The Neighbourhood

NEWSLETTER / ISSUE 9 / 2026



The Neighbourhood

HTA's equality, diversity & inclusion newsletter

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) through our social value and outreach programmes, strengthening existing partnerships and creating new opportunities for engagement across the built environment sector.

During the year, we strengthened our long-standing relationships with organisations including Trinity High School in Manchester and Mossbourne Academy in Hackney, while also developing partnerships with educational institutions such as The City Academy, Hackney and Ravensbourne University in London. We have also worked closely with local authorities, including Hackney Council, to support young people through careers engagement, skills development initiatives, and work placement opportunities.



Alongside our education and outreach activity, we have continued to build meaningful relationships across the industry. Our partnership with Beyond The Box CIC has gone from strength to strength, and we are proud to continue supporting their work and be involved in their Festival of the Future 2026 edition.

This edition of The Neighbourhood highlights some of the projects, partnerships, and achievements from the past year, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to creating positive social impact and advancing our EDI objectives.

The publication has been made possible through the efforts of Lucy Smith (Partner for Communications, Engagement & Interior Design), Stephanie Warner (People Team), Shawn Adams (Outreach Lead), and Daisy Morey (Events Coordinator), whose contributions have been instrumental in leading, supporting, and producing this issue.

HTA remains committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive workplace where diverse perspectives and lived experiences are valued and help drive innovation and success. We recognise that many communities continue to be underrepresented within the built environment industry, and we are dedicated to creating meaningful change both within our practice and across the wider sector. Through our EDI, outreach, and social value initiatives, we aim to make a lasting positive impact and inspire others to do the same.

> By embracing diverse perspectives, we can design more inclusive, sustainable spaces that truly reflect the needs of the communities we serve - Stephanie Warner, Head of People & Inclusion at HTA Design





Pride Month

As part of HTA's recognition of Pride Month, staff participated in a range of activities that celebrated and supported the LGBTQ+ community. On 4th June, Partner of Communications, Engagement & Interiors, Lucy Smith, attended the Pride in Property networking event, providing an opportunity to connect with industry professionals, share experiences, and contribute to conversations around LGBTQ+ representation and inclusion within the built environment sector.

During Pride Month, HTA Architect Mauro Mosca attended a private lunch hosted by Architecture LGBT+ at Fisher & Paykel, speaking with peers from across the industry to discuss inclusive practices, professional networks, and the importance of fostering diverse and supportive workplaces.

Internally, staff at 75 Wallis Road marked Pride Month through the annual Pride fruit platter, creating an opportunity for colleagues to come together, celebrate diversity, and demonstrate support for LGBTQ+ inclusion across the practice.

These activities formed part of HTA's wider commitment to creating an inclusive workplace culture, encouraging engagement with industry networks, and celebrating the contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals both within the organisation and across the built environment sector.







Queer Tour of Soho

As part of LGBT+ History Month, Architect Mauro Mosca organised a walking tour of Soho for HTA staff, exploring the area's rich LGBTQ+ heritage through its architecture and urban landscape. The tour highlighted several historic buildings, venues and public spaces that played an important role in the development of London's queer community.

Attendees gained a deeper understanding of Soho's significance as a centre for LGBTQ+ life, and the venues that helped create safe spaces for self-expression, community building and activism. The tour encouraged reflection on the relationship between the built environment and social inclusion, demonstrating how architecture can support diverse communities and contribute to cultural identity.



Architecture LGBT+ Life Drawing

This year we continued our annual collaboration with Architecture LGBT+ by hosting a life drawing event that brought together HTA staff, members of Architecture LGBT+, and professionals from across the built environment sector.

The evening encouraged participants to draw while fostering meaningful conversations. By bringing together people from a range of disciplines and organisations, the event helped promote visibility, representation, and a sense of community across the built environment sector.

The event also provided a positive and accessible platform for celebrating the contributions of LGBTQ+ professionals, encouraging allyship, and reinforcing the importance of inclusive workplace cultures both within HTA and across the wider industry.





