

## About - What is Design Future London?

The Mayor of London is passionate about creating opportunities for young people and building a better London for everyone. Design Future London is an award-winning challenge themed around our built environment, backed by a 6-week programme of session plans and resources which can be delivered in school, college and university curriculums. Anywhere that young people gather – they can take the challenge – be that a youth group, a faith group or club.

Working with partners including C40 Cities, Minecraft Education, MOBIE, Esri and Local Village Network, the Design Future London challenge offers opportunities to:

- Inspire young people to think about where they live, how places are shaped and influenced and how they could be involved
- Promote digital skills through the offer of Minecraft Education and ArcGIS licences
- Support diverse learning styles by offering a range of resources to help students respond to the design brief
- Support schools with a mentorship programme introducing students to representatives of the built environment sector

This year the challenge is also partnering with the Planning for London Programme and will be seeking to engage young Londoners to share their vision for the future of our city which will inform the review of a future London Plan.

The closing date for entries is Friday 26 January 2024.

Any questions? email us: [DesignChallenge@london.gov.uk](mailto:DesignChallenge@london.gov.uk)

We would like to thank everyone that has been involved in supporting the delivery of the award-winning Design Future London programme since its inception in July 2021 and the Building Trust for this opportunity. Across our city there are many professionals achieving great things in inspiring our next generation to join our exciting industry. Most of all teachers, who deliver the challenge with young people with passion and vigour – without their dedication Design Future London would not be possible.

Alt Text: ipad screen with a frame of Minecraft Education which has a text prompt saying Speak to Sadiq Khan. The caption states that we are asking students to respond to our challenge in Minecraft Education and other ways.

## **About: Why a design challenge?**

The Mayor of London is committed to supporting young Londoners access the opportunities that will allow them to fulfil their potential. Design Future London gives students an insight into one of the most exciting sectors in London and helps them to develop new skills.

Our aims have grown as we learn and talk to teachers and young people:

### **Year 1**

A challenge in the Royal Docks

- To inspire a future diverse pipeline – to promote the breadth of opportunity to young people, their teachers and their parents
- Raise awareness of built environment careers and embed into the classroom through the curriculum – particularly planning, design and how to make and shape places
- Inspire thinking around where you live, how places are shaped and influenced and how you can be involved

### **Year 2**

A challenge in Croydon Town Centre, we added:

To better understand London through the eyes of young Londoners Increase agency in the planning and place making process

Create a level playing field for engagement with the challenge through a mentoring programme for higher-than-average pupil premium schools

Embed opportunities for young people at every stage of the challenge – shaping, incorporating feedback, judging, events, prize experiences

### **Year 3**

A challenge in your own neighbourhood or town centre, we added:

Create a pathway to co-design a future London Plan to understand young Londoners priorities for their city

Alt Text: Two students at a desk working together with laptop computers in front of them. The caption reads University of East London embedded the programme into the course syllabuses for Year 2 students with ground-breaking impacts.

Alt Text: Image of colourful drawings students have created, one shows houses with rainbow front paths. The caption reads students start creating their ideas for Croydon.

## **Our reflections: What are we learning?**

Working with young people is teaching us a lot.

These are some of our reflections so far, but there is always more to learn.

### **Tools**

Everyone learns and expresses themselves differently. We provided tools to suit difference in learning and development, enabling students to say what they want.

### **Links**

Connect to industry partners to find the means to make that change happen – whether to influence, mentor or inform about careers.

### **Opportunity**

Embed young people in every part of what you do – they are sophisticated, surprising and we can learn from them.

### **Support**

To achieve successful outcomes we need to actively support delivery in education, drive it in the classroom through the curriculum, provide well delivered mentoring and structured resources that are easy to use for teachers. Remember it is the teachers delivering on the ground and help them to do so.

### **Comfort Zone**

We needed to shake things up and found ways to be more daring and inventive in our engagement i.e. artists' workshops, gaming, making models, more face to face.

### **Openness to change**

We listened to feedback from young people, teachers and mentors and were open to criticism and new ideas to improve – we acted on it to embed their ideas.

### **Power**

We have the power to unlock this if we want to – we need to place our intervention to where it is needed and help deliver the messages.

### **Collaborate**

Work together as an industry, don't reinvent the wheel – seek partners and pool resource and ideas.

### **Resource**

Be realistic about how much you need to put in to commit and be effective.

### **Relevance**

We need to make it relevant, understandable and cool – what is the built environment? Why and how should I be involved? Do we explain it?

