



The Croydon Urban Room

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1.0 Why & What



The Croydon Urban Room, is a physical home for public participation in the shaping of Croydon; fostering meaningful connection between people and place; past, present and future.

Why

Planning is top-down, political and inaccessible to many. At Croydon we are seeking to disrupt this norm and make planning populist, through a physical and online space for exhibition, events and active participation that is accessible and part of everyday life.

Our overarching aim is to democratise access and understanding of the planning process specifically through education and open dialogue, focusing particularly on underrepresented communities. We see this as the fundamental step in ensuring that the built environment of Croydon is for all that live, work and visit here.

The Urban Room seeks to:

INFORM:

make visible and democratise access to planning

EDUCATE:

foster reciprocal exchange of local expertise and knowledge

COLLABORATE & CREATE:

connect community, industry and government

INSPIRE:

empower individual public participation in changes and decisions that relate to the built environment

What

The Croydon Urban Room will become part of the everyday life of the Croydon centre; a known and familiar space for transparent exchange and two-way education. It will become a resilient and sustainable platform in a challenging financial landscape. The project will have an established and collaborative exhibition and events programme, featuring:

A) PLANNING SHOPFRONT (TO INFORM)

The physical shopfront space will provide a de-institutionalised public project space for civil servants to do their work, where the public can observe, enquire and participate in council projects live 'in action', and where the two can collaborate and exchange

B) RECIPROCAL LEARNING PROGRAMME (TO EDUCATE)

An education programme open to members of the public, all community groups, industry and council staff, and designed for reciprocal exchange, for individuals to share perspectives and expertise.

C) LIVE EXHIBITION/ARCHIVE (TO COLLABORATE & CREATE)

A live archive and exhibition space for the public, industry and government to research and explore the past, present and future of Croydon.

D) CREATIVE MEMBERSHIP (TO INSPIRE)

Membership initiatives will be the foundation of empowering civic agency in practice; providing formalised forums for influence and feedback, via physical and digital networks.

My priority for Creighton is
**COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

Where we want to be

What do you think?

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 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

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**Community Facilities
 Health and Education**

Where we want to be

The borough's health and education facilities will reflect the shared priorities, address their needs, facilitate improved education achievement, promote healthy lifestyles, as well as be of high quality, well designed and accessible for future generations' needs and be located and distributed in balance communities to ensure the borough's longevity to be successful. The council will work closely with the providers of these facilities to ensure there is sufficient capacity as their provision is set in the direct control of the council.

What are the key issues to consider?

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- It is anticipated that primary schools will be provided in 2028.
- In the early secondary schools in 2029.
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How could these issues be addressed through planning policy?

Policy options include:

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What do you think?

Please fill in a comment card at your ward through options at: www.creighton.gov.uk/developmentplan

Housing Design

Where we want to be

To support the creation of inclusive housing with a high quality standard of design and quality that is distinctive and responsive to and enhances the character and tenor of the local area.

What are the key issues to consider?

- The goal is to deliver additional housing should not lead to poor quality homes for the most vulnerable residents.
- Provide high quality design and construction that are informed by the local character, heritage and sense of place.
- Promote high quality shared spaces, amenities, public realm and landscape design and landscaping.
- Deliver a mix of housing types including specialist housing, to meet the needs of a wide range of applicants.
- Advocate for sustainable design and construction methods to reduce carbon emissions.

Urban Design, Heritage and Local Character

Where we want to be

How could these issues be addressed through planning policy?

Policy options include:

- Promoting and enhancing existing social infrastructure and community facilities, including but not limited to public houses, places of worship and other cultural facilities that are representative of the borough's rich diversity. This includes meeting the needs of all young people.
- Support the creation of new accessible leisure and high quality, well integrated community facilities, including but not limited to public houses, places of worship and other cultural facilities that are representative of the borough's rich diversity. This includes meeting the needs of all young people.
- Support initiatives of sustainable activities and practices such as urban farming, community gardens and alloties.
- Support entrepreneurship, creative and cultural industries in facilitating community activities and support the use of leisure and cultural facilities that are representative of the borough's rich diversity. This includes meeting the needs of all young people.
- Encourage better use of existing and new community facilities for promoting more use of school facilities outside of school hours.