BLACC x Black History Month

For Black History Month 2025, we celebrated the theme “Standing Firm in Power” through a series of events and activities across our studios. The celebrations began with our catering teams treating colleagues to a selection of dishes inspired by African and Caribbean cuisines. Highlights included authentic Caribbean favourites such as Jerk Chicken, Rice and Peas, and Fried Plantain, which were prepared by HTA chef Susanna Gerald.

On Friday 17th October, members of HTA BLACC and allies attended a special event hosted by Hackney Carnival legends Gahu Dramatic Arts. The group showcased the richness of Ghanaian culture through vibrant drumming, energetic dancing, and storytelling. Following the event, colleagues continued the festivities with a Caribbean-inspired dinner at Cottons in Shoreditch.

Later, on Thursday 23rd October, there was an African Lino Printing Workshop led by HTA Architect Bianca Baidoo at Wallis Road. The session offered staff the opportunity to explore African artistic traditions through a hands-on creative experience, encouraging learning, reflection, and cultural expression.









Edinburgh University BHM Lecture

As part of Edinburgh University’s Black History Month programme, HTA Architect Tanatswa Borerwe delivered a lecture reflecting on her journey into architecture and architectural illustration. Tanatswa also touched on her experiences as a Black female architect in the profession.

The session highlighted the importance of housing, placemaking and regeneration, and the transition from architectural education to professional practice. Tanatswa encouraged students to embrace diverse career pathways and recognise the positive impact architects can have on communities. As a direct outcome of the event, three students were offered internship opportunities at HTA’s Edinburgh office.





Accession Network Dinner

We were delighted to host the Manchester launch of the Accession Network at our Manchester office. The event brought together professionals from across the property and development industry for an evening of meaningful conversation and networking. Guests enjoyed food from local favourite Bundobust, helping to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Accession Network is a purpose-driven community committed to creating a more inclusive, supportive, and representative built environment sector. Through small, curated networking events, it connects emerging and established professionals, fostering collaboration, professional development, and shared learning. The Manchester launch marked an important milestone in the network’s continued growth, extending its reach across the North West.





Ravensbourne University Studio Visit

On 11th February 2026, we welcomed 50 students from Ravensbourne University's Architecture Foundation course into our office in Hackney Wick. As the module spans Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Urban Landscape, the visit offered students an opportunity to experience how multidisciplinary design work happens in a professional environment.

The session was led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams and Senior Associate Maribel Mantecon, with students being accompanied by course tutors Katie Fisher and Hwei-Fan Liang.

Shawn and Maribel took students on a tour of the 75 Wallis Road studio, sharing insights into the building's heritage. The visit concluded with a presentation from Partner Simon Toplis, who discussed a range of HTA projects, including approaches to modular construction and housing design.







> The students brought great energy, asked thoughtful questions, and showed a genuine interest in learning more about architecture - Shawn Adams, Outreach Lead at HTA Design



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Movember Fundraiser

For our Movember fundraising campaign, HTA Architects, Kyriacos Contonou and Hasan Cenktas grew moustaches to raise awareness and funds for men's mental health and cancer research. We also organised a bake sale that brought colleagues together in support of the cause. Through generous donations and contributions from volunteer bakers, the campaign raised an impressive £1,271 for Movember.



Diwali

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is celebrated by millions of people worldwide and symbolises the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil. To mark the occasion, on 21st October 2025, our offices came together to celebrate. Our offices were decorated with colourful fabrics, creating a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere, while a selection of traditional sweet and savoury Indian treats was shared among staff. Organised with support from Head of People & Inclusion, Stephanie Warner, the celebration provided an opportunity to recognise and appreciate cultural diversity across the practice.



World Mental Health Day

On 10th October 2025, our HR Team shared an email highlighting the free mental health and wellbeing support available at HTA, including the Employee Assistance Programme, Wisdom App, Aviva Smart Health and the Architects Benevolent Society. To encourage open conversations around wellbeing, staff also delivered a series of online support surgeries, providing colleagues with guidance, advice and access to further support.





