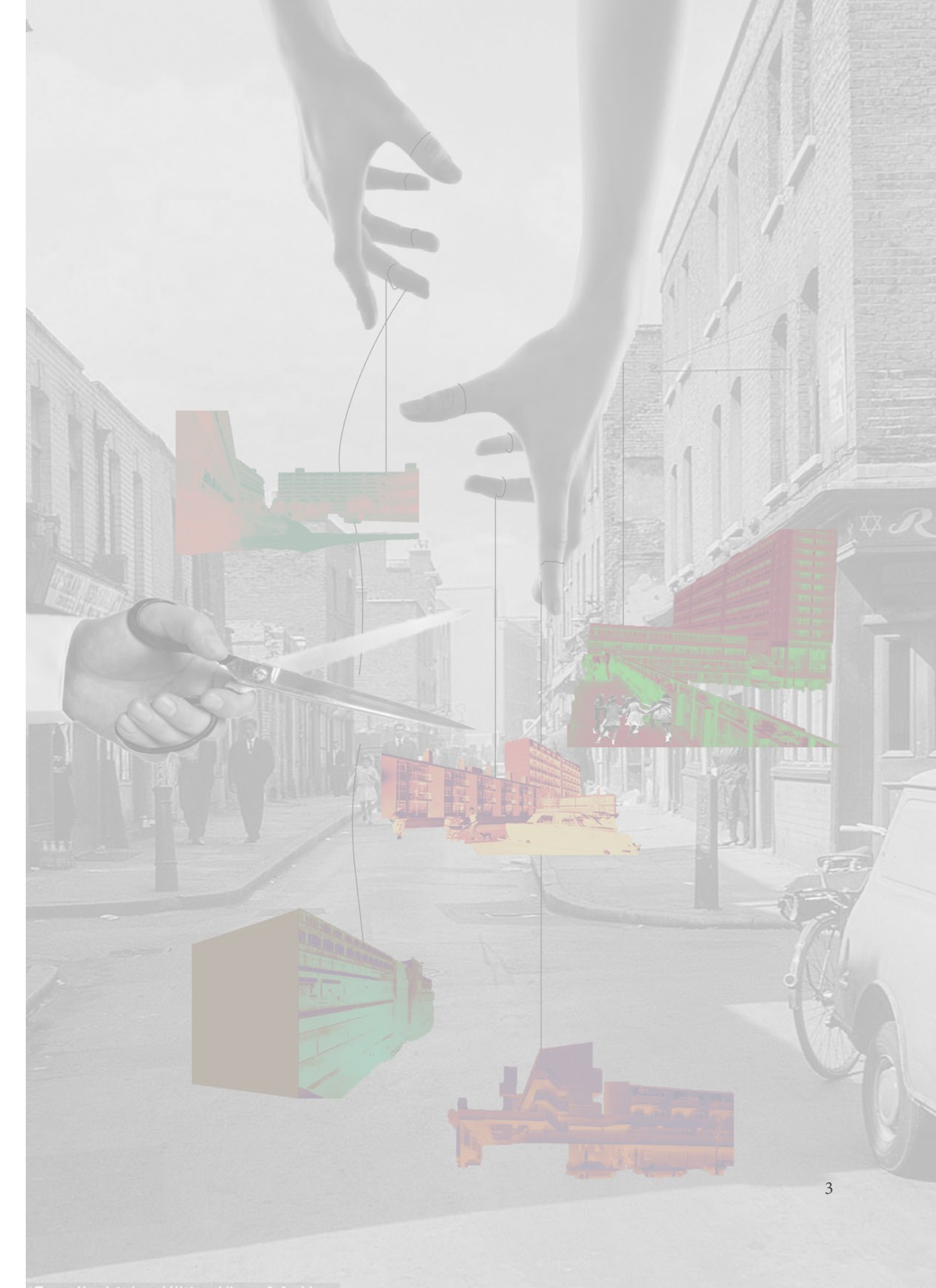
ISSUE NO. 1

Aminat Raji

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Word Count: 5119



How can urban regeneration develop social housing to break down social issues and inequities to improve community interactions?

“It’s about a society falling... On the way down it keeps telling itself: so far so good, so far so good” (*La Haine*, 1995)

Preface

In this illustrated thesis, I plan to underpin the complex debates around social housing and the imprint that it has created on communities. I aim to underscore connections between how spatial design features, planning and management contribute to the successes and failures of estates. I will be particularly focused on how shared spaces in state funded houses, can promote or disregard neighbourly interactions extending or closing the distance between private and public areas.

The urban fabric is impacted through materialisations that uphold structural inequalities and influences communities in different contexts. As designers and planners of the built environment, we have a responsibility to challenge some of these spatial discriminations and questions the problems in and around the home. Acknowledging the micro and macro impact of social housing is significant in uncovering how design features is a lens to decode these societal issues that can impact generations. Understanding the nuances within environments as well as the specific needs of the people of low income backgrounds, creates the opportunity to enrich the wellbeing of the community. (Smith, D.et al, 2014 p.2).

I aim to underpin ideology within the nature of instability within modernist affordable housing, as well as uncovering the complexity of how design features can intensify unemployment and criminal activity around estates. I will then look at how systemic injustices can contribute to the unsuccessfulness of low-cost houses. Furthermore, I aim to discuss potential strategies and methods that are more participatory via an analysis of ‘self-build’. I will be focusing primarily on the North Peckham Estate for the beginning of this thesis, exploring the vibrant, multicultural inner-city district that I am privileged to have grown up in and around. Hearing the voices of the community and their thoughts and experiences on nature of Peckham social housing is an important aspect that I will be implementing throughout this thesis to empathise and understand their needs. I will be exploring memories of some of spatial experiences in and around estates via primary research of people in my community to highlight the realities of social housing as well as historical accounts. Developing socially sustainable solutions that will benefit the livelihoods includes ‘community engagement, social equity and cultural heritage’ (Smith, D.et al, 2014 p.2) in and around home environments.

