

PLANNING STATEMENT

'A Space for Us': a Somers Town History Space

For Attention: Camden Council Planning Dept.

I am applying for Temporary change of use from current Class E to Class F1 (Community Museum) for a period of three years.

We wish to open this Community Museum in autumn 2021 in premises in Phoenix Rd, as 'A Space for Us,' a physical museum to make a positive difference to people's lives in Somers Town through education, preservation and celebration of history and community events.

Diana Foster of Somers Town Space Community Interest Company

Background

Somers Town is facing huge destabilising change. Its heritage is under threat: much of its 'art in everyday life' has been demolished and here is a community suffering, who feel at risk of annihilation.

This is precisely why '**A Space for Us**' is needed: to maintain a sense of place.

'A Space for Us' will interpret history with relevance to the present day; in an area where ideas of social reform and justice took root, as well as commemorate a rich working class heritage.

Future aims

1. Our aim is secure the Museum a longer term future and to empower all our communities.
2. We also aim to replace the missing Gilbert Bayes finials via fundraising and raising awareness.

Uses

Staff in attendance:

- Maximum 4: 1 paid and 1 temporary artist in residence + 2 volunteers (part time) usually 1 person
- At installation of new exhibitions, we may have more people in attendance, e.g. young people's exhibition

Timings

- Open Tuesday to Friday 11-6.30pm and Saturday 11-3pm
- Once a week Open until 9pm for educational uses or small discussion group (10 max)
- Once a month Opening until 10 pm for 'Opening' Events or talks

Opening will follow social distancing guidelines but is likely to include:

- General opening to locals for consultation groups and discussion Months 1 - 4
- General opening public for view our displays and for reading: exhibition/s and small library
- Open to young people club for reading classes 2x a week/: after school in week 3.30-5pm and Saturday (age 5 - 11)
- Open for Memory Space - older person's lunch group 1 x week
- Meeting point for guided walks likely once a month

Progress

2016 History Club **Committee** set up: Cllr Roger Robinson; Deborah Lavin; Alan Stephens; Diana Foster; Stephen Denholm of **START**

2017 Heritage Lottery Funded oral history interactive **FILM 'Spirit' set up website**

2018 Raised issue of **neglected Gilbert Bayes working class heritage** - gained support from Origin
2019 'Pop Up Museum' at **British Library** 1st publication: **Spirit!** 100 years of Social Housing Panel Event

Somers Town Space was set up as a **Community Interest Company**.

2020 Awarded funds to begin a development phase: '**Developing the Somers Town Community**' Community Consultation: Workshops and online survey of over 300 people

1. A "mobile pop up museum" - exhibitions, consultation and outreach on estates and report
2. Setting up of a Research group and Community Steering committee

2021 **Community Co-Design**: Half Term Design Week with Regent Place,

Online learning project for local Citizen Curriculum Edith Neville Primary School co-curation - Display

2021 Co-design of an **outdoor History Space** prototype with Camden Council CSM PUBLIC STUDIO

Who we are

We are embedded in the community, have built up an extensive network of locals, experts and organisations, as well as identified the archival landscape to draw upon.

Directors are Diana Foster, Steve Denholm, Secretary Jaimie Denholm

Academic Lead: Professor Esther Leslie /Treasurer Mae Slevin

www.aspaceforus.club Twitter: @HistoryTown Facebook:/aspaceforus

We have the support of our 3 councillors, Origin Housing, RMT. Funders HLF; Camden Giving, Culture Seeds GLAC; Community Chest Francis Crick, and others