### **Difference**

Seek out young people in different places to inspire those that would not normally engage, not only where it is obvious – be adventurous, flexible and open to learn. Anywhere where young people gather is an opportunity to engage them in what you are doing. Faith groups, youth clubs, schools etc.

#### Legacy

What is the legacy of what you are doing? Question the next steps for that young person and enable it to happen.

Alt Text: A workshop table with coloured paper, pens and books to cut out and make a collage. This groups has created a collage that depicts a green and sustainable city. The caption reads engaging artists to help us deliver workshops opened our eyes to how simple concepts can grow when the discussion is centred around an activity

## **Our reflections: Is what we are doing fit for purpose?**

Is what we are doing good enough?

Can we do more? Can we do it better?

As the built environment industry:

- Are we really delivering on our aspiration to inspire more young people?
- Are we being clear enough on opportunities?
- Are we helping enough and in the right ways?
- Are we putting enough resource into our future generation of professionals?
- Are we being meaningful in embedding the youth voice in planning and design?
- What can we revisit and redesign to be more effective?
- Could young Londoners help you shape this?

We want your ideas on how we can do better as an industry:

- Are you a practitioner?
- How are you engaging young people and improving opportunities for them to join the industry?
- Are you a young person?
- How can we do better?
- Do you know enough about the built environment industry and the career opportunities it offers?
- Are opportunities easy to find?
- What are we missing?
- Do you know how to get involved in shaping your city?
- How can we make it easier for you to get involved?

This is a crucial conversation ... we would really appreciate your feedback.

Visit the feedback box

Alt Text: A map was provided to students to follow around Croydon town centre, it asked for students to consider the taste, smell, sound and touch of Croydon. It asked students to look up and look across to take in the architecture. The caption reads: a Croydon walking tour with a difference with over 600 students participating – we asked questions of young people to develop ideas and thoughts they could take back to the classroom.

Alt Text: Darnell MacKenzie on stage. The caption reads We create opportunities for young people throughout the challenge journey – meet Darnell, he is one of the Mayor's Peer Outreach Workers. He coordinated a video with the Mayor's Lynk Up Crew (Aged 11–14) to share at the final events.

Alt Text: An aerial shot of students having lunch and networking at the final in the London Living Room at City Hall. The caption reads at the final events, industry professionals are invited to hear presentations from students and network to start building connections for the young challengers.

Alt Text: 2 students with the tutor at an ArcGIS workshop in LSBU campus in Croydon, there is a large screen showing the new Esri 3D functionality in the background. The caption reads Level 1 students studying the new T Level at City and Islington College were inspired by the new 3D tool presented to them by the Esri UK education team.

## **Co Design: Review of a future London plan – co-design with young Londoners**

This year, the Planning for London Programme which is considering priorities for what a future review of the London Plan should cover is embedding the Design Future London design challenge as a co-design opportunity with young Londoners.

Valuable insights will be gathered from young people on their priorities for London in 3 ways:

- Answering a set of tailor-made questions about their priorities for the future for both their neighbourhood and their home. These have been embedded into lesson plans that will be delivered in classrooms in primary schools, secondary schools and further education colleges.
- Live conversations with young people as part of structured workshops centred around key themes impacting our city
- All entries to the competitions will be reviewed to gather insights on thinking from young people, their ideas for the future and priorities for the city

See our live dashboard of feedback from young Londoners.

What questions are we asking?

- Do you think it is important that young people have a say in the future of their city?
- What should we prioritise in planning for how our city is shaped/develops in future?
- What changes would make your neighbourhood more sustainable?
- What would make the homes you live in better?

We can't wait to hear what children and young people tell us!

Alt Text: Two students presenting on stage to a newspaper headline saying London Sizzles. The caption reads young people are aware of the challenges our city faces and are vocal about issues like sustainability, climate change, safety, inclusion and provision of space.

Alt Text: a group of finalists jumping in the air after their competition win at City Hall. The caption reads we celebrate young people's ideas and aspirations through Design Future London – this will be captured as part of the programme as real and tangible input to the next London Plan.