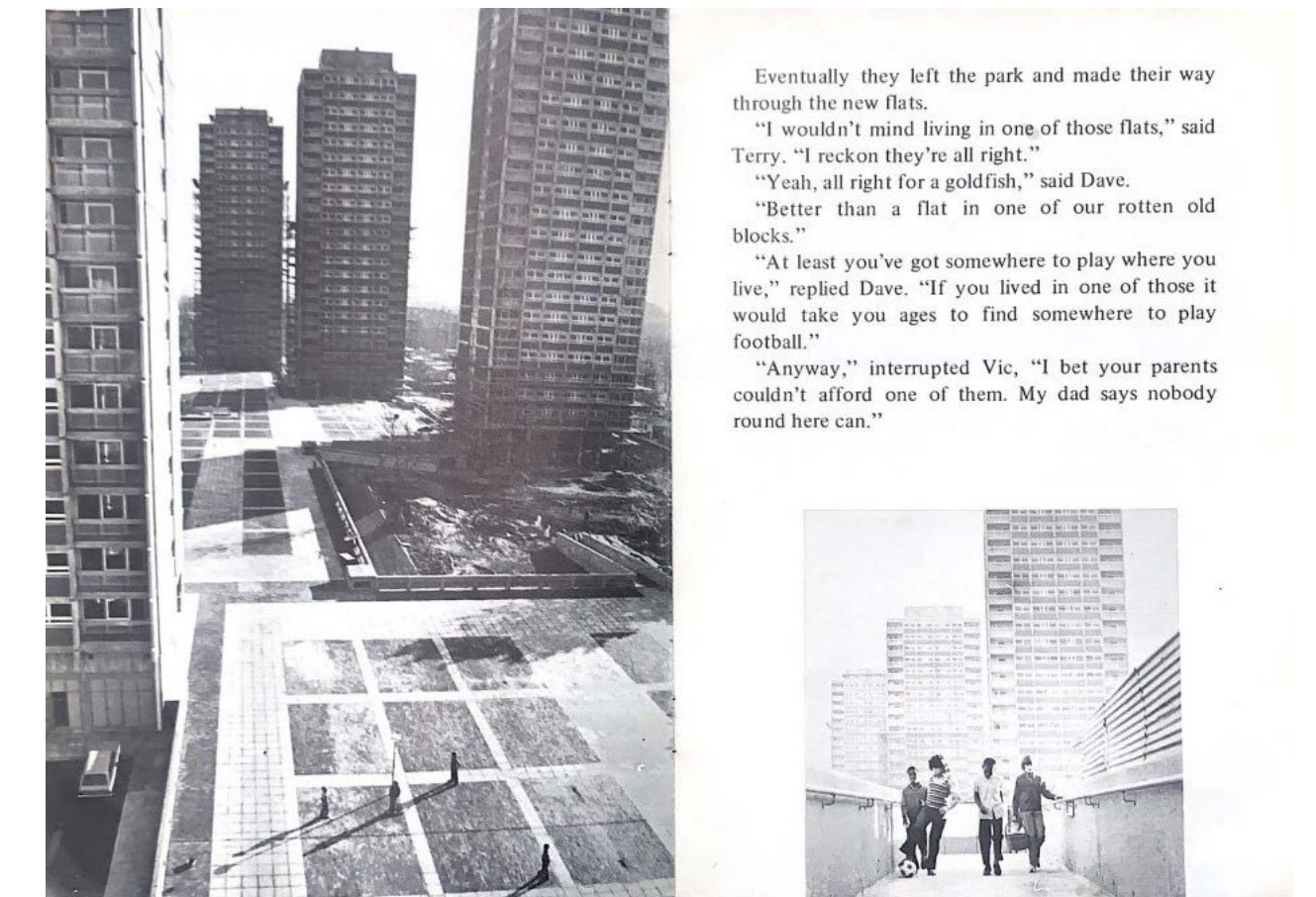


Figure 1

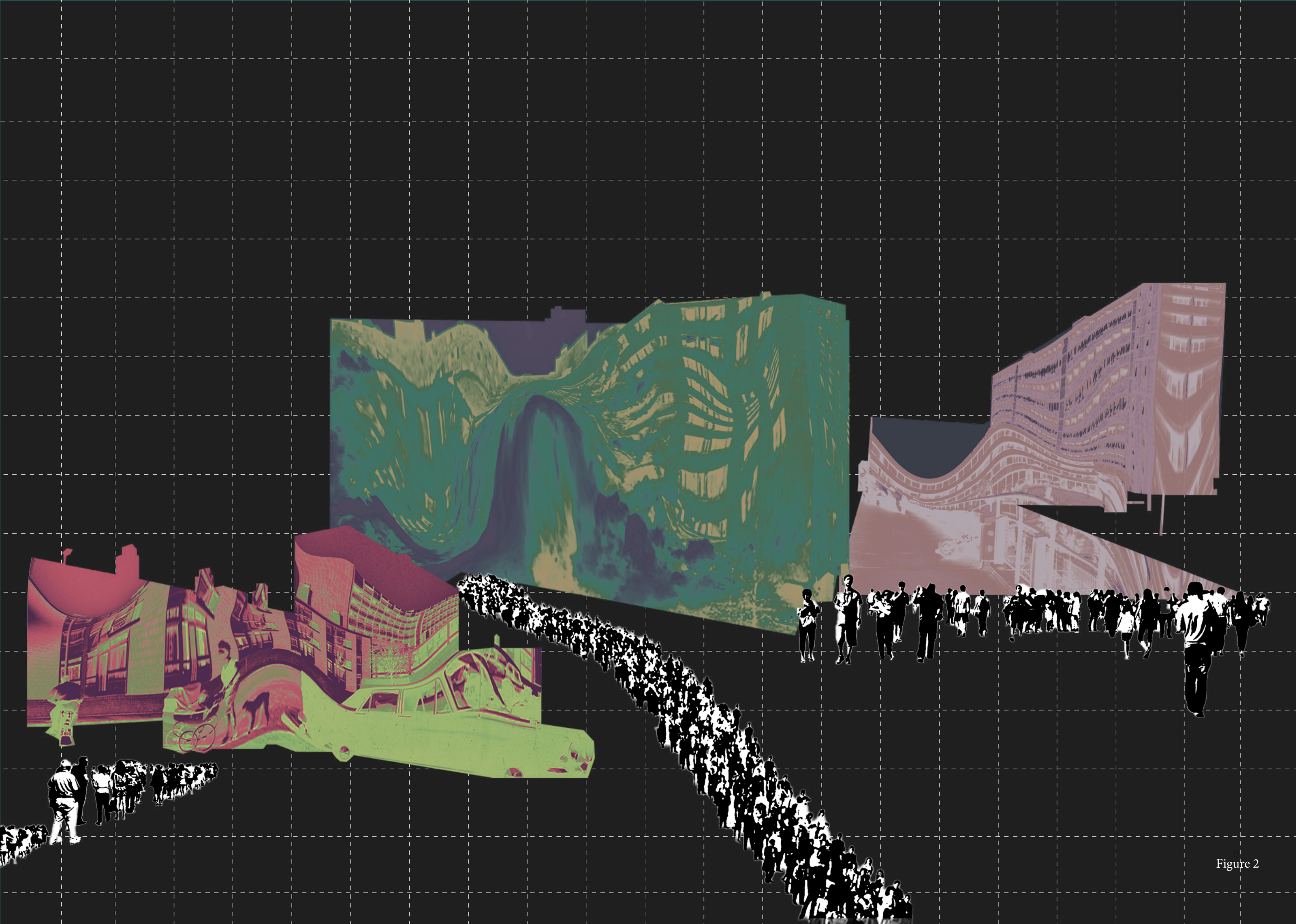


Figure 2

I | The Instability of Mass Housing

It is imperative to contextualise the idealism of mass housing in the western hemisphere. The council housing system in England was ‘municipally and centrally controlled’ illustrating the fact that prominent decision makers of housing policies were locally elected politicians and had state control during the post war period. The title conveyed their dominance - The Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1951–70)”. (Glendinning, 2021, pp. 141-142). Councillors, architects, and housing associates were key players in the process of developing schemes for low-income housing as well as the regeneration plans researched by Glucksberg (2013, pp. 107). The utopian concept of ‘the streets in the sky’ led by Le Corbusier during the modernist architectural movement set the standard for Western architects to aim to build variants of these dwellings according to Towers (2000, cited in Glucksberg, 2013). Unite d’Habitation designed by Corbusier marked an important residential symbol of the meticulous spatial detail put into the construction and social impact it would have on its residents. “He believed that the sharing of building and grounds would promote a strong community and social life”. (Coleman, 1994, pp. 8). Recreations of these social housing projects challenged architects and designers to plan spatially organised sections within the home for a large population of people but also understand and address the needs of people. The regeneration of estates in England were intentionally and ambitiously designed to have a space for joining families and the community together. Felix Trenton, the architect of the Aylesbury estate encourages this rhetoric of a utopia for the community, describing some of the mundane activities carried out in this estate promoting ‘Intimacy’ ‘Safety’, ‘Social-cohesion’, ‘Togetherness’. (Boughton, 2016a)

The trajectory of social housing in England was characterised as ‘a dream in the 60s, a reality in the 70s and a nightmare in the 80s’ Sky Magazine, March 1988 (Smyth, 1977). There is a possibility that planners were good intentioned with creating modernist solutions for preventing noise and danger of London traffic, whilst promoting a sense of community and trying to fit to every family’s needs pertaining to space, play and comfort within inner city estates. With the creation of high-density flats, there was the emergence of tower blocks, nevertheless, the unforeseen foreboding ‘sink estate’ of the 1980s had caused a huge resentment of council dwellings. The “dark grimy alleyways, graffiti-coloured walls” and limited maintenance illustrated the decline of the utopian ideal of estates. Margaret Thatcher gave tenants in the 1980s the right to buy their homes, however, the policy had more long-term cons than pros. (Crick, 2017). Overall, the mass production of council estates was seen as “over-hurried and rashly experimental” (Glancey, 2005). I agree as not much focus was put on by planners to understand the contextual issues around low-incomed housing that tenants have and would face. Jessie Brennan depicts how Thatcher exacerbated the problems as she took control of “failed experiments of left-wing social engineering that were so alien to their inhabitants they somehow served to exacerbate the problems of social deprivation they were designed to alleviate”. (Royal Academy of Arts, 2016)

