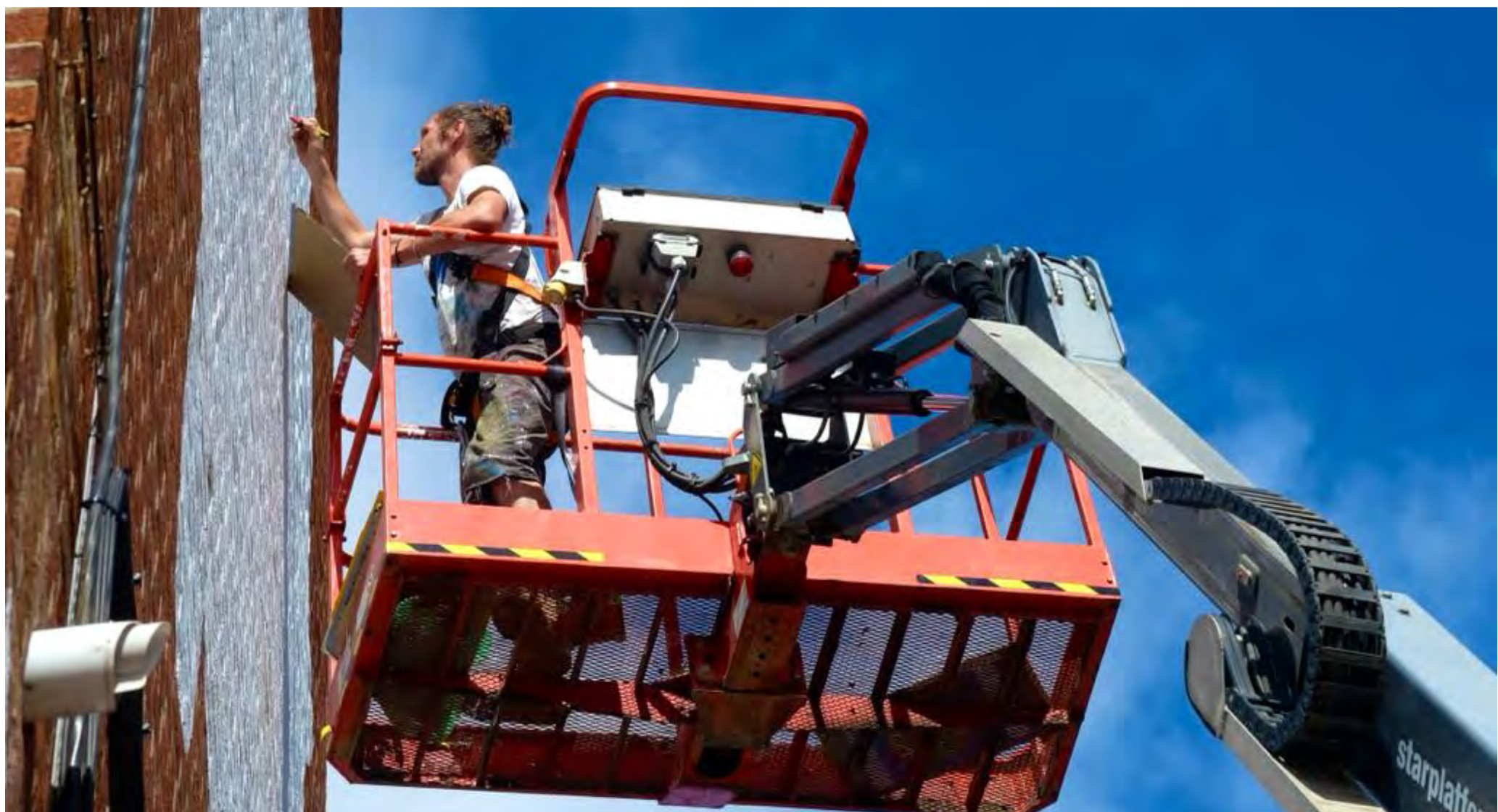