Alt Text: A groups of young people gather to exchange thoughts on some benches at the finals while a teacher claps an entry. The caption reads Young people will be spelling out their priorities and teachers will be collecting this feedback in classrooms across London

### **What did young Londoners tell us they wanted?: Less grey, more green and blue ...**

- Bring colour to empty frontages
- More purposeful green spaces – living walls, green tramways, activities
- Break up and populate pedestrian areas with community, activity and greening
- Water features and activated blue water spaces i.e. fishing, water sports

Alt Text: Future's Fighters, Age 13, Woolwich Polytechnic School for Girls – Entries were clearly saying more green space in our town centres, this entry included green walls and other schemes for greening our streets

Alt Text: The Dunstonian Education Edition, St Dunstan's College, Age 12–13 – Outdoor seating, an outdoor theatre, urban greening including roof top forests and a boating pond

Alt Text: Team Clay, University of East London, Age 20 – A green bridge connecting two areas of the town centre with activated safe spaces

Alt Text: Professional Winners, Broadmead Primary School, Age 10 – “Our world is a calm and peaceful place that everyone can join in”, the proposal included a city farm and open spaces



**What did young Londoners tell us they wanted? Inject more colour and imagination ...**

- Murals, painted walls / buildings to increase civic pride
- Tourist destinations and a purpose to visit, creating ownership of an area
- More engaging pedestrian routes and walkways
- Street art / street furniture – strong theme of material reuse

Alt Text: Team Y, University of East London, Age 24+ – Imaginative pedestrian areas in the Forest City

Alt Text: Crafting Croydon, Highgate Wood School, Age 13–14 – Enlivened, inclusive streets where you can share your culture

Alt Text: Croydon Super Gardens, Edmonton School, Age 17 – A nature garden with a functional public art and a community facility focus. A giant Lotus Flower to bring more people to Croydon

Alt Text: Creative Croydon, University College London, Age 21–23 – Permeable, enlivened streets with purpose

**What did young Londoners tell us they wanted? Give us more space ... and more things to do for body and mind**

- More affordable sports and facilities for young people
- Providing focus for the town centre – a reason to visit i.e. markets, creative spaces, food, pre-loved fashion, youth clubs
- Swimming pools, fitness and wellbeing
- Places to slow down and places to speed up

Alt Text: Team Clay, University of East London, Age 19–24 – Imaginative public spaces incorporating community playgrounds, a basketball court and water features

Alt Text: River, Sude & Modupe, Park View School, Age 14–15 – Extensive redevelopment to include parks, a downgrading of Wellesley Road with sustainable transport links and greening

Alt Text: Dome Zone, Bromley High School, Age 14 – Created small domes for growing local food and being self-sufficient, these were to be placed across Croydon Town Centre for the community

Alt Text: Creative Croydon, University College London, Age 21–23 – Permeable, enlivened streets with purpose

**What did young Londoners tell us they wanted? Sustainable and tech solutions ... to look after OUR future**

- Reuse and retrofit of existing buildings – with an inventive community focus
- More natural light, solar energy, roof gardens and community growing spaces
- Sustainable transport solutions and innovation i.e. drone delivery platforms
- Cleaning robots / e-scooters / kinetic pavements / Virtual Reality suites

Alt Text: Aervire, London Academy of Excellence, Age 17 – An aero and aquaponics structure can be built, as well as surrounding mixed use, passive house-standard buildings to encourage sustainability

Alt Text: Croydon Remixed, Independent Entry, Age 8 and 11 – Proposed green roofs, drone delivery platforms and sustainable energy solutions

Alt Text: Bubblecity, Bromley High School, Age 13 – To rebuild community strength in Croydon, old shipping containers were reused for their buildings

Alt Text: Team Sully and Arianna, Brooklands Primary School, Age 10 – Capture more carbon and self-generate more electricity to be more sustainable

**What did young Londoners tell us they wanted? Think about safer, healthier, more inclusive buildings**

- Embracing difference – more design led by lived experience i.e. women, faith, disability, neuro diversity
- 24 hour London – more lighting, more active streets at night for safety
- Reducing car use, pedestrianisation
- Co-housing schemes for all sectors of the community

Alt Text: Skyglass Architecture, Graveney School, Age 14 – Created a modular complex of affordable apartments surrounded by parks and gardens

Alt Text: Clapton Girls Academy, Age 16–17 – Mindmap to Minecraft – this entry demonstrates the complex journey students have been on to create their sustainable designs

Alt Text: Futures Fighters, Woolwich Polytechnic for Girls, Age 13 – Enlivened streets with seating areas and colourful shop fronts, reusing buildings for affordable housing and community focused activity

### **What did young Londoners tell us they wanted? Represent our diverse community ...**

- Creating places and spaces for older and younger generations from all backgrounds to mix, socialise and thrive
- Affordable housing and solving the homelessness crisis
- Places to share culture and faith –from food to cultural experiences
- Multi-use facilities to promote Inclusion

Alt Text: Farringtons Minecraft Club, Farringtons School, Age 11–14 – Created a rainbow themed building as a landmark to represent the need to be inclusive and embrace difference

Alt Text: Monarch Architecture, Putney High School, Age 15 – The sustainable provision of housing for all was a key theme for this team focussing on the community of one of the most diverse boroughs in London

Alt Text: GenZ, Graveney School, Age 14 - A colourful, sustainable solution to the rising cost of student housing

Alt Text: Spazio Verde, Ursuline Academy, Age 15 – This team wanted to create a diverse scene of art, food and culture, creating spaces where the community can work, shop and play all under one roof. Offering homes with little or no bills.