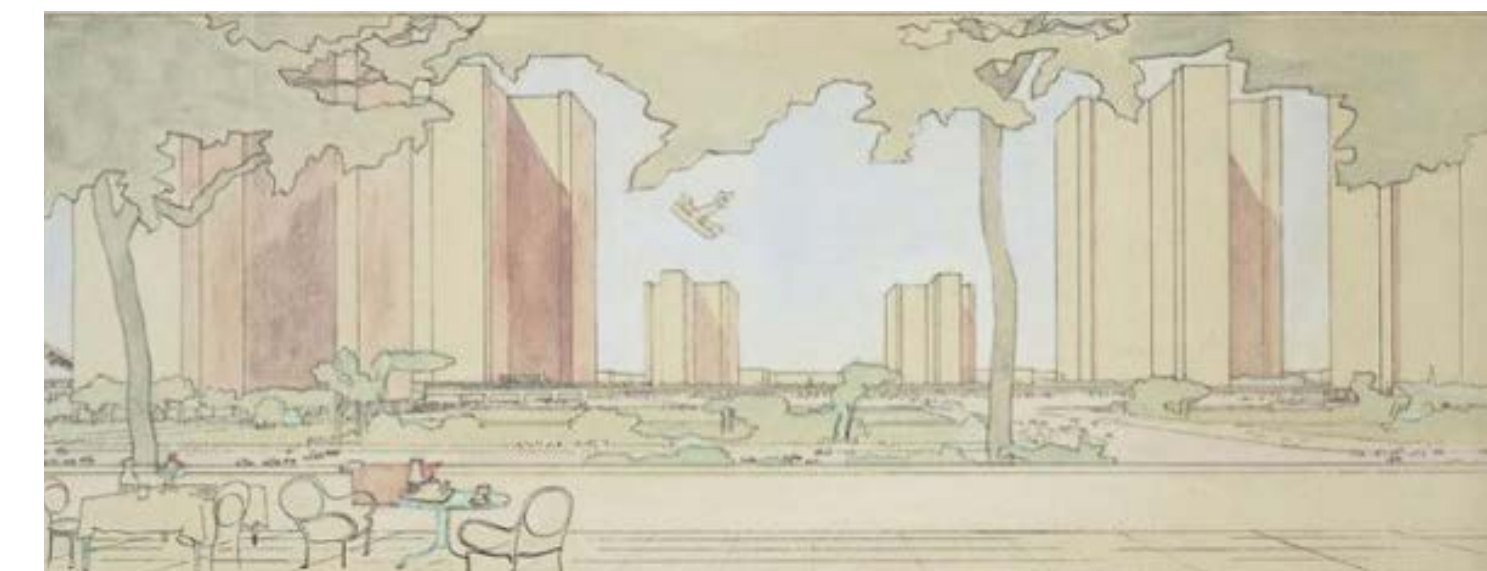


Figure 3



Figure 4

II | The Spatial Concentration of Deprivation

Regeneration of 5 estates – North Peckham

In this section of this chapter, I will be exploring the complexity and trajectory of the regeneration of estates located in South-East London. Focused on ‘The North Peckham Estate’, I will be investigating the historical and current social issues that have been to some extent, exacerbated by the spatial qualities of the utopic aspirations of architects and planners. Understanding the failures of this estate will shed light on a microcosm of wider issues in inner districts of London. Boughton (2016a) states that The Regeneration bid of £60 million in 1994, “artificially merged” five estates located between Peckham High Street and Burgess Park comprised of; Sumner Estate, Willowbrook estate, Camden Estate, Gloucester Grove Estate, and North Peckham Estate. The North Peckham Estate, built in the 1960s/70s was designed by architect F.O Hayes and was succeeded by Hans Trenton of the borough architects. It was the largest of the estates encompassed by 1444 dwelling connected by a network of facilities, overhead walkways, and interconnected by a sequence of courts to bridge the residential and parking spaces (Boughton, 2016a). It was believed that the architects were well intentioned, exaggerating on the notion of individuality and variety through the inclusion of 1-5 bedrooms which promoted safety, intimacy and cohesion depending on the occupants needs. Nevertheless, the idyllic trope of the North Peckham ‘holiday camp’ had soon faced its problems (Boughton, 2016a). The attempts of creating the modernist solution for preventing noise and danger of London traffic, whilst promoting a sense of community and trying to fit to every family’s needs pertaining to space, play and comfort was unattainable. The failures of society and the landscape of the features of the estate reflected in the events that had led on.

“27,000 people lived in the estate, a concrete walkway complex plagued by crime and unemployment” (Harman, 1987). Practitioners have examined the complex and nuanced issues surrounding the estate as well as inner city dwellings in general. Alice Coleman, a geography professor, had investigated the reality of the spatial failures of inner-city housing including the North Peckham Estate. The findings of the study suggests that “fifteen design features were responsible for the social breakdown of estates” (Coleman, 1994, pp.2-4). According to Coleman, her position clearly neglects the distinctive issues around each estate which weakens the credibility of her disposition. However, she does not, make important how design features can be used as a lens to see societal problems. Her acclaims highlight the link between vandalism and litter across 17 different estates providing a disadvantage score and connects them to specific design features (Coleman, 1994, pp.4). This set of data must be interpreted with caution because the generalisation of links between diverse types of contextual estates and design features.

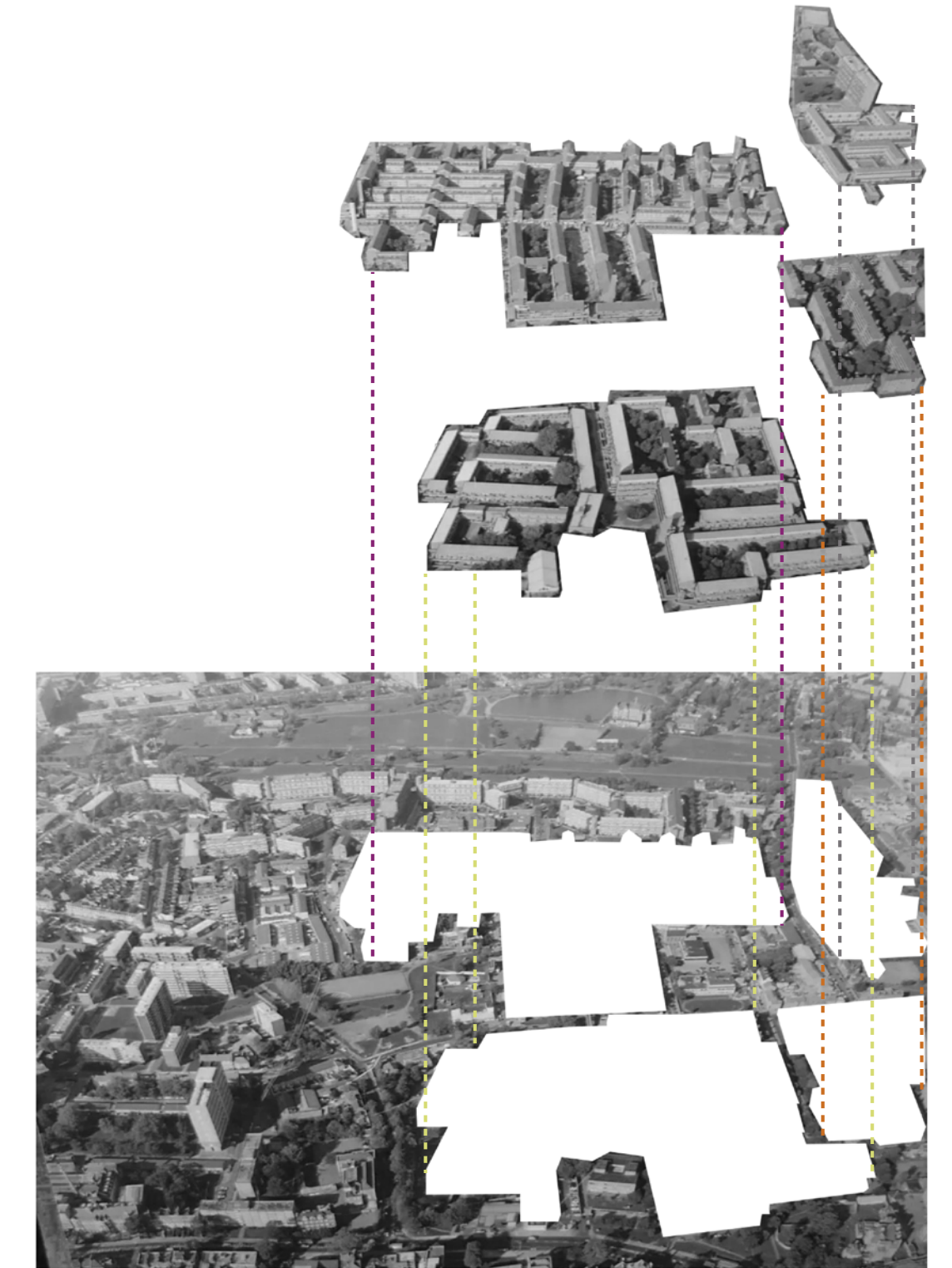


Figure 5

Coleman utilises the work of Oscar Newman and Bill Hillier to punctuate the connection between spatial theory and ‘social malaise’. Recognised by Coleman (1994, pp.13-14), Newman’s proposition was the interdependence between the specific design feature that attracted criminal activity through statistical analysis contextualised in New York. He extrapolated key insights from this data including anonymity, lack of surveillance and the option for alternative escape routes. The Defensible Space Theory emerged, concluding that the design of estates could impact the psychology of behaviour of people as well as the confusion of territory which would create spaces for “easy hits by criminals” (Donnelly, 2010, pp.3). Overhead walkways are signified as the number of elevated/raised walkways connecting adjacent blocks. According to Coleman, “They clearly increase the escape-route options for criminals and help foster anonymity” (Coleman, 1994, pp.38). This coincides with Newman’s theory as Coleman’s primary research conducted by interviews demonstrates that “tenants condemned walkways as they enabled noise and congestion created by intruders and children. During the Peckham Riots of 1981, rioters and looters were able to lose themselves in the ramifying North Peckham Estate, where 72 blocks were all connected by walkways”. (Coleman, 1994, pp.38). This theory is supported as the nature of the estate “was literally not psychologically owned by its residents due to its modernist form which encouraged and enabled crime creating anti-social behaviour” (Boughton, 2016b). Therefore, the circulation of the vertical and horizontal routes can determine the congestion of activity of the tenants and intruders. Walkways were now not seen as a community space but a space to be feared by the actual residents of the estate. This coincides with lived experiences on the estate as Caleb Femi, a British-Nigerian author who grew up on the estate alludes to an experience of being a child, witnessing a crime around a walkway in his poetry anthology ‘Poor’ (Femi, 2020).

