



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

SPACES 2020

News and views about Hackney's built environment

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Kings Crescent Estate



Clockwise © Jim Stephenson, Peter Landers and Tim Cocker



Kings Crescent Phases 1 and 2 is one of the winners of the Hackney Design Awards 2018. Based in Stoke Newington, the development involved the creation of 273 new homes and the refurbishment of 101 existing homes. Of these, 41% are for social rent, 10% are intermediate, and 49% are for market sale. They are part of a 765-home masterplan.

Working with Henley Halebrown Architects, Karakusevic Carson Architects have created a series of three courtyard blocks that combine new and refurbished buildings around landscaped communal gardens. The public realm and landscaped areas were designed by Muf architecture/art.

The architecture of the new buildings aims to bridge the gap between strong, confident buildings fit for higher density living and

fine grain detailing, with attention paid to proportion, scale and elegance.

Elevations, massing and detailing are intended to subtly respond to a variety of contexts, including the surrounding late Victorian townscape of 19th century terraced and semi-detached housing as well as the existing post-war estate buildings whilst maximising views of Clissold Park.

The centrepiece of the public realm is a new play street that runs the length of the site, named Murrain Road after the late resident who ran a local youth club. Both route and destination, the street makes a new connection to the park, and is a shared resource for residents and neighbours from the wider area

The scheme was informed by continuous and active engagement with local residents to ensure the design reflected their needs and made the greatest possible social impact.

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St Columba Church By Hedy Parry-Davies

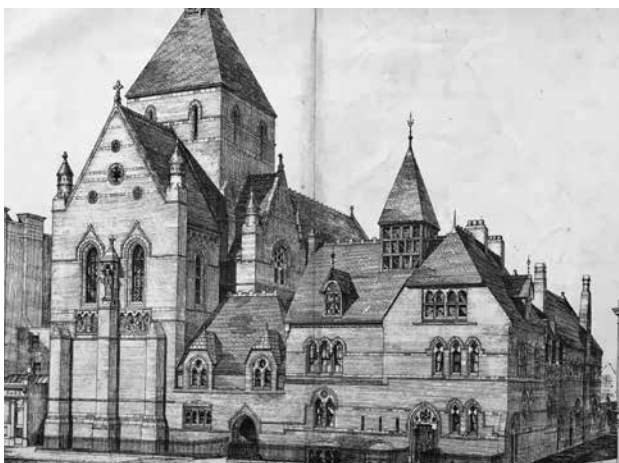
St Columba Church has a huge and memorable presence on the busy Kingsland Road. It was built from 1868-1869, to designs by the Victorian architect James Brooks (1825-1901), reputedly known as ‘the Sir Christopher Wren of the East End’. He designed four churches of great scale in the area: St Michael, Mark Street, E2 (1863-65), St Chad’s, Haggerston (1868-69) as well as St Columba and St Saviour’s, Hyde Road, Hoxton (1863-1870) though the latter was lost during WWII. All three surviving churches are Grade I listed.

Brooks was born in Hatford, near Wantage, Berkshire, to a farming family but at grammar school was influenced by High Churchmen, including Dr Pusey (1800-82), to abandon farming for architecture. In the late 1850s he was commissioned to build St Michael’s church through Dr Robert Brett, a surgeon from Stoke Newington and a friend of Dr Pusey’s. Both were members of a missionary movement promoting Ritualism and targeting the poor communities of London’s East End. Financial assistance was provided by the Church Building Commissioners and the Metropolitan Churches Fund.

On a Victorian Society visit in 1972, Roger Dixon, the architectural historian and writer, summarised Brooks’ East End works: ‘The three churches are remarkable for the honesty of their construction, their comparative lack of ornament and their grand proportions. Brooks chose as his model the earliest period of Gothic. The churches are not however in the archaeological tradition of the Gothic Revival...He wished to produce, with the limited means at his disposal, churches for the needs of his own day. Churches that would proclaim the Gospel to the poor’ (The Victorian Society ‘Visit to Churches by James Brooks in Shoreditch and Haggerston’, January 1972).

Ian Nairn in *Nairn’s London* (1967) agreed of St Columba that: ‘...everything is here because it needs to be, and there is none of the genteel swoonishness of High Anglican churches in the politer parts of London.’