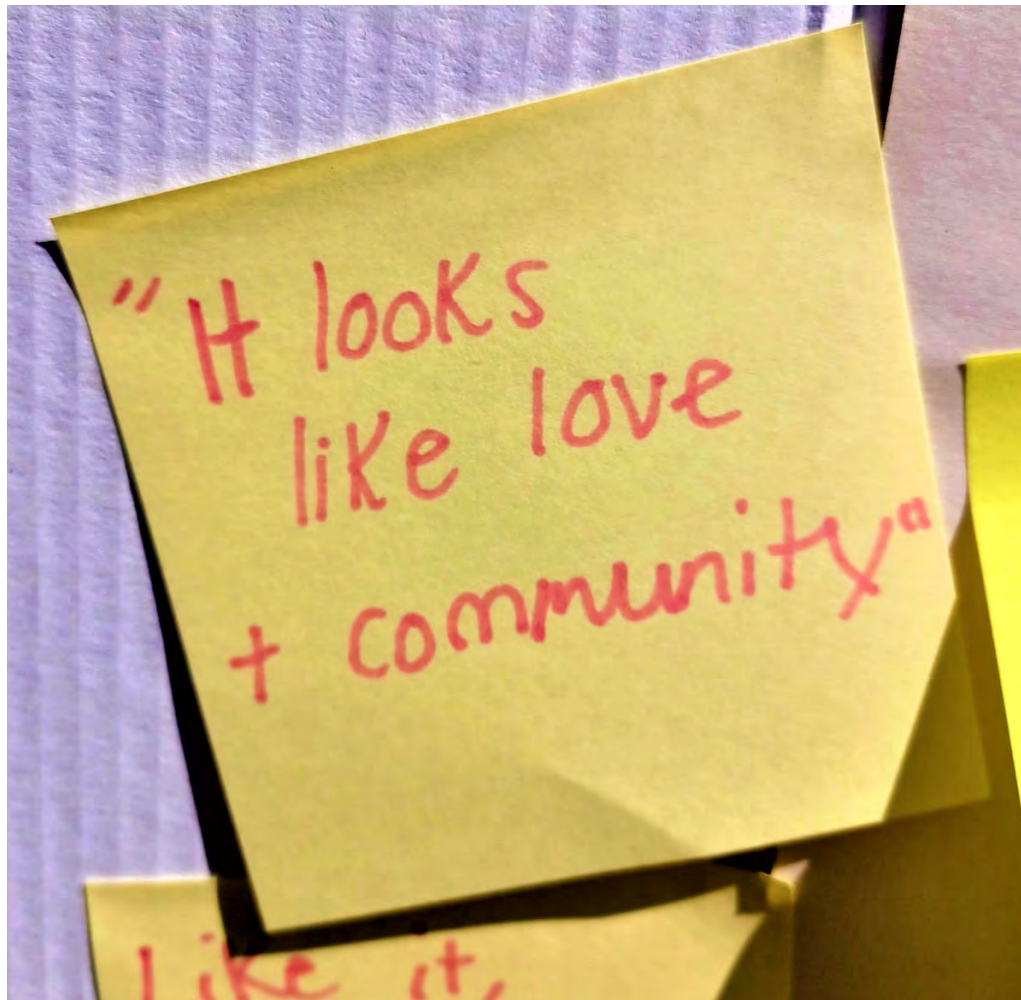