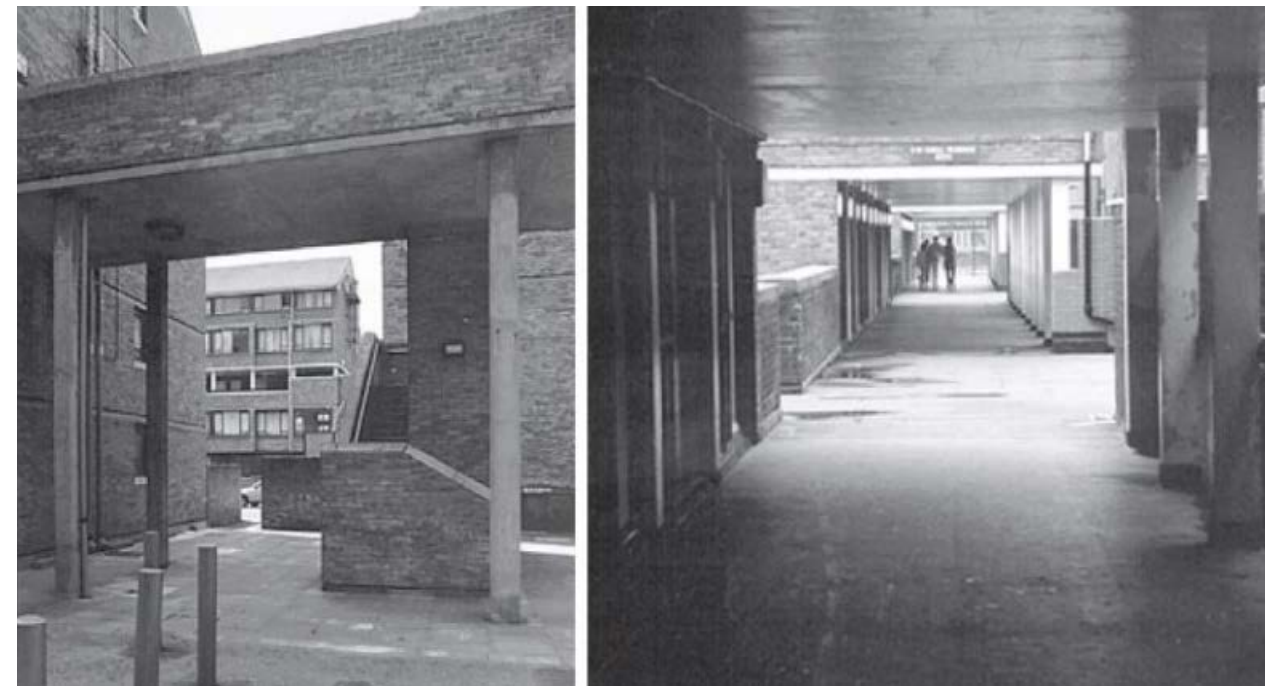


Figure 6-7

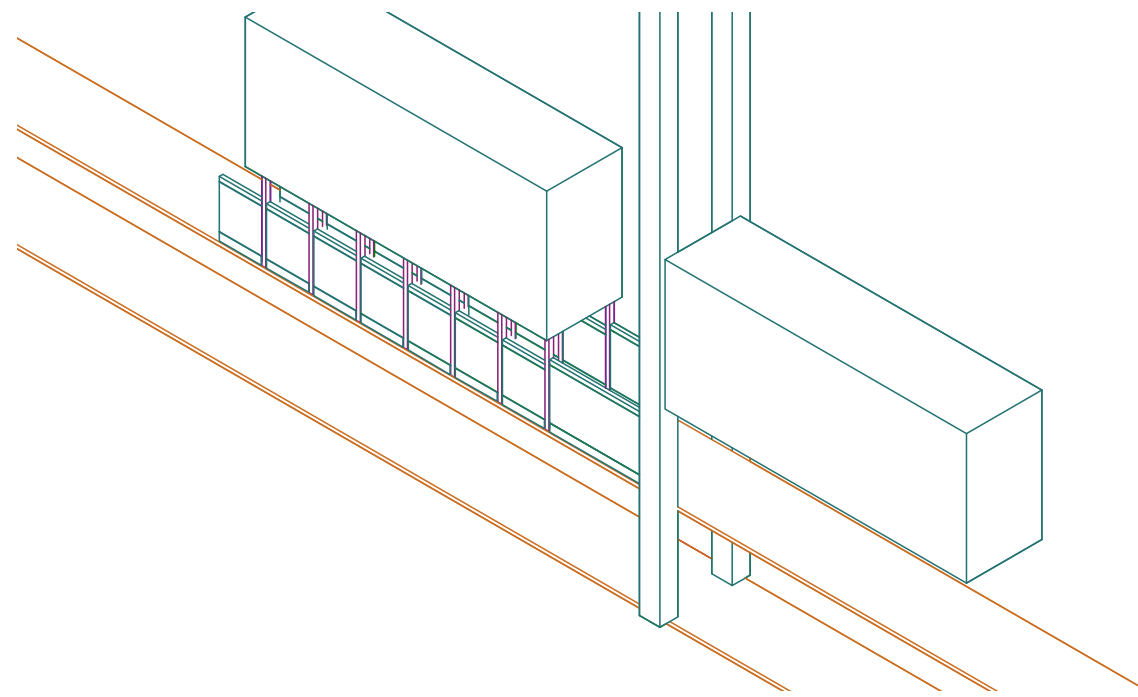


Figure 8

A Designer Talks of a Home/ A resident talks of a Home (I)

“On the 19th floor you could see everything but the future

those great long corridors reduced people

We see the same view even when we’re not looking, we’re usually not looking

To see that a building could have such an impact on the way people felt, on the way they interacted

At the scene we know who did it, keep our mouths shut when boydem come with their

It’s about interrogation and empathy

[laughter]” (Femi, 2020)