Moredunvale Opening Event

Moredunvale Park opened to the community, marking the transformation of an underused 5-hectare green space into a thriving neighbourhood destination. We worked directly with residents to shape the park's design and delivery from the outset. Their involvement ensured the new facilities; an amphitheatre, skate park, accessible pathways, play trail, tree planting and wildflower meadows, truly reflect what the community wanted.

The celebration centred on the unveiling of an 'outdoor museum' installation by artist team WAVEparticle. The artwork brings together 100 bronze objects inspired by residents' stories and treasured possessions. These sit on six plinths above a scale model of the Moredun tower blocks, creating a permanent tribute to the community's heritage and collective voice in shaping their new park.







Hackney Council Architecture Workshop

On 18th February 2026, we welcomed 10 young people to the studio for the first of two architecture and design sessions. Designed to give students insight into careers in the built environment, the session introduced key disciplines, including Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture. The workshop was coordinated and led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams, with support from Planner Michaela Oberhuber, Landscape Architect Rob Michel, and Architectural Assistant Max Frost.

The session started with a guided tour of HTA's studio at 75 Wallis Road. The tour offered them a first-hand look at how an architectural office operates, how teams work together, and the types of projects underway within the practice. A series of short career presentations by Michaela, Rob and Max followed this. Each presentation offered a snapshot into their professional journeys. Students had the opportunity to ask questions during a dedicated Q&A panel, gaining clarity on routes into the sector and the day-to-day.

The session culminated in a hands-on masterplanning activity. Working in groups, students used building cut-outs to reimagine Hackney Central. Each group presented their proposals to the room, sharing their ideas and reflections on the exercise. Overall, the session offered students an engaging and inspiring introduction to architecture and the wider world of the built environment.





> "It was great to meet the students and introduce them to town planning through the workshop. They were engaged, asked some thoughtful questions and brought interesting ideas to the exercises - Michaela Oberhuber, Planner at HTA Design



Hackney Council Model Making Workshop

As part of our engagement programme with Hackney Council, a model-making session was delivered on 19th February 2026 for a group of nine young people. Working collaboratively, the students designed a building and play space, developing their understanding of the design process through practical, hands-on activities. The session was coordinated and led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams, supported by HTA colleagues Lucy Smith, Sam Elbahja, Sara Shu, and Eve Murzyn.

The workshop began with an introduction to HTA, followed by an icebreaker activity designed to help students feel comfortable and engaged. Students then took part in a guided tour of Hackney Wick, providing valuable context and inspiration for the design challenge. Back in our studio, they worked in small teams to develop ideas for a community centre through a series of sketching exercises. The session concluded with a hands-on model-making activity, where students transformed their concepts into three-dimensional design proposals.

The final design stage focused on creating an adjoining play space that complemented the community building, with students considering landscape, accessibility, and user experience as they refined their proposals. The workshop concluded with group presentations, allowing students to share their ideas and design rationale.







Race Equality Week

As part of our ongoing commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, HTA staff were encouraged to participate in Race Equality Week 2026, led by Race Equality Matters under the theme #ChangeNeedsAllOfUs. For the fourth consecutive year, we promoted the 5-Day Challenge, an initiative familiar to many members of staff through previous campaigns and the new joiner induction programme.

The challenge invited participants to spend five minutes each day exploring key topics including stereotyping, the bystander effect, communication, allyship, and personal commitments to change. Each activity encouraged self-reflection, increased understanding of race-related behaviours, and provided practical resources for further learning.

Activities were added to everyone's Outlook calendars, and staff were invited to share reflections and commitments arising from the final exercise, The Big Promise. This initiative reinforced our dedication to fostering an inclusive culture and supporting meaningful conversations about race equality and allyship. It also encouraged staff to consider the practical actions they can take to help create a more equitable and inclusive workplace for all.

> We have, over many years, nurtured a beautiful culture at HTA - Let's continue to work together to ensure our workplace is a reflection of the world we want to see - a community built on active listening, kindness, understanding, care, and respect for each other and all whom we come into contact with – Stephanie Warner, Senior Associate, Head of People & Inclusion at HTA Design



Lunar New Year

We celebrated Lunar New Year by bringing colleagues together to learn about the cultural festival. An internal email highlighted the start of the Year of the Horse and touched on the traditions and symbolism associated with the occasion.