Bancroft Estate Community Mural Project

*Magic Me & Bancroft Tenant
Management Co-Operative*



Partnership Overview

In May 2022, **Magic Me** and **Bancroft Tenant Management Co-Operative** (BTMC) partnered together to create a community mural on Bancroft Estate, Bethnal Green.

At Bancroft Estate's Annual Fun Day 2021, residents expressed the need for the community to 'come together' again after COVID-19 lockdowns and ways the estate could be 'brightened up'. Following consultation with 44 residents, the idea of a mural was put forward to the committee. BTMC reached out to Magic Me as a hyper-local arts organisation experienced in linking people different in age and diverse in ethnicity, culture and faith.

About Magic Me

Magic Me's mission is to spark magic between generations – inspiring change for individuals, communities and systems. We bring younger and older people together in shared creative activities, combating social isolation and loneliness and building stronger communities.

Magic Me has over 33 years of experience delivering innovative arts projects with communities in Tower Hamlets.

www.magicme.co.uk

About BTMC

Bancroft TMC is the highest form of tenant participation in which the tenants and leaseholders in a particular area or estate take on responsibility for the day-to-day management of their estate. The BTMC has a committee comprising 15 residents that hold monthly meetings to oversee the running of the BTMC and play a strategic role, making decisions about the BTMCs plans for the future and partnerships.

www.bancrofttmc.org.uk

As part of the project set-up, Magic Me and BTMC established a **partnership agreement** outlining the key responsibilities of each partner.

Magic Me:

- Lead the design and delivery of the project including recruitment and management of Lead Artist and Project Volunteer
- Manage the project budget
- Embed intergenerational expertise into activities and events
- Design marketing and promotional material
- Oversee the installation of the mural
- Lead on project evaluation

BTMC:

- Lead on resident engagement - distributing project information, coordinating meetings with key community groups, providing translation support for project communications and in-person at events
- Support logistical elements of consultations and mural installation
- Advocating the project amongst residents, staff and committee members

Partners shared responsibility of:

- Artist interview process
- Tracking participation, activities and impact for internal and external project evaluation
- Risk Assessment

Project Overview

“It looks like a bouquet of love given by the community.”

Passerby, Bancroft Estate

Led by Project Manager (Magic Me), Emily Bird, and international mural artist, **ATMA**, the project aimed to:

- Improve a neglected area of the estate that had historically attracted anti-social behaviour
- Build stronger relationships across the community

About the Artist

ATMA is the Sanskrit word for 'Soul'. Born in Bordeaux, France in 1979, he is based in London and works internationally. ATMA's range of collaborations is extensive, having worked with renowned institutions such as the Google Arts & Culture, Lazarides Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum and Punch Drunk

He is the leading artist for Paint The Change, delivering murals and large-scale engagement projects across the world.

ATMA is also one of the co-founders of the East London-based organisation Wood Street Walls.

<https://www.atma-art.com/>

Activity

Through **creative consultations** with targeted groups and the wider community, residents came together to explore, share and develop their mural ideas. Using Magic Me's intergenerational expertise, activities were welcoming to people of all ages and encouraged conversations between different generations.

The final mural design grew out of the following themes:

- Celebrating diversity (including culture, ethnicity and age)
- Showcasing nature on Bancroft Estate (including the community garden, homegrown vegetables)
- Creating a positive impact

The mural was revealed and celebrated at the Annual Fun Day, in August 2022.

Those involved...

41 artist applications received and 6 artists interviewed

1 Lead Artist

1 Project Volunteer

5 BTMC Committee Members and Staff

1 Magic Me Project Manager



Project Outputs

1 community-wide consultation event attended by **80 residents**



3 individual consultations with the Women's Group (an intergenerational group of Bengali women), the Carrom Club (Bengali men's group aged 50+) and Globe Road businesses engaging **11 residents** and **17 local business owners**



105 people engaged through **informal outreach** around the estate and at **BTMC's General Meeting**



1 Mural Reveal and Fun Day event attended by **300 residents**



6,436 online views of the **mural installation**



The project reached a total of 6,949 people in-person and online

Project Outcomes & Impact

“Overall it has changed the feel of the space in a really positive way, for me the value of this is beyond measure.”

BTMC Committee Member

Improvement of Rickman House & reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

BTMC identified Rickman House as a space that would significantly benefit from a mural with the aim of *'designing out'* ASB associated with the area. Despite being one of the main entrances to the estate, it was often avoided due to ongoing issues with vandalism and fly-tipping.