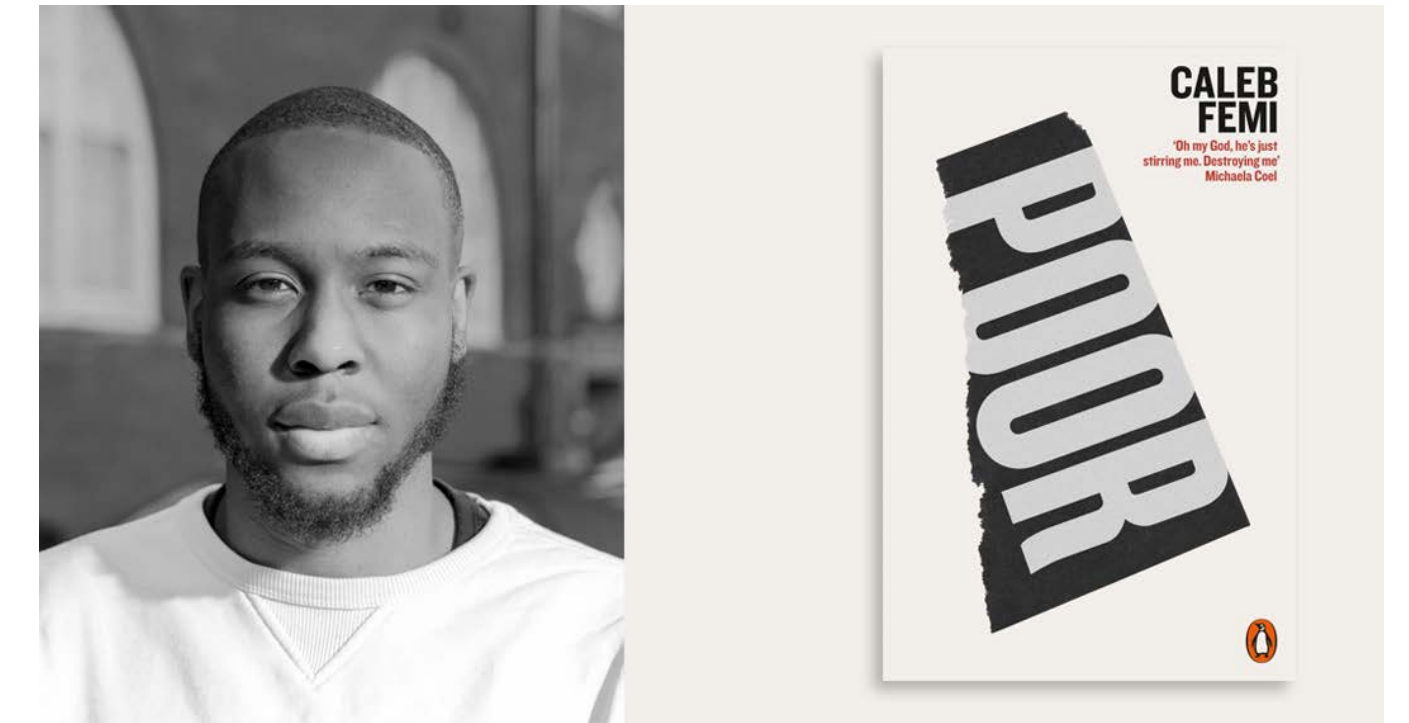


Figure 9

Here Femi, juxtaposes the reality and fallacy of the North Peckham estate but also how walkways and corridors did not promote community interaction but instead criminal activity. He also contrasts the balance of power between the residents and architects. This section of the poem symbolises how this design feature was a microcosm at looking at the wide spread of gang culture and lack of surveillance. This coincides with the Defensible Space theory as the escape routes around walkways on the estate help foster fear of the residents as the ones committing the crimes essentially ‘psychologically owned the walkways’ (Boughton, 2016b). I resonate with this as from my experience, when I was younger I saw some blood on the floor around the passageway next to my neighbour’s flat. The next week the neighbour got evicted and there was police tape across the passageway to the stairs. The crime was enabled because the area had no surveillance and was a discrete area within the block.

Coleman's identification of walkways raises the complexity of accessibility allowing us to examine the urban footprint of the estate. Bill Hillier's Space Syntax theory supports the notion of facilitation of criminal activity through spatial planning. He believed that estates had inhumane planning in the 1970s. (BBC, 1993). He believed the secret to their success is understanding the pattern of space within them, so he developed a technique for analysing space: Cutting the estate into squares, corridors, walkways and creating lines of sights in each space then using computer generated codes to determine which areas are the most accessible and least accessible based on the number of corners you would have to turn to get around the whole estate. The blue is least accessible, and the red is most accessible. In the North Peckham Estate, there were large blue areas especially in the heart of the estate which created a space for criminal activity. A successful pattern of urbanity has a core of red space in the middle. This theory highlights how patterns of spaces control where people naturally move (BBC, 1993). This theory coincides with the issues around accessibility when looking at the death of Damilola Taylor. The "murder of Damilola Taylor (a 10-year-old Nigerian child) of 2000, in the Peckham estate secluded stairwell" (Boughton, 2016b) had signified a great of loss of the community and exposed the failures of societal to the protection of its youth. It was when the regeneration bid was in progress and confirmed the condemnations of the estates design evidence by Coleman (Boughton, 2016b). A vivid description illustrates the complex confusing navigation of the estate. "He pulled his failing body up two flights of stairs towards a walkway which led circuitously towards his home but collapsed in the dank stairwell, against heaps of fetid rubbish and the stench of urine". (Hill, 2000). The word 'circuitously' connotes how it was difficult to navigate along a walkway as it would not take you to a specific section block but multiple. Found on the 'east wing stairs' (Femi, 2020), the space syntax diagram illustrates the lack of accessibility to public spaces. This exposes the inhumane and issues with navigation for residents around the large concrete estate. Although, there is credibility in this theory, Coleman doesn't fully explain the extent that design features have in exacerbating and highlighting wider issues.



Figure 10

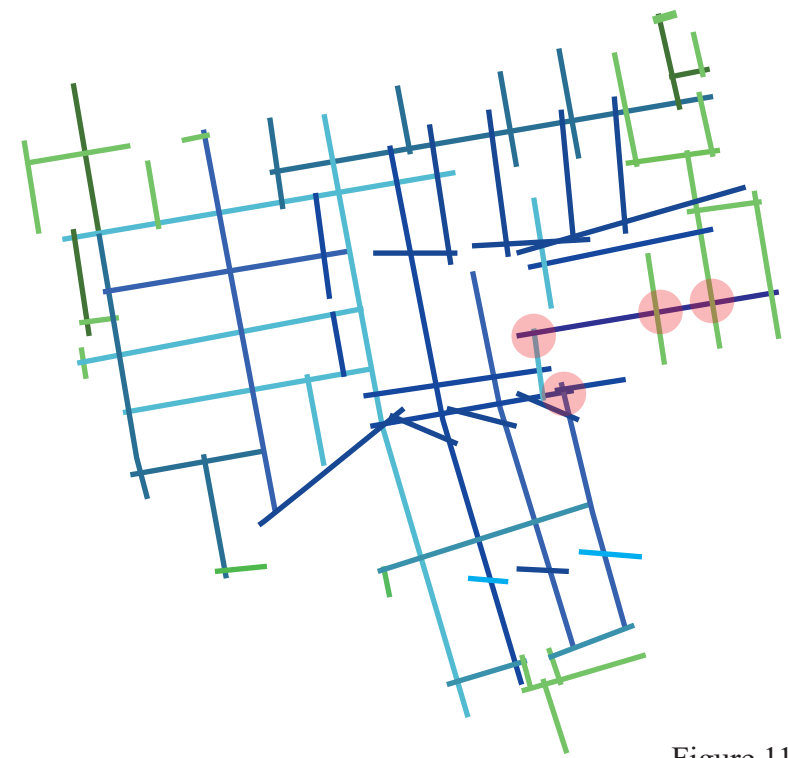


Figure 11



Figure 12

Critique on Coleman

Nonetheless, Coleman displays serious flaws on her analysis of the issues surrounding estate, dismissing key considerations that led to the social breakdown and the demolition of the dwellings where 27,000 lived (Harman, 1987). In the context of North Peckham estate, the rise of poverty and unemployment in this inner-city district were huge factors affecting the program of criminal behaviour. Her summary is that design variables have not been researched in isolation and that “Alternative explanations of the various forms of social malaise have been explored, and while some appear to be contributory factors, none has emerged as being stronger than design” (Coleman, 1994, pp.171). Instead of understanding how features like walkways uncover how poverty can cause criminal activity to take place, Coleman doesn’t believe these factors are mutually exclusive. This therefore dismisses how design features magnify wider social issues. The correlation between unemployment and criminal activity is closely linked as “Poverty is the root cause of many crimes in the world such as theft, murder”... (Nguyen, n.d). On North Peckham Estate, this manifested itself as ‘vandalism, dereliction and crime’ around these corridors and walkways (Currie, 1987).

One of the major weaknesses of her study is that as a solution, Coleman advocates for “the removal of the worst design features based on the data”, (Spicker, 1987, pp. 291) (walkways being one of them). This was ‘to improve entrances and reduce anonymity’ of areas that coincided with the Defensible Space theory. Paul Spicker challenges this policy advocacy as he states that it is a “waste of resources and diversion from real needs as it is to deal with the basic problems” (Spicker, 1987, pp. 292). This provides a holistic perspective of what the council and architects need to focus on within the development of estates. Spicker (1987, pp. 292) highlights the lack of funding of the council in the regeneration of North Peckham, which is another factor to emphasise when determining decision that Coleman fails to recognise. Coleman dismisses the critical question ‘how could walkways be developed to improve community interactions instead of the demolition of them?’. The nuanced needs of employment and community safety based on residents’ voices needed to be at the forefront of decision making to improve the estate. A councilor stated that ‘Tenants’ needs were not prioritised at all’ and the partially demolition destroyed communities in the regeneration period (Glucksberg, 2013, pp.129).