What do you think?

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2.0 How





The project is pioneering a new form of transparent and meaningful civic engagement in an edge condition of a growing city; it aims to de-institutionalise and deconstruct socio-economic and cultural barriers, making planning and placemaking popular.

LIVE FEEDBACK LOOP

The proposed physical and digital space provides a platform for transparent decision-making and clear terms of collaboration and engagement, so people can keep up to date with council plans and projects.

PARENT & ATELIER

Consisting of a 'parent' venue, a roving atelier and website; the project has far-reaching impact across the borough, and is able to be both place-specific and borough-wide in focus.

ACCESSIBLE & AGILE FRAMEWORK

Featuring a flexible Kee Klamp kit-of-parts that can be moved and adapted easily; the project to be responsive and to grow and build iteratively, as and when there is demand and available funding.

DOMESTIC & DEINSTITUTIONAL MODEL

The kit-of-parts is purposefully domestic in scale and design; facilitating intimate 'living room' events and exchange akin to a dining table. This plays out in its physical siting; the space is made visible in everyday life in familiar locations of exchange, such as neighbourhood high streets and shopping centres.

PLAY ORIENTED!

Play and role play is central to our focus on expanding engagement and agency in the planning process.





Domestic & Deinstitutional Model

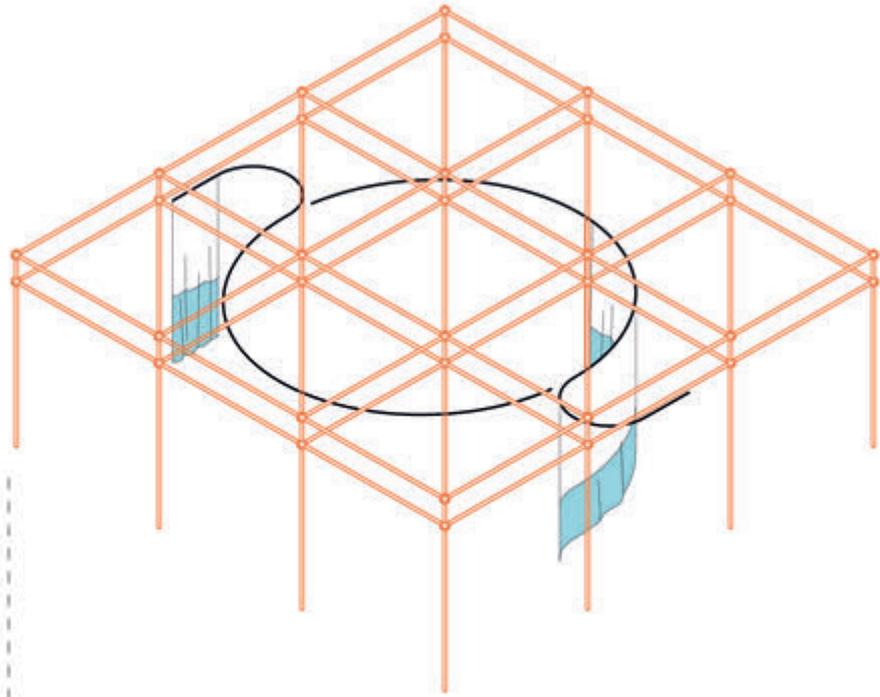




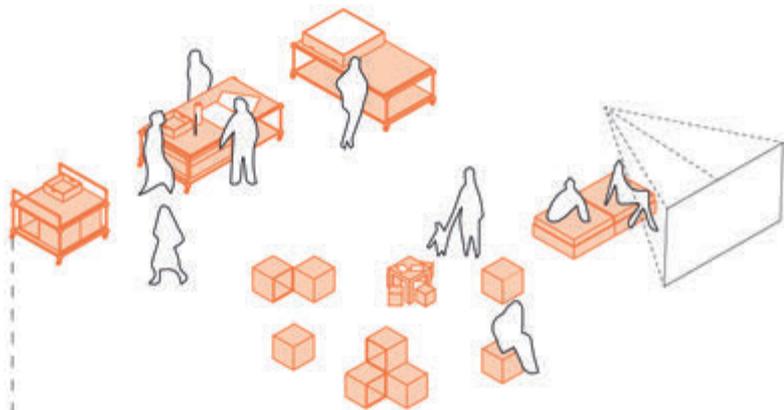
Historical Precedent:
Croydon The Future