But its austerity was not entirely by design. According to Dixon, ‘Not all the capitals have received the carving intended for them nor has a scheme of mosaic panels been carried out... The contract sum was for £7,894, although the final cost was nearer



Clockwise: St Columba Church, clergy house and schools, painting by Hundley 1977; *The Builder*, 11 December 1869; and St Columba Church, clergy house and schools. Lithograph, *Building News*, 28 February 1873.

£10,500. The reason for the extra cost was partly structural difficulties with the nave piers. Brooks designed these of brick but settlement necessitated the replacement of brick by stone’. And so decorative elements were in fact omitted to achieve savings.

The main entrance is through an arched gateway leading into a quadrangle with the Church at its south. A detailed description of the church is included in Historic England’s listing citation (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1226862>). In brief, it consists of nave, aisles, transepts and chancel; natural lighting penetrates

from clerestory glazing, as the aisles are windowless. At the crossing is a low tower with a pyramid roof. The font, its cover and the reredos were also designed by Brooks.

In 1975 the church was declared redundant and closed, followed by years of neglect and deterioration. In 1980 a lease was taken over by the Christ Apostolic Church (CPC), conditional on their undertaking substantial repair works. These have not been completed, and the church building is on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register Category A. The CPC has now set up a Crowd Fund to meet the costs of repairs.

New life for St John at Hackney church By Paul Bolding



The Grade II* listed St John at Hackney church has been restored and reordered as a multi-purpose space for worship, concerts and community use at a cost of £5.5m.

The work includes repairs to the roof and improved access to the church including reopening and restoring all four corner entrances with their ionic porches. Inside, non-original accretions have been swept away to make a larger open space on the original Greek Cross plan. The altar sits on a new permanent raised platform which can double as a stage.

Audio and lighting equipment and better toilet provision will make it easier to resume the church's former life as a concert venue alongside its role as a place of worship.

Before its closure, the church had started to gain recognition as a key gig location with acts including Emeli Sandé, Robbie Williams and Coldplay.

Some of the work has corrected poorly done repairs and alterations carried out after a serious fire in 1955.

Architects of the revamp are Thomas Ford & Partners with interior design by John Pawson, including the chapels, stage and lighting. Top visual artist and set designer Es Devlin has contributed a work for one of the prayer spaces.

A new baptistery and resurrection chapel have been constructed, the former including

a font in Portland stone designed by Pawson. The latter will house the church's war memorial.

'Together, the chapels symbolically mark the visitor's journey around the building from birth, through life, to death, and the hope of resurrection that lies beyond', said Zac Lloyd, church community engagement officer.

Memorials have been rehung and a small number moved. Church offices at the back have been rearranged. Flat roofs have been fitted with solar panels.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has contributed £1.8m to the total. The neighbouring Hackney Gardens development by Thornsett Group Plc, which specialises in property deals with churches, provides substantial Section 106 funds. The church gets one of the three buildings in the mixed tenure development for community facilities including a food bank, scout hut and church halls.

A Section 106 agreement dated 2015 between the borough and the church provides for £1.741m for church works, £102,000 for libraries and education in the borough and £10,000 for public realm works.

Clapton CAAC disliked some design elements of the new residential development, most notably on the sensitive east elevation that faces the church and the grounds. It was 'deeply uncomfortable' with roof terraces.

St John at Hackney was designed by James Spiller and built in 1792-1797 to replace a 13th century church nearby of which only St Augustine's Tower remains.

The church quotes Pawson as saying: 'At the heart of a project like this is the challenge of allowing architecture and people to come together in the richest ways possible. I am looking forward to playing my part in retuning an important piece of London's historic fabric, to make exhilarating spaces charged with atmosphere and purpose.'

The church will not have fixed pews in the nave but portable seating will be used. Tiered seating has been installed either side of the organ.

Both the congregation – which has been using St Luke's, Homerton during the work – and the bellringers will be looking forward to the reopening at a date in 2020 yet to be announced, possibly in time for Easter.