Figure 13

Community Involvement

In contrast, The Byker Estate located in Newcastle, according to Beatrix Campbell (*The Byker Wall*, 1988), was ‘one of the best examples of council housing’ due to several factors. It was the streets in the sky concept made secure and promoted community interaction through bridging public and private spaces. The walkways on parts of the city in the sky flats, face the light and promote social interaction via benches, a nice city space view, plants, and garden areas. It encourages neighbourly friendship and conversation instead of emptiness. Although the residents weren’t owners of these homes, they influenced the built environment through semi-public spaces beyond their door fronts. This created the merging of private and public spaces leaving nowhere ‘doomed or indefensible’ (*The Byker Wall*, 1988). Residents were also involved in design decisions, allowing the democratic majority to affect the evolving urban fabric around them. The Byker estate symbolised how housing can be adapted, fit the contours of the land and advocate for the opinions of residents and children in the creation of neighbourly communities.

The implementation of ‘complex requirements’ in housing schemes made by Cook’s team in Camden to consider many contextual factors. This included varied sizes of families, programming of public and private space (car parks, vehicular services, communal areas, response to the landscape. “A number of additions were made to the brief due to the diverse standards of the context”. Alexandra Road’s housing development was during the Conservatives of 1968 transferring some power to private developers as well as the mental health act of 1959, requirement to provide ‘care and training’ for children struggling with issues. Other additions were a youth club which Brown had always wanted to design and a play centre building (Swenarton et al., 2017, pp.58-69). The arc centre in the estate is for young people and families to share ideas and provides a safe space for the youth. “Young adults used to organise youth activities and that was a core memory I had of interactions on the estate” (Spid Theatre Company, 2019). From the perspective of the community a resident states that “the person that designed it did a good job, the way it’s set out facing your neighbours provides a very friendly and tight community” (Spid Theatre Company, 2019). These cases understood and considered the needs for the context and inhabitants of the area in providing spaces that promoted community interaction and encourage different demographics to get to know each other.



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 18

IV | Is the Future Self-build?

The post-war experience of populations from the Commonwealth moving to inner city areas of the U.K. faced a myriad of challenges as access to adequate services and opportunities were difficult in the late 20th century (Architecture Foundation, 2022). The spatial accumulation of BAME communities within impoverished districts is linked ‘to poor housing conditions and low-economic status’ creating ‘low life expectancy and ‘health risks’ according to HCI’s research (Gulliver, 2017). I will be exploring how marginalised immigrant communities come together through co-design to build their own homes to cultivate a familial culture and genuine friendships. In this chapter I will be evaluating grassroots projects that help to tackle systemic issues within housing via a community-led bottom-up framework.

In the context of Lewisham, South-east London there was a housing crisis which created an exceedingly long waiting list (Open City, 2020). Corresponding to Sultan (2022), Fusions Jameen - A new cooperation that led a self-build community project, creating three collections of housing promoted by the London Borough of Lewisham. Chisel’s ‘Self build for rent framework was attractive to local black residents which interchanged ‘time and labour for reduced rent’ within the grove park area of Lewisham. The modular design system pioneered by Walter Segal and in collaboration with architect Martin Hughes and developing coordinator José Opsina had provided a framework for the grassroots organisation. (Sultan, 2022) 13 dwellings were created in large plots along the now, Nubia Way finished in 1997. Adversity was in the face of the self-builders at a societal and communal level and in the process of making homes. The rise of right-wing fascist rhetoric of ‘African people taking our homes’ and the unemployment meant that the project was seen as a threat (Sultan, 2022). This led to burning of one of the houses in construction (Architecture Foundation, 2022).

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Figure 19

The project lasted two and a half years of every evening, which included camping out in cold conditions (Open City, 2020). Tim Oshodi, a resident on Nubia states ‘Community self-build shows how you can regenerate an area in a way that empowers local people’. (Sultan, 2022). This illustrates how the power of community engagement and participatory design in self-build housing can impact the wellbeing of people. Residents also state that the neighbours feel like family through the process and ‘Building it was very spiritual, intimate and healing’ (Architecture Foundation, 2022). Similarly, Walter’s Way in Lewisham had also reflected the self-build scheme. The modularity of the design system was flexible to the lifestyle and the choice of the inhabitants creating a street of unique personalised homes. Programs of spaces could be divided and rearranged which reflected the inhabitants needs. (Architecture Foundation, 2015b). There are various social spaces around these housed to promote neighbourliness based on the residents needs and the doors are normally open during the summer period (Architecture Foundation, 2015b). Once a year residents host a street party on Walters Way, and nearly three hundred people join as the community spirit there is ‘tangible’ (Architecture Foundation, 2015b). Dave Dayes a local resident states sustainable practices were also practiced as ‘the topography of the land was not altered’ and local timber was used (Architecture Foundation, 2015b). The bottom-up system of co-design resists and challenges the status quo which shifts power to the tenants in making decisions within housing and policy. This blurs the hierarchical system of the user up to government officials in terms of social housing. This allows for people to build communities and to grow through upskilling themselves and helping each other, fixing unemployment and authorise people.

Community, growing up in London felt very non-existent outside of school for my friends and I especially a local neighbourhood one. The tenant hall was never in use and interaction are awkward. My friend Jamilla states ‘The community in my estate is vaguely knowing who lives on each balcony because you have spied from your window many times’ (Dauda, 2022). From my parents’ perspective as immigrants from Nigeria, if they had the opportunity to self-build, they would do it regardless of the longevity of the projects. They believe that the complexity of mortgages and rent would be alleviated through the scheme of self-building (Raji, 2022). When looking at the severity of the housing crisis issue in London, Walter’s way and Nubia are microcosms of successes in a the much larger issue. When looking at scale in solving mass housing, self-build takes a huge amount of time, and considering housing, quick solutions are needed. Nevertheless, the way that community manifests in the shared spaces on the street ‘enhances the wellbeing of individuals’ and their neighbourhood (Smith, D.et al, 2014).



Figure 20

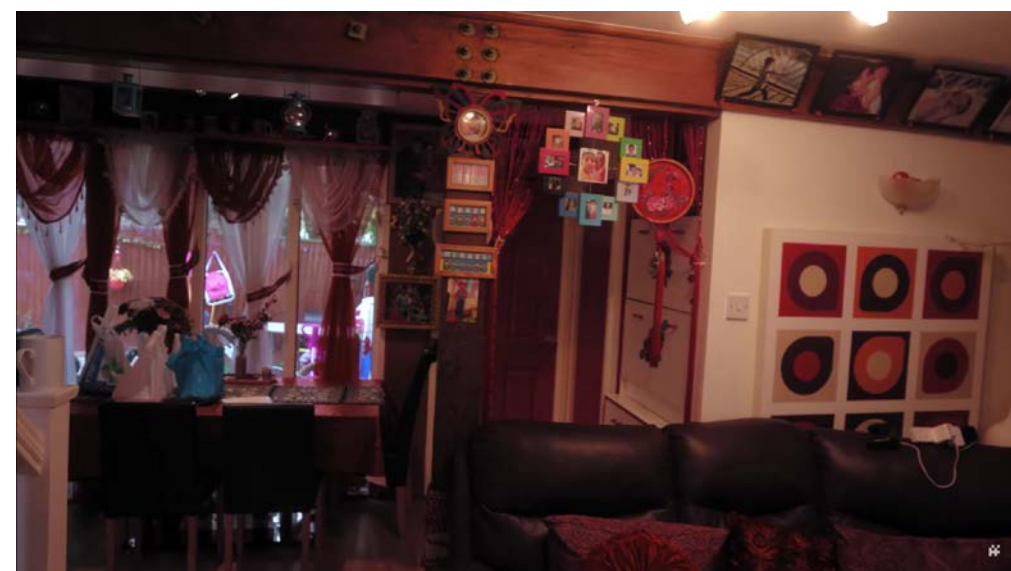


Figure 21

Conclusion

Corresponding with Smith’s (.et al, 2014, p.2) overview with social sustainable practices, ‘the act of designing is more than generation of a physical place’. It effects generations of communities within social housing and beyond. We as designers need to learn from the mistakes of regeneration in the past and meticulously make decisions based on needs through community engagement. Reflecting on this process, understanding the different perspectives from the voices of the inhabitants to the politicians was imperative to this discussion. This helped me build holistic knowledge on the nature how design features can grow or break down a community and be a lens that overall, worsened unemployment and criminal activity. A focus on social sustainable practices within the design and planning process will allow these issues to be tackled and create positive effect on lives. Creating a framework that is for public interests and an inclusive neighbourly atmosphere is essential for future housing projects. I believe that more funding for self-build projects would be instrumental in empowering inhabitants to upskill and create safe and welcoming environments to live in.