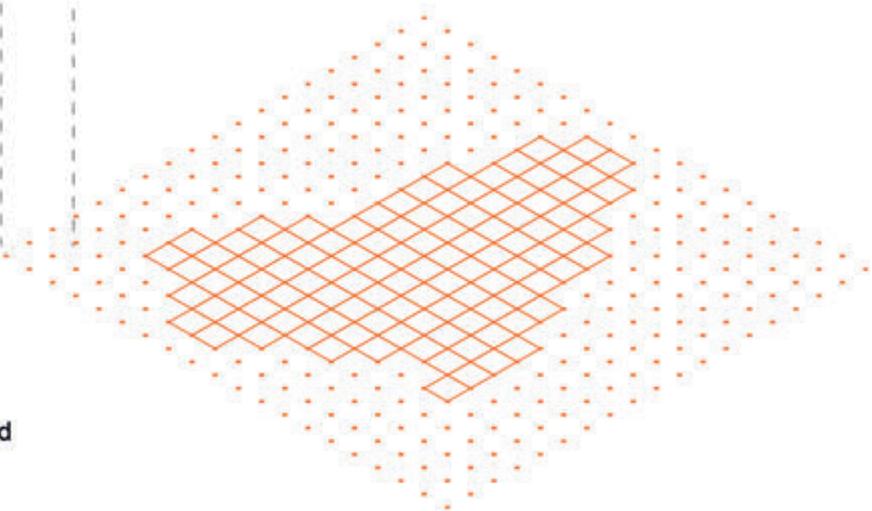
Phase 2:
Structure 'Room'
In progress



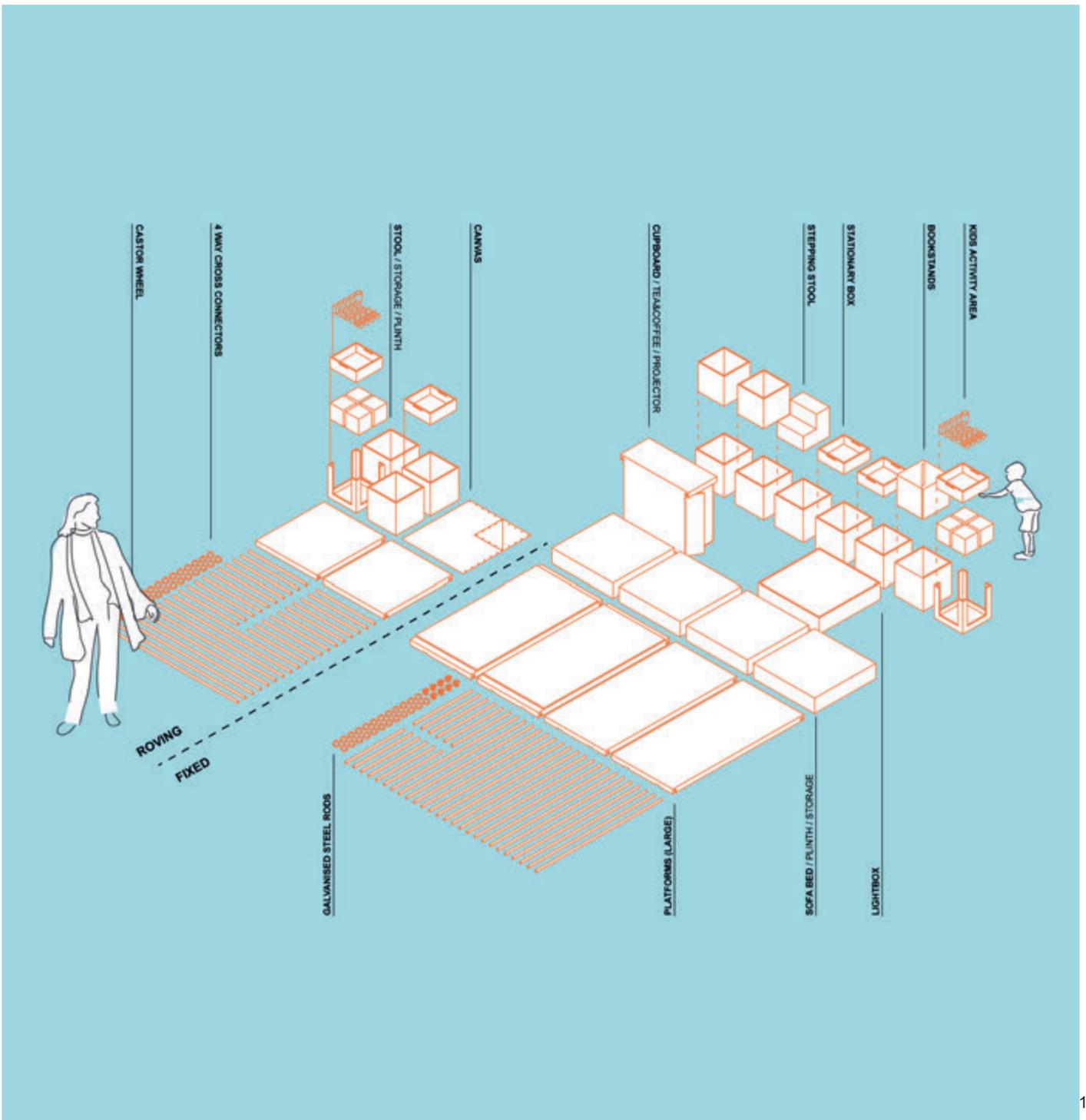
Phase 1:
Kit-of-Parts 'Furniture'
Delivered 2019