To mark the celebration, we also hosted a Lunar New Year-inspired lunch for staff, creating an opportunity to connect, share experiences, and celebrate cultural diversity. The event reinforced our commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming workplace culture.



Highbury Fields School Careers Fair



On Wednesday 4th March, Partner Caroline Dove and Part 1 Architectural Assistant Sam Elbahja represented HTA at Highbury Fields School's Careers Fair. They spoke with students about housing developments, interior fit-outs and other projects that HTA has delivered, using visualisations to illustrate our work.

The event generated strong interest and engagement from students throughout the day. To provide a more hands-on insight into architectural practice, they also brought along project models and material samples, which proved popular with attendees. Students were particularly eager to learn about career pathways into architecture.

Following the event, several students contacted us to enquire about work experience opportunities.



> "It was a fantastic opportunity to take part in the career's day. I wish I had something similar when I was their age. It was great to see such enthusiasm and eagerness from the young people – Architectural Assistant, Sam Elbahja at HTA Design

London School of Architecture Talk



Senior Chartered Landscape Architect Sara Shu delivered a presentation to students at the London School of Architecture, exploring how parks, podiums and roofs can contribute to healthier, greener and more connected urban environments. The session highlighted the value of integrating green infrastructure throughout developments and showcased how thoughtful landscape design can help create more sustainable neighbourhoods.



Ravensbourne Architecture Students Practice Visit

On 5th March, a group of 13 students took part in an educational visit designed to introduce them to architectural practice. The session was led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams, who guided the students through a structured programme that combined both professional insight and practical skill-building.

The visit began with a tour of the office, giving students a first-hand look at how an architecture studio operates. They were able to see how design teams collaborate, how projects progress from concept to detailed design, and how different disciplines work together within a practice.

Following the tour, students attended a presentation from HTA that focused on the adaptive reuse of 75 Wallis Road. After the presentation, the students moved on to a practical activity involving a photographic and measured survey of the building façade. The students were tasked with producing an elevation of the façade of 75 Wallis Road. The session concluded with a review of their progress and reflections on what they had learned, marking the end of a productive and insightful visit.





The City Academy Leadership and Aspirations Session

On Wednesday, 25th March, we held a Leadership and Aspirations workshop for six Year 12 students from The City Academy in Hackney. This 1.5-hour session introduced students to leadership concepts, professional workplace expectations, and transferable skills relevant to senior roles.

Students began with a guided office tour at 75 Wallis Road, which was led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams. During this tour, students learned about the building and gained insight into HTA Design's work. This was followed by an interactive icebreaker, which encouraged participation and helped students feel comfortable in the professional environment.

The session then moved into a discussion about working in a professional setting, giving students a realistic understanding of workplace culture, expectations, and responsibilities. This was followed by career presentations from professionals in Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture, offering valuable insight into different career pathways.

Part II Architectural Assistant Nana Kwarteng shared her personal journey into architecture, reflecting on her studies, graduation, and experiences working in professional practice. Landscape Architect Kexin Wu introduced the role of a landscape architect, outlining what the profession involves, the skills required, and her personal career journey.

The session concluded with Planner Michaela Oberhuber, who explained what planning is, the different career routes into the profession, and how planners shape the built environment. Students learned about opportunities available within the built environment sector and considered how their own interests and strengths could align with future career pathways.

> "It was lovely to have the opportunity to share my journey into architecture and see so many young people excited about their future - Nana Kwarteng, Architectural Assistant (Part II) at HTA Design





Neurodiversity Celebration Week

As part of Neurodiversity Celebration Week from 16th-29th March, we shared resources and guidance to raise awareness of neurodiversity and celebrate the strengths of neurodivergent individuals across the practice. Staff were signposted to internal and external support, training, webinars, and specialist resources. The initiative reinforced our commitment to promoting understanding, encouraging open conversations, and ensuring neurodivergent colleagues feel supported and valued.