Following the installation, BTMC has observed a marked reduction of ASB, with attitudes of both residents and neighbouring communities shifting to a more positive view of the estate.

“The area previously attracted a lot of litter and fly-tipping and this has been dramatically reduced and the community is respecting it.”

“It's not associated as much with ASB anymore, fewer groups gathering in this area.”

“The mural being crafted and installed on the estate shows people that someone values and cares about the area.”

“I've had nothing but positive responses to it, so many people stopping to take pictures.”

“The BTMC office received a phone call from someone who was just passing by and wanted to find out how their local area could get a mural like ours because they loved it so much.”



“I’ve lived here nearly 20 years and I’ve never spoken to the shopkeepers and they told me about the history of the area that I never knew.”

Bancroft Estate Resident

Building stronger relationships

Bancroft Estate comprises 600 households with a mix of long-term (30+ years) and short-term residents (9 months or less). The high turnover of tenants, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 (loss of income, increased isolation) and a recent fire displacing residents of Hadleigh House highlighted the need for connections to be strengthened.

The opportunity to co-design a mural supported the community to reunite, recover and thrive. The project achieved this through:

- **Intergenerational exchange** - as one of Magic Me’s core Intergenerational Principles, activities were ‘consciously’ designed to engage residents in conversation with someone of a different generation, breaking down ageist assumptions and creating common ground
- **A blended approach** - structured and organic opportunities for neighbours to interact were part of project design e.g. a community-wide consultation event with facilitated activities, artist and committee members speaking to people on the street and asking for feedback, watching the mural be installed, feedback stations at the Fun Day
- **In-person delivery** - face-to-face exchanges increased the profile, presence and reach of the project and BTMC; creating connections with residents who may face barriers to taking part in estate-wide initiatives due to lack of access to digital resources (e-newsletters, bulletins, online applications) and/or needing communications translated into another language

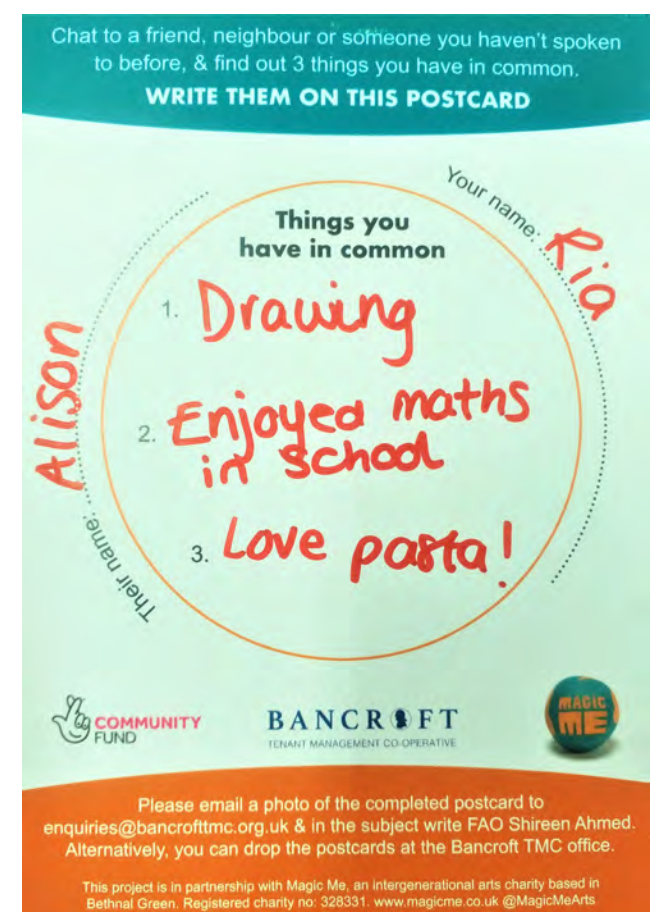
“I’ve been able to learn more about the women’s group, a core community of people who have been here a long time that I wasn’t aware of.”