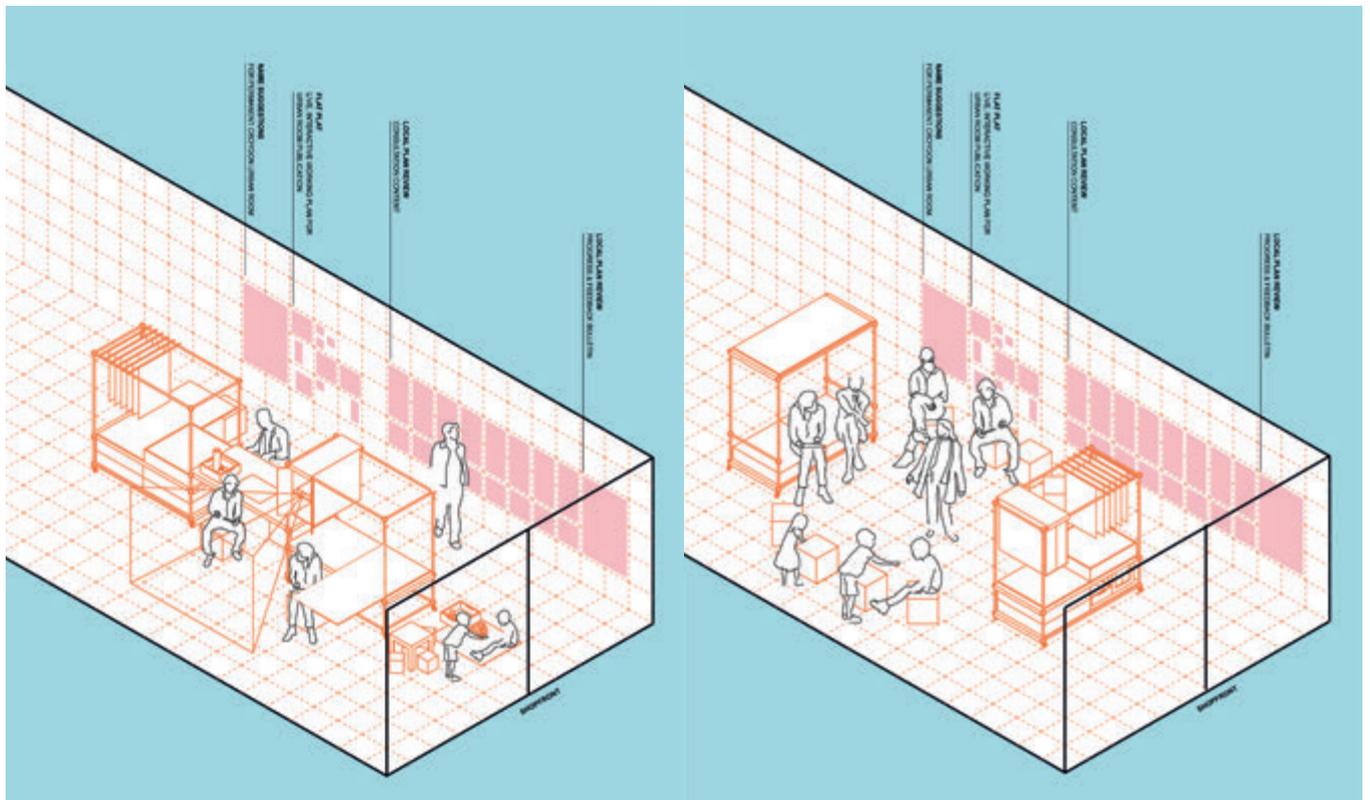
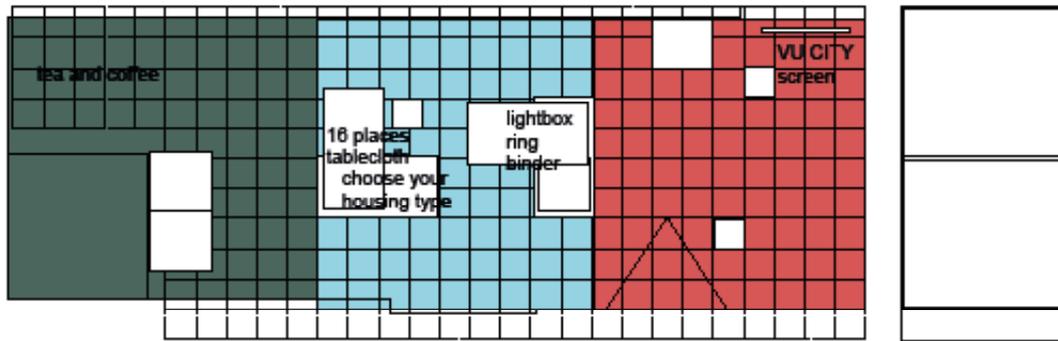
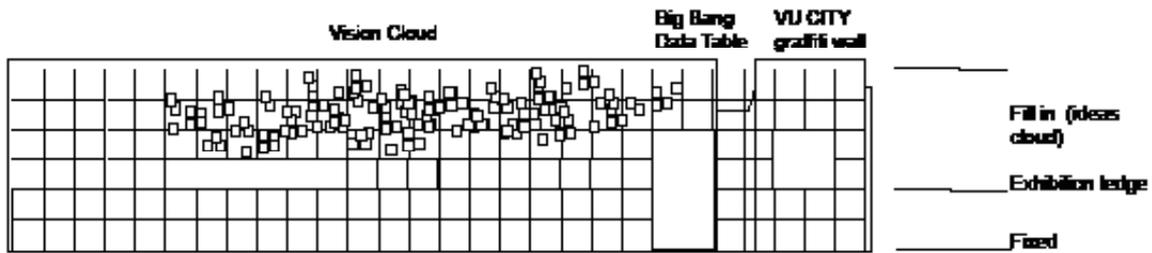
Spatial Framework:
A 0.5m² scaled grid
provides an adaptable
spatial and design
framework. At this scale,
Croydon = 86 squares of the grid