## **Get involved: Be Creative ....**

Children and young people:

- Reinforced freedom of thought on ideas that adults overthink
- Revisited core principles of urban planning
- Created inexpensive small-scale interventions that make real difference
- Were not afraid to be bold and imaginative, not held back by convention
- Were adaptable and innovative – some using their entry to Design Future London to win other competitions, seeking work experience from industry partners where relationships had been made, winning scholarships, using this for their UCAS applications and many other next steps were achieved

Alt Text: Secondary schools and colleges were invited to RISO printing workshops with Turf Projects in Croydon to kickstart their ideas

Alt Text: Enhancing digital skills is important - Esri ArcGIS built a hub for students introducing them to data to support their site analysis

Alt Text: Delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks is another focus - here students workshopped ideas with Grimshaw Architects at Homes UK

Alt Text: Enhancing soft and transferable skills essential for future workplaces are a focus of the challenge

## **Get involved: Be Inspired ...**

Children and young people:

- Thrived in a space where they were offered an opportunity and platform to have their say in different ways, being more inclusive and open to all
- Were bold, inclusive, collaborative, inventive – the sky was the limit
- Not afraid to challenge the status quo and rock the boat
- Realised it doesn't have to be big regeneration to be effective – it can be small interventions too
- Perceptive and didn't over complicate
- Thrived in teams using agile project management methods, testing designs throughout

Alt Text: Our prizes are focussed on giving further opportunities to challengers – we are grateful for the support from industry.

Alt Text: Lendlease guided some students around their Elephant Park development showing them project delivery on the ground.

Alt Text: Teamwork skills, bouncing ideas and constructive crits happened naturally

Alt Text: Students had clear thoughts on sustainability and creating communities in their city

## **Get involved: Have Fun!**

Children and young people:

- Inspired and challenged us
  - Thought better places mattered ... safer, fairer, greener, more prosperous
  - Clearly want change, were empowered with a voice and had the confidence to express it
  - Thrived on the challenge with increased self-belief and self-confidence
  - Want better places to live, work and play
- 
- Are not afraid to ask why? Or why not?
  - Have great ideas and sophisticated thinking
  - Want to be part of that change and want to know how
  - Provided 2-way inspiration – we should learn from their back-to-basics approach
  - Removed the nonsense with simpler concepts
  - Re-energised and reassured us through their positive can-do outlook
  - Were optimistic
  - Had increased exposure to soft skills experience for the future – all important game changers for young people to demonstrate that they have a place at the table

The future is bright, the future is safe!

Alt Text: Schools were invited to a curated workshop to start thinking about what makes up the built environment with MATT+FIONA and artists from Turf Projects – Croydon's homegrown art space

Alt Text: Bringing the built environment to life and the priorities we were talking about was very important to successful delivery

Alt Text: Students from Blackheath High School took some time out for a team photo on their walking tour of Croydon town centre

Alt Text: Even Chewbacca inputted to one of our interactive workshop at London Build



## **Our partners: MOBIE and Croydon Council partnered Design Future London in Year 2**

George Clarke, Architect, TV presenter and founder of MOBIE shares a passion for inspiring young people with the Mayor of London and they work together on Design Future London.

### About MOBIE

MOBIE – the Ministry of Building Innovation and Education – is all about young people and the future of home design.

Home is the most important piece of architecture in our lives and young people are vital to the future of housing – they must play a major role in shaping the future of our Built environment. MOBIE is a charity, founded by the architect and TV presenter George Clarke, it:

- Promotes innovation in the design and delivery of homes
- Attracts, inspires and trains young people to be the creators of the homes and communities of the future

### Our aim

We want to radically improve the way we design and create homes in the UK – to raise design standards, build more sustainably, introduce innovation and transform home building into clean, precision-engineered and efficient process with greater emphasis on building quality, performance and the needs of users.

We want to inspire the next generation to join the housing industry and to drive change through different ways of thinking and doing. We want them to adopt more digital approaches, use new materials and technologies, and use improvement thinking to help reduce waste, environmental and climate impact and to improve build quality.

### What we do

Our school resources and training open up home building, the built environment and sustainable construction to young people, showing them the variety of roles and opportunities that they can pursue in the built environment industry.