“Through the project, I was able to engage and connect with a particularly vulnerable young person I often see on the estate and I feel like it was a positive experience for them.”

“The project has allowed the committee to have conversations with younger members of the community and I was personally surprised by how open and nice the younger people were.”

Unexpected outcomes

- Increased resident engagement with other aspects of the estate e.g. recycling management, younger people’s sports club, General Meetings
- Increased willingness of residents to share feedback, insights and suggestions with BTMC e.g. installing bicycle racks, creating a sensory garden



- BTMC (committee members and staff) gained new insights into the community and life on the estate, informing their roles and responsibilities, better meeting the needs of residents

“A project highlight for me has been other committee members taking more of an active role talking to the community as well as taking ownership of the issues that were important to residents - I would highly encourage all members to be part of future projects.”

“A project highlight for me has been talking to and connecting with people on the estate we would never have met.”

Project Learning

“The design has enabled everyone to relate to it, and the artist managed to pull together so many elements that mean so much on different levels.”

Bancroft Estate Resident

Through the project we learned the following ingredients were essential to meaningfully connect and engage with residents leading to a stronger legacy:

- **Creating a sense of ownership through authentic representation** - the final mural design included a bouquet of flowers and plants from countries residents felt connected to (captured during consultation), held up by the hands of three people, different in age, ethnicity and culture, the Khodu plant (a Bengali vegetable) is prominently featured in the design which can be seen across the estate in the community garden, private gardens and balconies
- **Finding advocates within the community** - key members of the community (committee members, shopkeepers, Carrom Club) gave essential practical support (a place for the artist to wash their brushes during install, translation at events) and encouraged other residents to be involved and feel an important part of the process
- **Celebrating community contributions** - activities were consciously designed to showcase the existing contributions residents of all ages make to their estate, allowing people the space to reflect on their role in the community and the positive influence they have

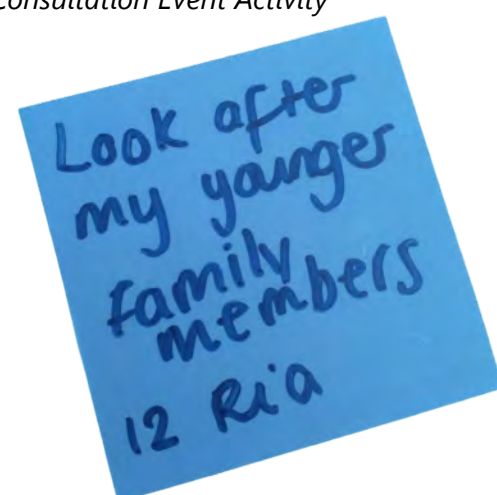
*What do you bring to your community?
Consultation Event Activity*

“We have a 24-hour, all-season Khodu - our pride and joy”

“The mural represents the Tower Hamlets community.”

“I really like it, it’s colourful and has the plants our parents grow here.”

“It’s giving a lot of joy to people.”



Future priorities

- Ensuring activity is resident-led through the creation of an intergenerational steering group, empowering the community through skills development (project design, event coordination, intergenerational and inclusive practices)
- Expanding on a sense of ownership by incorporating resident artworks into future mural designs and providing opportunities to be part of the installation process by painting sections of the mural
- Bringing intergenerational exchange to the forefront of the mural design by connecting the Carrom Club and Women's Group with younger residents to take part in creative activities and workshops together

Credits

Magic Me

Emily Bird, Project Manager
Kate Hodson, Programme Director
ATMA, Lead Artist
Dina Chehrazi, Project Volunteer

Bancroft Tenant Management Co-Operative

Goulshana Kadir, Secretary
Peter Vittles, Assistant Secretary
Shireen Ahmed, Deputy Manager
Abbas Ali, Repairs Officer
Julian Smith, Director
Nathan Tomusange, Caretaker
Yakin Hassane, Caretaker

Photos

ATMA
Dina Chehrazi
Emily Bird
Kate Hodson

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