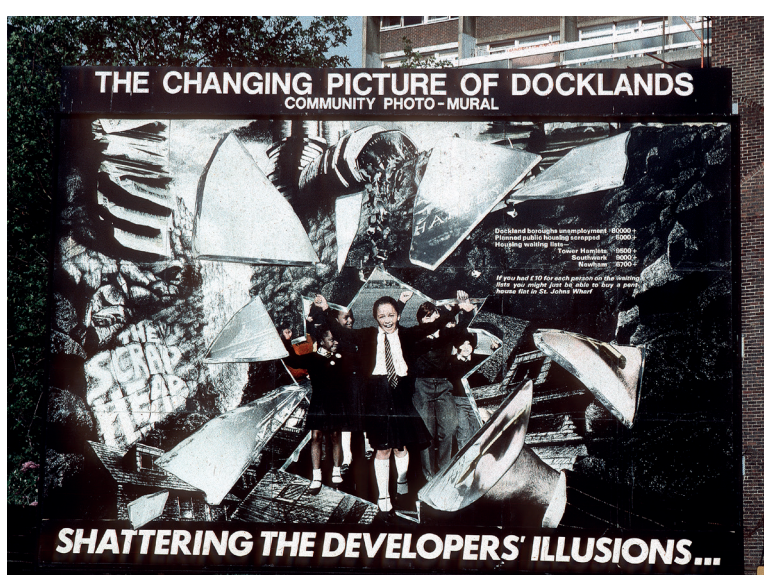


COMMUNITY-LED PLANNING AND THE ARTS

The Power of Art

Where complex issues are concerned, the arts offer accessible and engaging forms of communication that can help to unify thoughts, concepts and action, both amongst those leading the action, and in taking the message elsewhere. They can affirm and celebrate a community's identity as well as its collective power.



From a sequence of 1980s photo-murals by The Docklands Community Poster Project, depicting local people's concerns about the development. Produced alongside graphics for campaigns, travelling exhibitions and a photo-archive to ensure that events were documented from the community's perspective.

Creative Collaborations

These interventions take many forms from posters and leaflets, banners, billboards and photographs for reproduction in the media, to music, video, plays and participatory events. What matters is that these skills come from within the initiative, that artists, activists and local people work together to ensure the message is succinct and on target.