F.O Hayes’ North Peckham Estate had exposed how lack of funding and wider look at social issues around the area can cause the shattering of many lives through crime and its’ demolition. Considering this, planning out the lifespan of estates on how it evolves and develop is essential for stronger and long-lasting communities. Nonetheless, as designers we can learn that considering efficient accessible spaces and safe community areas is essential to centre around this discussion is the voice of inhabitants and the lived experiences within social housing. Respecting the voices of dwellers are imperative to uncovering and tackling issues but also the realities of people day-to-day lives. Through the microcosm of Pruitt Igoe, the effects that project had brought into focus the deep-rooted systemic issues which plague western society but also how architecture can be weaponised against residents. Upon reflection, we can learn potentially how a neighbourhood could be used to increase social mobility to create new opportunities for its’ occupants. The mimicking of Le Corbusier’s ‘idyllic cities’ only seemed to be successful when the needs of the inhabitants are prioritised like the Byker Estate. Architects like Ralph Erksine and Walter Segal had understood the power of public opinion within social housing as the inhabitants could dwell in a safe neighbourly environment and call a space their home. Overall, it can be said that thoughtful and user-focused regeneration can help tackle societal issues through understanding the needs of the contextual community. When looking at the future of public housing, community involvement can be a driving factor for successful and socially healthy projects.

Figure 1

Worpole, K., Boler, J. (1972). *Hackney Half-term Adventure* United Kingdom: Centreprise [Scanned pages]

Figure 2

Raji, A (2022). *People swarming the mass housing experiments* [Collage]

Figure 3

Le Corbusier Foundation (1922). *A vision of a utopian city, France* (Mixed Media Drawing) Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/06/nourishing-cities-with-nature/> [Accessed: 15 November 2022]

Figure 4

Raji, A (2022). *The 5 estates as social experiments designed and then demolished* [Collage]

Figure 5

Raji A (2022). *The 5 estates urban fabric* [Collage]

Figure 6 7

Municipal Dreams (n.d.). [Image found on website blog] Available at: <https://municipaldreams.wordpress.com/2016/10/11/the-five-estates-peckham-part-one/> [Accessed: 15 November 2022]

Figure 9

Penguin Books (2020). [Image found on website blog] Available at: <https://thelondonmagazine.org/interview-caleb-femi-on-poor-bartering-poetry-and-the-mythos-of-the-south-london-estate/> [Accessed: 24 December 2022]

Figure 10

Raji, A (2022). *Illustrated diagram of The North Peckham Estate and the dangerous areas within it* [Diagram]

Figure 11

Raji, A (2022). *Illustrated diagram of the computer-generated accessibility of the North Peckham Estate based on the Space Syntax Theory. The red spots specify the areas where criminal activity took place and where Damilola Taylor died* [Diagram]

Figure 12

Chapman, J. (n.d). *A memorial at the spot where schoolboy Damilola Taylor died. The stairwell by the lift in the housing estate where he lived in Peckham South London.* (Photograph) Available at: <https://www.alamy.com/a-memorial-at-the-spot-where-schoolboy-damilola-taylor-died-the-stairwell-by-the-lift-in-the-housing-estate-where-he-lived-in-peckham-south-london-the-young-boy-was-murdered-on-his-way-home-from-school-27th-november-2000-image389137462.html?imageid=729BE706-E663-497E-A954-EC8A304FAE19&p=11977&pn=1&searchId=1e438e4c47ef63c5fd08514d4e2ee497&searchtype=0> [Accessed: 16 November 2022]

Figure 13

Newell, R. (n.d.) *7 Bridges* (Photograph) Available at: <https://municipaldreams.wordpress.com/2016/10/18/the-five-estates-peckham-part-ii/> [Accessed: 16 November 2022]

Figure 14

Newcastle Libraries (1974). *A view of the front of the Byker Wall Byker taken in 1974* Available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/39821974@N06/4078269651/> [Photograph] [Accessed: 11 Jan 2023]

Figure 15

Spid Theatre Company (2019). *Estate Endz - SPID @ Alexandra and Ainsworth Estate. YouTube.* Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq3Kkx-wWeQ> [Accessed 6 Nov. 2022]. [Screenshot from Documentary]

Figure 16

Raji, A (2022). *The hierarchy and design features highlighted by the Pruitt Igoe's Tenant Management Cooperation in the 1970s* [Collage]

Figure 17

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Figure 18

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Figure 19

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THE PECKHAM EXPERIENCE - Peckham as a Heterogeneous Community with Jamilla Dauda

What words first come to mind when thinking about Peckham?

‘The words that first come to my mind when thinking about Peckham are: ghetto, divided, gentrification, lively and home’.

Do you think Peckham has changed? How?

‘After living in Peckham all my life- 20 years: I do believe Peckham has changed. It’s as if it’s now cool, and trendy to say your from Peckham, especially around white people. Previously mentioning being from Peckham was a crime in itself, something that people would fear due to the violent history and reputation of Peckham. This reputation has been brushed under the carpet through gentrification, rather than dealing with the in going issue of youth violence’.

How do you feel when going down Peckham High Street?

I feel just okay- comfortable knowing it’s what I’m familiar with so I don’t have a fear tied to Peckham personally but at the same time I grip my phone a little tighter when walking down the high street, because I don’t trust peoples character in this area.

Do you feel a sense of belonging here?

I feel a sense of belonging in terms of the familiarity with Peckham. It holds so much of my childhood and early adulthood, I don’t see myself ever not feeling at home in Peckham. Although as I’m growing up I’m also desiring to grow out of Peckham, be open-minded and venture to more communities.

Do you have any traumatic memories surrounding Peckham? If so would you feel comfortable sharing them?

I have memories on cat calling- it’s a daily, unavoidable event honestly. I remember being in pedophilia experiences, with guys in Peckham, taking advantage of my youthful innocence. I remember I was in the primary school play ground and I witnessed two white men beat up a black man trying to pass the street, outside the gate- so horrifically that then man bled and bled, until his face was red.

Do you believe the media portrayal of Peckham is accurate?

Not at all. The media will be quick to portray Peckham as ravaging in knife crime, and criminals or the newly established gentrification, but will never mention the sense of community the hair shops, African food malls, and black owned stalls provide. The media would be the last to mention the necessity of the existence of black culture in Peckham.

Survey on Council Estates

Do you feel safe in your council estate?

Yes and no. I feel safe because I know the ins and outs like the back of my hand. The familiarity gives me a sense of comfortability when I’m walking around the area . Yet despite that, when it’s dark I would be the first to turn my music down when I’m going through the inevitable alley ways to reach my door. I look behind me several times, in fear- scared of someone following me.

Do you think there is a real sense of community there?

The sense of community in my estate is very questionable, and quite divided- despite the juxtaposition in that. This is because my family associate with those a few doors either side of us, but any further than that, the sense of community is non-existent. The only sense of community that only ever existed was when the now grown up kids would play out, on the block, being children, where the only fear was coming home late. Now community is merely being able to leave your package with your neighbour or slipping a Christmas card through the letterbox to avoid the awkward small talk. The community in my estate is vaguely knowing who lives at each balcony because you’ve spied from your window many times. It’s the calling the police when the couple across the block are shouting more than usual and as divided as we may be, we still put ourselves in their shoes and hate injustice. Community is the adults calling the police and causing the police chase but the youngsters helping the person get away.

What’s some aspects that you would change about your estate spatially?

I would get rid of the alley ways. They are so daunting, especially at night. And any lights on the path still don’t act as a deterrent for anyone intending to commit crime. I remember walking down the path I always do- and the same guy is always there, watching me, nodding, sometimes saying hello- I walk, and keep walking. Afraid but thankful that nothing happened, yet I must walk there again, hoping.

REVISED QUESTIONS with Aminat, Jamilla and Parents

Describe an interaction you had on a passageway/corridor/walkway in a social housing block? How did you feel? What did you see/experience?

Aminat: Noise Congestion – Usually there are kids running up and down the passageway

Aminat: Interaction with neighbours on walkways can sometimes be awkward. For the next-door neighbour that we grew up together, interactions are nice and friendly and we’re likely to have a brief awkward chat on the walkway. For new neighbours, they usually just avoid the other neighbours so those exchanges don’t really take place. Walkways aren’t really moments for social interaction and to me is just a space to get home.

Jamilla: I would get rid of the alley ways. They are so daunting, especially at night. And any lights on the path still don’t act as a deterrent for anyone intending to commit crime. I remember walking down the path I always do- and the same guy is always there, watching me, nodding, sometimes saying hello- I walk, and keep walking. Afraid but thankful that nothing happened, yet I must walk there again, hoping.

How easy is it to walk around your block to access the main public domain?

Aminat: It takes 2 minutes to get to the main road and there is not much surveillance around the block. In terms of noise congestion there isn’t much

Are there specific walkways where criminal activity takes place? How did you feel/Was there any surveillance?

Aminat: The walkways connecting the dwellings in in the heart of the estate is where most of the crack houses are and where most of the criminal activity takes place. I believe it is because of the lack of surveillance in these walkways. I remember when I was 7/8, my neighbour used to warn me about parts of the estate because of an experience she had when someone got stabbed. It haunts her and I till this day.