Transgender Awareness Week

As part of HTA's ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace, Architect Mauro Mosca, on behalf of Incl., circulated a company-wide email on 31st March 2026 to mark Transgender Day of Visibility. This email encouraged awareness and understanding of the experiences of transgender and non-binary people, recognising their contributions to society while also acknowledging the challenges many continue to face.



Stress Awareness Month

Our HR team organised a Hatha Yoga session as part of Stress Awareness Month, providing colleagues with an opportunity to focus on wellbeing and mindfulness. Led by Eleonora Prinsi from Re-Set-Pause, the session combined physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation to promote balance between mind and body. Participants left with practical tools to help manage stress, improve concentration and enhance their overall wellbeing.





Winstanley & York Road Estate Playground

As part of a wider initiative by Wandsworth Borough Council to encourage young people to be more active, we collaborated with approximately 240 pupils from Falconbrook Primary School to design a meanwhile play space. Partner, Communications & Engagement, Lucy Smith, and Senior Graphic Designer, Shiny Thaper, worked with 12 classes to gather ideas and inspire the design process.

The project began with engagement sessions where pupils were invited to share ideas for floor-based games through drawings and sketches. Suggestions included a scooter track, dance zone, running track, “floor is lava” game, chess board, maze and workout circuit, among many others. These ideas were then developed into vibrant, easy-to-use graphics, using a limited colour palette to create a strong and cohesive identity for the space. The wider project also included the design of safety signage, lighting and creative hoarding.

The play space was officially launched on the final day of the school term, giving pupils the opportunity to enjoy a place they had helped to shape and bring to life.







> “It was a real joy to see local children engaging with the playground, with many proudly pointing out the elements they had helped to design – Shiny Thaper, Senior Graphic Designer at HTA Design

Cycle to MIPIM

Associate Partner Rhea Shepherd, along with Partner Simon Bayliss and Sandy Morrison, participated in a fundraising initiative supporting Club Peloton and its core charity partners: Cyclists Fighting Cancer, Coram, and the Tom ap Rhys Pryce Memorial Trust. Through their involvement, they contributed to raising awareness and funds for organisations that provide vital support to children, young people, and communities facing a range of challenges.

Cyclists Fighting Cancer helps children living with and beyond cancer to regain confidence, strength, and independence through access to adapted bikes and cycling programmes. Coram works to improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people, while the Tom ap Rhys Pryce Memorial Trust supports community initiatives and projects that create opportunities for disadvantaged young people.





HarPA Family Play Day

HTA supported HarPA’s Family Play Day at Somerford Grove Adventure Playground, providing young people aged 2 to 16 with the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities. A total of 14 attendees joined the event.

Throughout the day, attendees enjoyed access to the adventure playground under the supervision of HarPA’s specialist playworkers, alongside activities including giant bubbles, chalk art, soft archery, laser tag, and soft play.

The event provided a fun and inclusive environment that encouraged outdoor play, social interaction, and family engagement, with food and refreshments available for all participants. The day was well attended and provided families with a valuable opportunity to spend quality time together.







Trinity High School Architecture Day

On Monday 15th June 2026, we delivered an engaging Architecture Day at Trinity High School in Manchester, introducing 18 Year 10 students to careers within the built environment. Led by Outreach Lead Shawn Adams, alongside architects Dulcie Foster Finn and Zohra Abbas, the event was supported by Associate Planner Tillie Baker from Iceni Projects and Director and Engineer David Miller from Heyne Tillett Steel. Through a range of interactive activities, students gained valuable insight into architecture, planning, and engineering, while learning about the diverse roles and career pathways available across the industry.

The day began with a 'Meet the Professionals' session, where students heard first-hand about each speaker's career journey and took part in an open Q&A discussion. This was followed by a collaborative masterplanning exercise, encouraging students to think about how buildings, public spaces, and infrastructure come together to create successful places. Students also enjoyed a guided tour of No.3 Circle Square, designed by Bridge Architects, providing a real-world example of the design and construction process in action.

The event concluded with a design competition, where students worked in teams to create and model a building proposal. Overall, the day provided a practical introduction to the built environment, helping students broaden their understanding of future career opportunities.