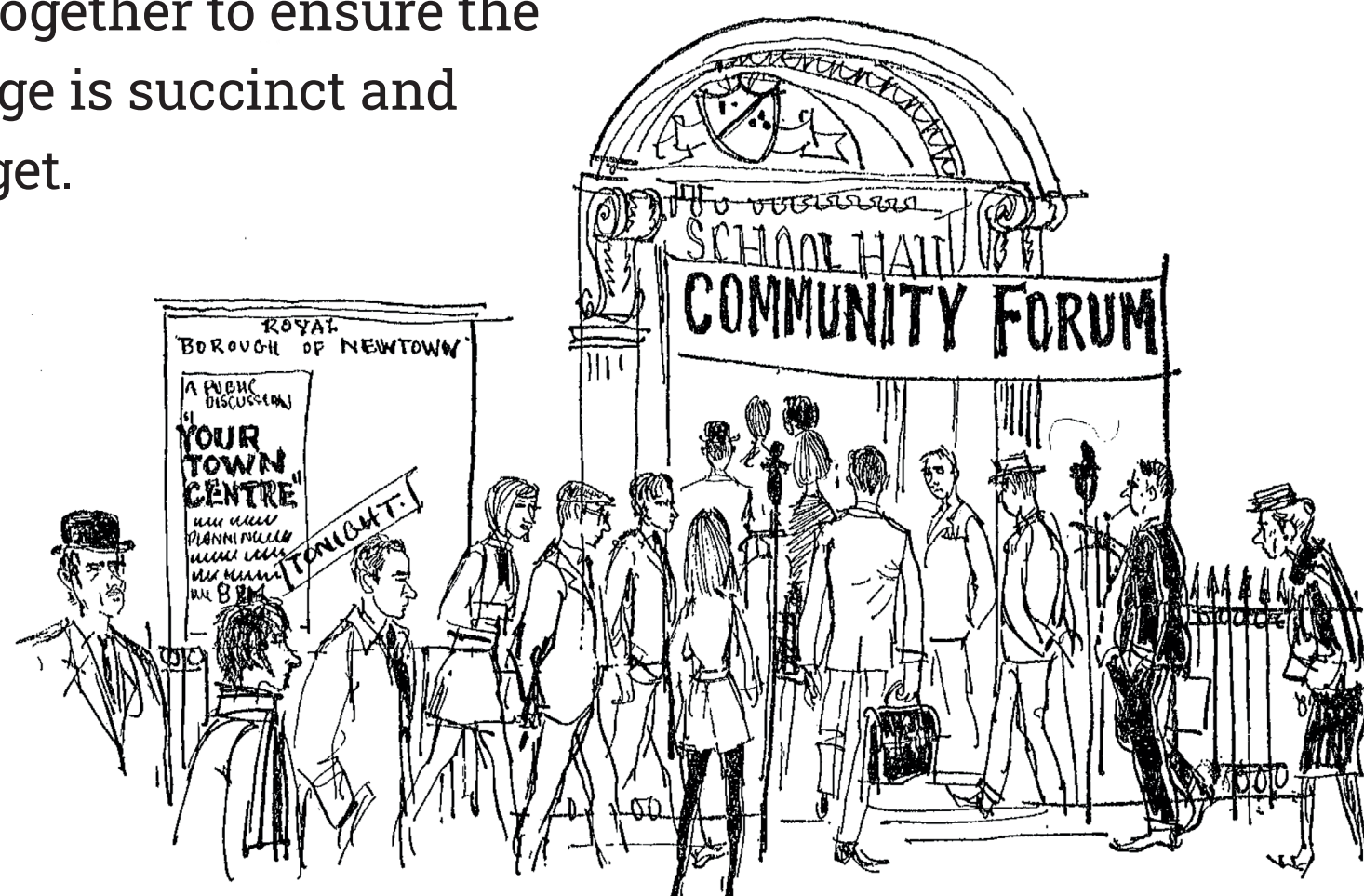


Illustration: David Knight

In 1969 the Skeffington Committee produced the first government report on participation in any public service, the only remaining major central government report on participation in planning. The eye-catching illustrations were used to highlight the role of the public in planning and explain the participation process.



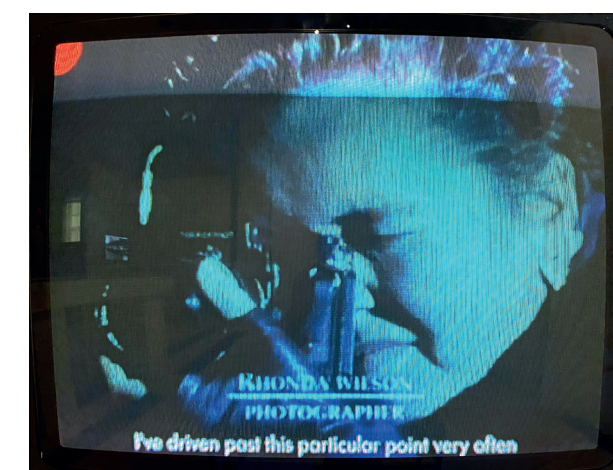
© Tough Cookies and CPL, 1986

As part of the Democracy for Docklands Campaign the Tough Cookies released the record Give Us Back Our Land of songs that supported local people's fight for a redevelopment that met their needs.



Photo © Peter Dunn and Lorraine Leeson, DCP 1984

On three occasions in the 1980s over a thousand people from the London Docklands sailed up the Thames led by a barge declaring their message to the public to protest against the way the area was being re-developed and to deliver the People's Charter for Docklands to Members of Parliament.



The film Paradise Circus addressed the campaigns by women in Birmingham for a women- and people-

friendly city. Broadcast on Channel 4, it contributed to a wider understanding of the issues facing women in cities designed on the ideal of the car-driving male.

SOURCE: STILL FROM PARADISE CIRCUS (1988) DIRECTED BY HEATHER POWELL, PRODUCED BY BIRMINGHAM FILM & VIDEO WORKSHOP. COURTESY OF HEATHER POWELL.

... beware Artwashing

Unfortunately in present times art is often used in regeneration schemes as a form of 'art washing' commissioned by developers or others with a vested interest. Many examples nevertheless exist of creative work that has played a key role in supporting community-led initiatives.



Floyd Road mural, Greenwich Mural Workshop 1976

Greenwich Mural Workshop's Floyd Road mural celebrated a successful campaign by residents to refurbish rather than demolish nearby houses.