Accessible & Agile Framework



3.0 Pilot: Lessons Learnt





PILOT - PARENT

Building off other Urban Room success elsewhere in England, the project was piloted in late 2019, as part of the Local Plan review consultation period. We were able to design an initial kit-of-parts and test our learning and exhibition methodology and partnership model; working with internal and external stakeholders such as Historic England, Kingston University and young practitioners such as Sam Bland and Migrants Bureau. In December, at an evaluation roundtable, stakeholders offered constructive, positive feedback, and encouraged the development of the project ongoing.

The Pilot Parent was located in the Whitgift Shopping Centre (open to the public Wed-Sat). It functioned well as an atelier office for council staff as well as hosting a participatory exhibition of interactive historical artefacts, Virtual Reality game, 3D Croydon digital model, and graphical display of the Local Plan proposals. A successful educational programme featured youth surgeries, workshops and open to the public learning and development sessions.





A) PLANNING SHOPFRONT (TO INFORM)



THEMES

STRATEGIC
OPTIONS



A) PLANNING SHOPFRONT (TO INFORM)



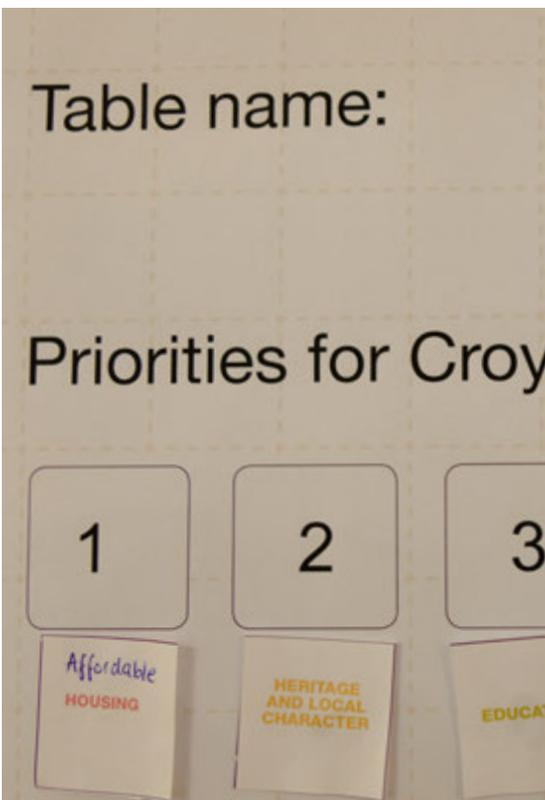


B) RECIPROCAL LEARNING PROGRAMME (TO EDUCATE)



LEARNING PROGRAMME

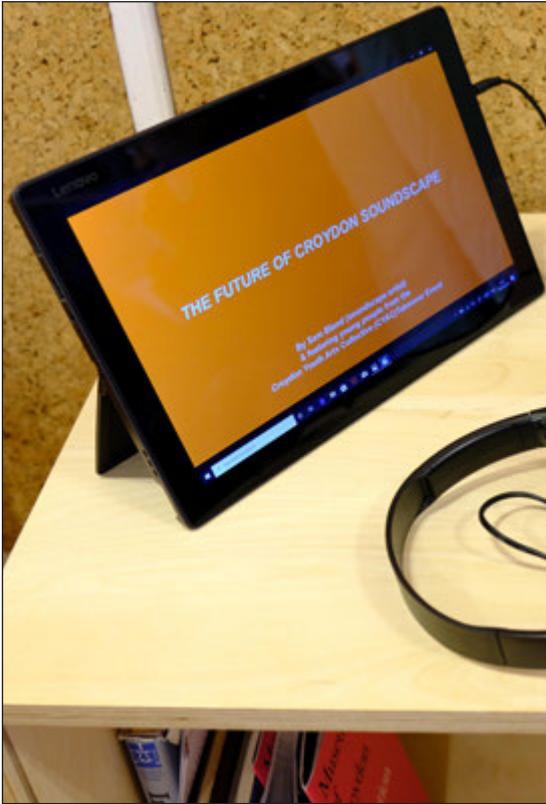
The learning programme featured events and membership initiatives such as Youth Cabinet sessions and public CPD sessions where council staff and the public could learn together. A series of workshops with the public and targeted audiences - such as Residents Associations, the Youth Voice forum and school groups - allowed for more in-depth engagement and sought to empower public participation through role play. Participants were able to better understand of the role of a Local Plan, the decision making process of Spatial Planning and the bigger picture on a Borough and even regional level; whilst council staff gained a better understanding of the communities' ambitions for the future.