International Women's Day

In March 2026, we marked International Women's Day by raising awareness of the annual celebration and encouraging staff to engage with this year's theme, #GiveToGain. The campaign highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge, time, advocacy, mentoring, and support to help advance gender equality and create a more inclusive and connected society.

On the day, emails were sent around celebrating the achievements of pioneering women within architecture and construction, from historic figures such as Ethel Mary Charles and Dame Zaha Hadid to contemporary industry leaders recognised through the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) awards. It also recognised the significant contribution of HTA's Women@HTA group, which has played a key role in strengthening inclusivity across the practice since its formation in 2015. Their work has helped shape flexible working





Cycle to UKREiiF

For UKREiiF 2026, Senior Architect Marcus Yeomans and Senior Urban Designer Rebecca Rose took on a two-day charity cycle ride from Kendal to Leeds in support of Cyclists Fighting Cancer. Travelling through the Yorkshire Dales, valleys, moorland and forests, they covered a challenging route that was even hillier than anticipated, making their arrival at UKREiiF all the more rewarding.

Their efforts helped raise vital funds for Cyclists Fighting Cancer, a charity that supports children and young people affected by cancer by providing access to bikes and cycling-related activities during treatment and recovery. To support the cause, HTA staff organised a bake sale, which raised £500.



WIA Mentoring Summer Party

This year we hosted the Women in Architecture (WIA) Mentoring Programme Celebration at our London studio. Organised by Associate Partner and Senior Architect, Eleni Stathi, the event brought together around 130 attendees, including mentors, mentees, and industry leaders, to mark the successful conclusion of the 2026 mentoring programme.

The evening celebrated the achievements of the year's mentoring cohort and recognised the commitment of both mentors and mentees who had participated in the programme. Over the previous six months, the programme had supported more than 600 women working in architecture, helping to build professional networks, strengthen confidence, and support career development across the profession.

During the event, attendees reflected on the impact of the programme through a series of testimonials and highlights from workshops, events and discussions delivered throughout the year.







Pedelle

In June 2026, Associate and Senior Architect Emma Haward took part in a challenging three-day charity cycling event in support of Club Peloton's core charities: Cyclists Fighting Cancer, Coram, and the Tom ap Rhys Pryce Memorial Trust. Over the course of the event, Emma completed more than 300km of cycling and climbed over 5,000m in temperatures reaching 35°C, demonstrating remarkable endurance and commitment to the fundraising effort.

The route included demanding mountain ascents, spectacular scenery, and several unexpected challenges, including road closures caused by landslides that required significant detours and additional climbs. Despite these obstacles, Emma completed the course, finishing with a memorable ride through mountain passes before descending to the coast.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters and donors, she raised more than £1,000 for Club Peloton's partner charities.





South Asian Heritage Month

During South Asian Heritage Month, we celebrated the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of people from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
Guided by this year's theme, "Unity in Diversity," colleagues were encouraged to explore the shared values and traditions that connect South Asian communities.

Staff participated in cultural food experiences and a screening of the Hindi film The Lunchbox, while also being encouraged to attend local exhibitions, heritage walks, festivals, workshops, and poetry events celebrating South Asian heritage and culture.







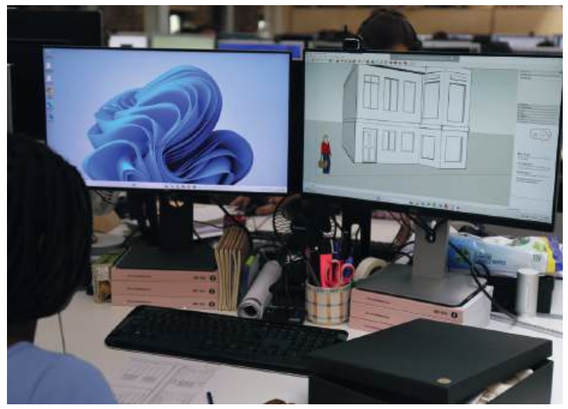
Work Experience Placements

Over the last year, we have delivered more than 30 work experience placements, giving school, university, and college students valuable insight into the architecture, planning, and urban design industries.