Our design challenges, like Design Future London, inspire young people across the UK to share their ideas on the future of home, places and the built environment. We never cease to be wowed by the imagination and amazing talent that is out there just waiting to be unleashed!

Our education resources, courses and training help to ensure young people have the skills that the industry needs to transform and improve, including digital design, new technology, materials and processes, sustainability and alternative energy and soft skills such as collaboration and presentation. With our education partners, we have created an 'education pathway' from BTEC to PhD.

At MOBIE we will attract and nurture a new generation of designers, makers, constructors, developers, planners and surveyors to enter our housing industry and to improve the design and delivery of our most important buildings.

If you are a student, school, college or an employer interested in creating the homes of the future and engaging with and learning from young people then we are keen to hear from you – contact us.

#### About Croydon Council

Croydon Council place making team worked with Design Future London to create the challenge for Year 2, centred on the North End Quarter.

The aim was to bring the challenge to their award-winning urban room in the Whitgift Centre.

## **Our partners: Schools Reinventing Cities: C40 Cities and Minecraft Education**

### About Schools Reinventing Cities

Schools Reinventing Cities, a partnership between Minecraft Education and C40 Cities, offers a unique and innovative way for young people to engage with climate action in their cities and showcase their innovative ideas beyond their classrooms.

Using a Minecraft representation of their city, school students are challenged to design climate solutions that could be replicated in real life and submit these ideas in a city-wide competition. C40 Cities and Minecraft Education work with cities globally to engage young people across the world in tangible urban planning ideas for climate action.

London was the first city to launch a Schools Reinventing Cities competition in January 2023 as part of Design Future London.

### Why?

We must harness a model of low carbon and resilient development where everyone can thrive. We can expect young people to continue to lead on climate, not least because their futures depend on achieving a radical change in the way the world is currently run. We must create a space for youth to collaborate with cities and share their vision and ideas for a more sustainable and inclusive urban future.

The programme builds on:

The mobilisation of youth and cities on the climate crisis

The concept of C40's Reinventing Cities competitions to find tangible solutions to urban problems and Minecraft Education's past collaborations with cities on similar projects

The programme aims to:

- Engage young people to design and build solutions for climate action and resilience in their city
- Amplify youth voices and ideas to city leaders
- Invite city leaders to move beyond ideas to action and strive for the implementation of winning ideas through policy change or physical builds
- Educate everyone on the actions they can take to combat the climate crisis

### About Minecraft Education

Minecraft Education is a gamebased learning tool used by millions of teachers and students around the world. Students can create and explore together in a fun, immersive Minecraft universe, building skills along the way!

### About C40 Cities

C40 is a global network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities that are united in action to confront the climate crisis and create a future where everyone, everywhere can thrive. The current Chair of C40 is Mayor of London Sadiq Khan.

## **Inspire young Londoners: Be a Mentor ...**

From the students engaged with programmes run by Local Village Network:

- 66% of students are now considering a career in the built environment, with architecture and engineering being the top choices.
- 70% of students felt that they gained a better understanding of their soft and hard skills and how these can be valuable in a career.
- 76% of students report that the opportunity to speak with new and diverse people left them feeling more confident to do so in the future.

Are you a built environment professional that wants to help young people?

Sign up – its quick and easy and you can make that real difference to our future generation of city makers.

We have also developed a specific platform with developer Mount Anvil as part of their Makers and Mentors programme.

The platform can match schools that need help with the challenge to companies or individuals that have resource to help.

We work closely with STEM Learning with their STEM Ambassadors programme where you can sign up to be a volunteer.

Our supported programmes

Following the pilot year, it was concluded that more schools could be involved and more opportunity could be created for those children and young people from diverse and low socio-economic backgrounds.

Three organisations specialising in mentoring young people from higher than average pupil premium schools were engaged to increase the reach specifically to these young Londoners.

**Local Village Network (LVN)** Our purpose is to ensure that every young person has access to positive networks and an equal chance to reach their full potential. LVN reaches out with mentoring programmes and a youth-facing app which promotes free opportunities to young Londoners through its platform. LVN are a partner again in Year 3 and have assisted in creating session plans for schools and are delivering a direct programme in 12 selected schools across Greater London.

**ROK** Here at ROK, we support young people from diverse and low-income backgrounds, helping them to believe in themselves and succeed in their career goals and aspirations. Through our workshops, mentorships and various events we organise, we give practical advice to aid young people in London aged 11–18 to progress in their careers successfully.

**Mayor's Fund for London** We are a politically independent charity which champions opportunities for young Londoners from low-income backgrounds and diverse communities

across the Capital. We collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, and the Mayor of London is our patron.