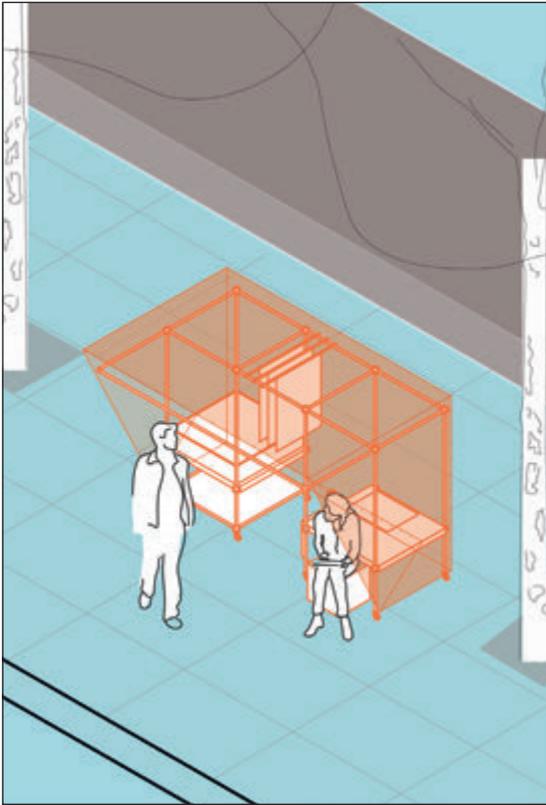


EXHIBITION

The exhibition component featured a variety of projects and interactive activities such as historic objects loaned from the Museum of Croydon, a live 'heat map' comment wall, an audio piece by local artist Sam Bland, and an installation of research by Kingston University students. The diverse exhibition offering sought to interest and engage different ages and audiences.





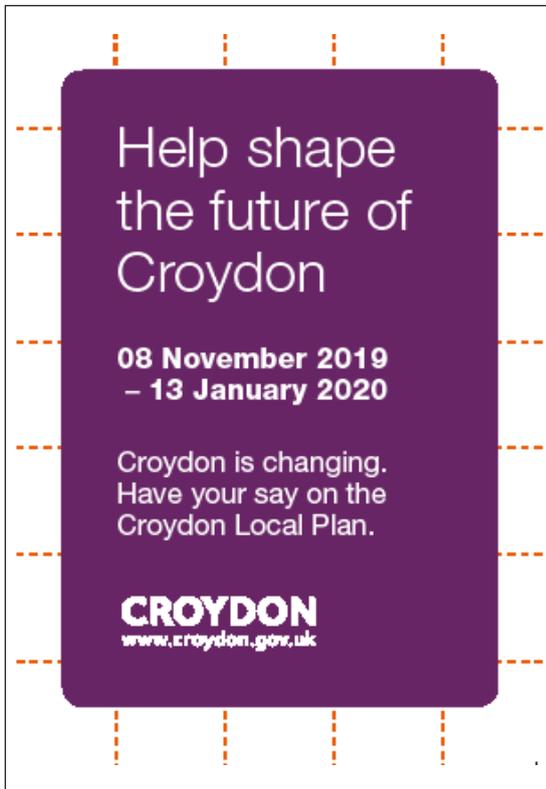


PILOT - ATELIER

The Roving pilot worked well as a flexible platform; visiting 5 High Streets, 4 markets and 5 libraries across the geographical reach of Croydon over 7 weeks.