Noticeboard

Rewilding Regent's Canal

The Wildlife Gardeners of Haggerston have won a prize for their work in creating habitats for animals on Regent's Canal and Kingsland Basin. They came first in the 'Urban Gardening' category in the biennial Natur im Garten awards. Natur im Garten promotes gardening without the use of artificial pesticides and fertilisers. The gardeners look after a 350-metre length of Regent's Canal between Kingsland and Whitmore Road bridges, and take care of the neighbouring Kingsland Basin Nature Reserve. The plants they introduce to the canal clean the water, provide habitat and forage for insects, fish and birds, and make the waterway a more natural place to explore.

Castle Climbing Centre



The Castle Climbing Centre in Green Lanes is to expand its roped climbing area by developing the former Pirates Playhouse building, which is nearby. The new space will be sustainable with insulation to reduce energy usage and solar panels on the roof to provide renewable energy.

Museum of the Home

The Geffrye Museum is to reopen in summer 2020 under the name Museum of the Home. This follows major renovation work which has kept it closed for more than two years. The museum closed in 2017 to undertake an £18.1 million overhaul which has doubled its space, partly by opening up its almshouses for the newly created Home Galleries. These will host permanent thematic displays which explore people's everyday experiences of home life over the past 400 years by weaving together historical and contemporary stories. The renovations will also bring in an entrance opposite Hoxton Station, a street-side café and much improved visitor facilities. A Learning Pavilion will allow people of

all ages to take part in the museum's education work. Visitors will be able to enjoy direct, year-round access to the popular Gardens Through Time exhibition, as well as a new eco-friendly roof garden. The new Collections Library overlooking the front of the building will give the public access to the museum's extensive archive for the first time.

Award for Rio

The Rio in Dalston was named Cinema of the Year in the Screen Awards 2019. It was in the category of cinemas with 24 screens or under and was recognised for its work in the community. The Castle Cinema in Brooksby's Walk was on the shortlist of eight.



Closure of F Cooke

F Cooke in Broadway Market closed down on 24 December 2019. The shop, which served pie, mash and jellied eels, had opened in 1900. It is a Grade-II listed building.



Hackney Society Events

Highbury Substation

Saturday 15 February 2019, 10.30am

Visit with James Watson

Following a fascinating past visit to the Millfields Electricity Substation, Hackney Society member James Watson will take us on a tour of Highbury Substation at Finsbury Park introducing us to a cable tunnel connecting Hackney to Wimbledon and the steps being taken to bring renewable energy from offshore wind to the heart of the capital. Sturdy footwear is essential. Photography and videography are strictly limited.

Meet at 1 Newington Barrow Way, N7 7FA. £5 for Hackney Society members, £10 for non-members. Booking essential. Book via hackneysociety.org

Hoxton Square

Saturday 28 March 2019, 11.00am

Tour with Carolyn Clark
Hoxton Square has constantly reinvented itself over the centuries, from market gardens to industrial powerhouse; from the haunt of Young British Artists to hub of the night-time economy. Carolyn Clark, author of *Shoreditch Tales*, will take us on a tour of the Square and its surrounds, exploring past, present and future.

Meet at Gigi's, 11 Hoxton Square, N1 6NU. £5 for Hackney Society members, £10 for non-members. Booking essential. Book via hackneysociety.org

Publications

Ridley Road Market

by Tamara Stoll developed during an eight-year engagement with Ridley Road. Weaving together photographs, archival materials, stories, newspaper cuttings and a series of postcards, it conveys Ridley Road as a place of community and of cultures from all over the world coming together. £12.99. Available from <https://ridleyroadmarketbook.com>



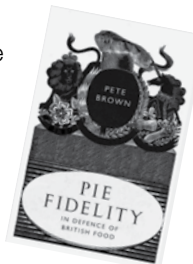
Once upon a Time in Brick Lane

by Paul Trevor is a collection of pictures taken in Spitalfields and the surrounding areas between 1974 and 1989. Hoxton Mini Press, £25.



Pie Fidelity: In Defence of British Food

by Stoke Newington-based writer Pete Brown considers the origins and present status of nine typical British dishes, including fish and chips, Sunday roast and crumble with custard. Particular Books, £16.99.



Hackney Archive: Work and Life 1971-1985

by the photographer Neil Martinson includes images of Hackney before technology and gentrification changed the area. Hoxton Mini Press, £17.95.



Spaces is published by the Hackney Society. Views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

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