Do you have a memory of a shared community space that made you feel welcomed?

Aminat: I can’t think of anything on my estate, but I just remember the school carnival street parties. I felt like I belonged in something bigger, and everyone felt connected on the street party.

Have you ever seen criminal activities on walkways? If you have, why do you think these spaces are comfortable areas for criminals?

Aminat: Criminal Activity – One time I saw some blood on the floor around the passageway next to my neighbours flat. The next week the neighbour got evicted and there was police tape across the passageway to the stairs. In my opinion, the activity was enabled because the area had no surveillance and was a

Do you think there’s a real sense of community on your estate?

Jamilla: The sense of community in my estate is very questionable, and quite divided- despite the juxtaposition in that. This is because my family associate with those a few doors either side of us, but any further than that, the sense of community is non-existent. The only sense of community that only ever existed was when the now grown up kids would play out, on the block, being children, where the only fear was coming home late. Now community is merely being able to leave your package with your neighbour or slipping a Christmas card through the letterbox to avoid the awkward small talk. The community in my estate is vaguely knowing who lives on each balcony because you’ve spied from your window many times. It’s the calling the police when the couple across the block are shouting more than usual and as divided as we may be, we still put ourselves in their shoes and hate injustice. Community is the adults calling the police and causing the police chase but the youngsters helping the person get away.

Aminat: Community, growing up in London felt very non-existent outside of school for my friends and I especially a local neighbourhood one. The tenant hall was never in use and interaction are awkward.

If you had the chance to ‘self-build’ would you?

Dad: Of course, if we had the opportunity to when we migrated here it would definitely be a good option because you get to own the property and that gets you within the housing market

Come and join in at the Tenant Hall!

North Peckham Estate Community Newspaper

Written by us, for us



ISSUE NO. 2

The mapping illustrates the construction and demolition of the regeneration of the five estates explored in the Illustrated Thesis, the rise of estates in inner city London and depicts my families' memories in estates within South-East London



Figure 1

Timeline

Depicting how people are products of their environments through the lens of Peckham. The timeline is divided into two parts, wider contextual factors, and personal accounts/narratives. Specifically looking at the history of estates, politics, demographic migration, societal changes, and narrative accounts.

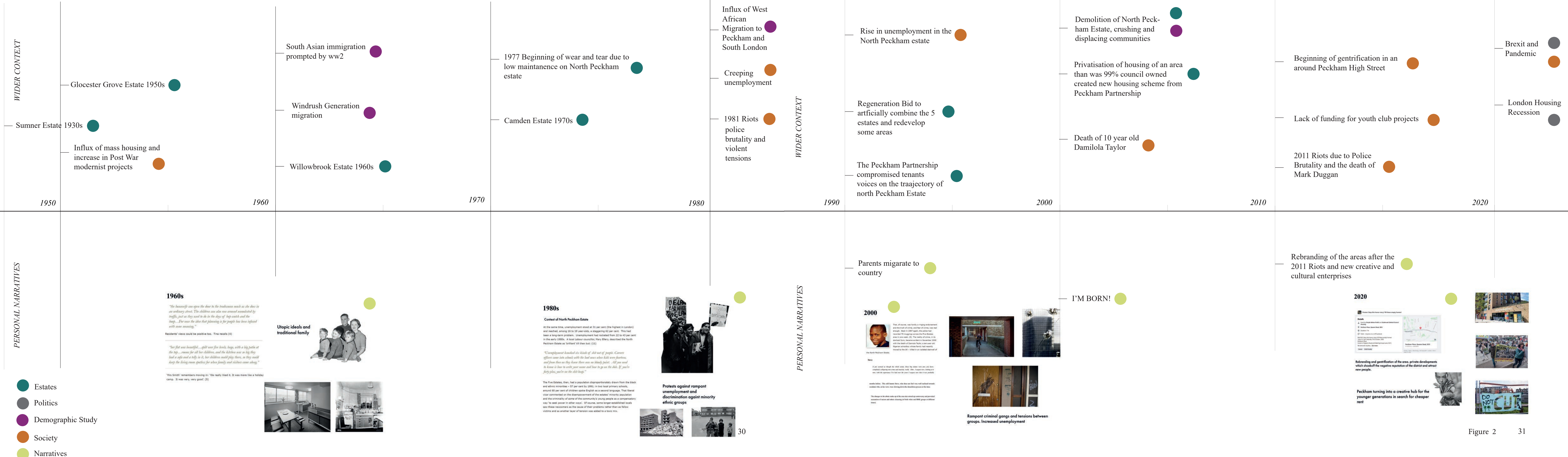


Figure 2 31

Personas

Narratives and characters created from personal accounts on the North Peckham Estate as well as Peckham in general. Their perspectives highlight the reality of the social housing conditions 2 decades apart. Also includes my family's perspective on living around Peckham in social housing.


1960s

Tina Smith

- 33-years-old British housewife
- Mother to three kids
- Living on the newly built North Peckham Estate.
- Raised and is raising kids on traditional values/family setting

Spatial conditions of the Estate:

- Huge kitchen and storage areas to accommodate to her lifestyle
- Playground and garden space for children
- Huge new patio space
- Big living space to accommodate to visitors




1980s

Gayan Da Silva

- 17-year-old Sri Lankan kid living on the estate
- Recently had to start working part-time to help mother to with bills.
- Was stopped and searched in the recent 1981 Brixton Riots on his way home school

Spatial conditions of the Estate:

- Playground pitch missing bits due to wear and tear
- Living space windows boarded up due to children playing football
- Graffitied outer door and bin space
- Graffitied patio area on wall divisions.




2000s

Kwasi Mensah

- 9-year-old, first generation Ghanaian immigrant living on North Peckham Estate
- Hangs out with friends on the block to play with friends
- Currently in Year 5, at Brunswick Park Primary School
- Working class mother working long shifts and dad currently unemployed

Spatial conditions on the Estates:

- Criminal activity on walkways, stairwells and other discrete placed within the estate
- Needed renovation in kitchen
- Moulding interior windows




2020s

Natalie Yang

- 22-year-old creative
- Recently move to Peckham place for university
- Goes to creative events within the area and has a strong community

Spatial conditions at Peckham Place:

- Outdoor community green space
- Spacious open plan interiors
- 3 bedroom shared flat





1990s - Present

Raji Family Perspective

- Migrated to South-East in the late 1980s/90s
- Muslim, Yoruba, Nigeria
- Raised 5 children
- Living in social housing and didn't follow the 'Right to Buy' scheme

Spatial Conditions of flat:

- Spacious flat accommodating family
- Faced issues getting social housing scheme
- Council renovated flat years after the renovation was scheduled

Figures 3 - 7 32

Visual Essay - Illustrations

These illustrations depict the change of interior social areas in social housing on the North Peckham estate from accounts of personal narratives. Moreover, I include my perspective living around Peckham.

1965



Speech bubbles: "Ahhhhh... relaxation time", "Splash, splash, splash, splash!"

1987



Speech bubble: "Ben, help me finish painting the clothes on the size"

2001



Speech bubbles: "STRIKE... GOAL!", "Kwasi, please be careful with the plants"

1995



Speech bubbles: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY! BIRTHDAY!", "This low entrance is so annoying! I'm gonna ask my mum to buy me a wheel I get home", "Ayo, James have the ball"

Figures 8 - 11 33

Peckham Estate Stories:
The Concertina Game

Each storyboard depicts the changing spatial conditions of estates in Peckham based on personal experience and accounts.

Try to match the persona card to each storyboard

TIP: Use the timeline to help you for clues



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

Figure 1

Raji, A (2023) *Mapping and collage of memories around my old flat in bentley house, Camberwell* [Collage]

Figure 2

Raji, A (2022) *Timeline of wider contextual history effecting Peckham and personal narratives through archival accounts* [Diagram]

Figures 3 - 7

Raji, A (2022) *Cards of personas based on personal accounts and my Peckham experience* [Diagram]

Figures 8 - 11

Raji, A (2022) *Back garden patio space, each across two-decade periods, exploring maintenance issues as well as personal narratives based on real accounts on the North Peckham estate* [Illustrations]

Figure 12

Raji, A (2023) *Angled shot of the concertina book – Peckham Estate Stories* [Photograph]

Figure 13

Raji, A (2023) *Eye level shot of storyboards in the inner part of the book* [Photograph]

Figure 14

Raji, A (2023) *Wide shot of Ana (model) playing the concertina book game to guess the persona to the storyboard* [Photograph]

Figure 15

Raji, A (2023) *Close shot of Ana (model) playing the concertina book game to guess the persona to the storyboard* [Photograph]