The kit of parts proved to be accessible in its construction, able to be installed easily in library spaces, high streets and markets with an allen key.





COMMUNICATION & BRANDING

We sought to spread the word about the Local Plan Review in a similar format to the physical kit with a multi-pronged approach; using existing Croydon Council network and social media channels and more, on the ground, targeted poster distribution.

Whilst awareness of the Local Plan consultation review grew over the duration of the project, some further work is needed to ensure the project successfully reaches diverse and less-engaged parts of the public.

Speak to us at a library near you*:

- Selsdon Library** 12 Nov, 5:30-7:30pm
- Thornton Heath Library** 19 Nov, 5:30-7:30pm, Hindi*
- Purley Library** 26 Nov, 5:30-7:30pm, Hindi*
- New Addington Library** 03 Dec, 5:30-7:30pm
- Ashburton Library** 10 Dec, 5-7:30pm, French*

Speak to us at a high street near you*:

- Surrey St Market** 08 Nov, 11am-2pm, Polish*
- Crystal Palace Market** 09 Nov, 11am-2pm
- Coulsdon, Brighton Rd** 13 Nov, 11am-2pm, Hindi*
- Norbury, London Road** 20 Nov, 11am-2pm, Tamil, British Sign
- Purley High St** 27 Nov, 11am-2pm, Hindi*
- Selsdon, Addington Rd** 04 Dec, 11am-2pm
- South Norwood Market** 07 Dec, 11am-2pm, Twi*
- Addiscombe, Lower Addiscombe Rd**, 11 Dec, 11am-2pm

* Translator available at some events and activities. More information online and at the Croydon Urban Room.

Find out more about the Local Plan Review and how to get involved at:

The Croydon Urban Room at the Croydon Art Store
Whitgift Centre, Trinity Court, Wellesley Rd Entrance

Wed-Fri 11am-5pm (till 7pm on Thurs) Sat 12-4pm
08 Nov - 20 Dec

Online at:
www.croydon.gov.uk/localplanconsultation

CROYDON FUTURE THINKERS Youth Programme

- CYAC Youth Takeover** 02 Nov, 1-5pm
- Soundscape launch party** 16 Nov, 2-3pm
- Saturday surgeries** 16, 23, 30 Nov, 2-3pm
- Youth Cabinet** 04 Dec, 5-7pm
- Closing Workshop** 07 Dec, 2-3.30pm





Open Crit Roundtable

In the final days of the Pilot, we hosted a roundtable session with key stakeholders and Urban Room experts.

This was a crucial first step in considering the next stages of the project and reflecting on the project so far.

4.0 Next steps

We are now seeking funding to establish a permanent home in a high street / shopfront location, and develop our proposed public programme to facilitate learning, exploration and participation.

Our priorities in the next stage of work (2020-21):

1. Funding & Business Model

Funding is an essential focus as part of this next phase of work. We are developing a diverse funding strategy to ensure the project is a resilient and sustainable platform in a challenging financial landscape.

Developing partnerships with other stakeholders, such as universities and industry, will help ensure the funding model is robust, with access to diverse funding opportunities such as s106, the Greater London Authority and a range of external funding opportunities including, but not limited to; cultural grants, heritage and conservation funds, community funding and education.

The possible funding categories can be distinguished under these 4 key strands:

1. Accessibility, diversity, democracy
2. Heritage and Historic Value
3. Culture
4. Education

2. Siting and Design Development

Finding a permanent shopfront is another primary focus. In the immediate future, we will exhibit a window display of Pilot feedback, and seek to extend the kit of parts as required in the new space, and develop our design of the Parent Urban Room.

3. Strategic Public Programme

The team will also develop an ongoing public programme of activities within the Urban Room that are directly aligned with other Spatial Planning projects. Officer involvement in the programme can flux dependent on funding and resources available.

4. Membership Network & Communications

As part of creating a robust business model, developing an active digital membership and online presence will be a key focus.

The strategic external learning programme will serve to expand awareness of the project more broadly, both within Croydon and beyond.