Together, these placements total more than 1,100 hours of work experience and training, helping young people gain a deeper understanding of careers across the built environment.

Through a programme of hands-on learning and practical project work, students were challenged to design their own housing schemes, developing ideas through sketching, 3D modelling and research into precedent projects.

These placements form an important part of our commitment to supporting the next generation of industry talent. By providing meaningful workplace experience, we help young people build confidence, develop new skills and gain the knowledge needed to explore future career pathways within the built environment sector.





River Clean-Up with Moo Canoes

On 26th August, we joined our friends at Moo Canoes for a lunchtime canal clean-up on the waterways of East London. Alongside local residents, businesses and other canal users, participants spent an hour collecting litter from the River Lee and helping to improve the local environment.

Working in teams of three, volunteers paddled along the River Lee towards Hackney Marshes, collecting litter and debris from the waterway as they went. From plastic waste to larger discarded items, the group worked together to help improve the condition of the canal. Adding a competitive element to the activity, each canoe challenged itself to recover the largest item possible, with one team successfully hauling a discarded bike tyre from the water.

The event highlighted how small collective actions can have a meaningful impact and demonstrated the value of partnerships between local organisations and community groups in caring for shared public spaces.

The day concluded with a gathering at Barge East, where participants enjoyed a complimentary drink. The clean-up was a great success, with many keen to take part in future events and continue supporting the conservation of East London's waterways.

> "It was great to get out on the water and see our local area from a new angle. We can't wait to do it again when summer comes back around! - Max Frost, Architectural Assistant (Part II) at HTA Design









Alton Estate Library Legends

Young people from the Alton Estate marked Book Week this year in a creative way through the Library Legends Hoarding Project. This community arts initiative has transformed the construction hoardings surrounding Block A, the first building slated for demolition, into a celebration of reading, stories, and local talent.

The project features bespoke artwork designed by local young people, drawing inspiration from books, libraries, and the power of stories to connect communities. Installed across the hoardings, the artwork showcases the creativity and imagination of local participants while brightening the public realm during ongoing regeneration works.

HTA's communications and engagement team facilitated a series of creative workshops where young people produced portraits of their favourite literary characters. These sessions doubled as an engagement tool, allowing the team to gather vital community feedback on the new children's library proposed for the regeneration area.

The Library Legends project forms part of the wider Alton Estate Regeneration programme, which aims to create not only new homes and improved facilities, but also opportunities for residents to shape and contribute to the future of their estate.





Meridian Water Employment Workshop

Over the last year, we have been working closely with Enfield Council to deliver a series of social value workshops focused on addressing adult unemployment across the borough. The first session was delivered on 20th May 2026 at Edmonton Library. This two-hour workshop focused on employability skills, understanding job descriptions, job search strategies, and interview preparation.

The session was led by HTA's Outreach Lead, Shawn Adams, alongside Associate Partner and Senior Architect, Kwame Ohene-Adu. Throughout the workshop, eight attendees received practical guidance and tailored advice to help improve their confidence and readiness for employment, while also gaining a better understanding of effective job application and interview techniques.





South Thames College Apprenticeship Day

As part of our social value commitment to the Alton Estate, we worked with South Thames College to attend an Apprenticeship Day, sharing opportunities for residents to learn more about careers in architecture and design. The event aimed to make careers in construction and design more accessible, providing practical information about apprenticeships, training and entry-level opportunities.

We also delivered practical employability workshops covering CV preparation, portfolio development and mock interviews. Participants were able to develop and test their skills in a supportive environment, gaining confidence in presenting their experience and discussing their ambitions.



Alton Estate Forest School

As part of our social value commitment to the Alton Estate, we worked with the local Forest School to improve its outdoor environment and create opportunities for pupils to connect with their community. The school's playground had fallen into disrepair and needed support to become a welcoming space for play and learning.

The school had recently received donated table tennis tables, providing new opportunities for active play, social interaction and outdoor learning. To support this, we delivered a series of creative identity workshops exploring two questions: "What makes Alton special?" and "What makes me special?"

The workshops encouraged pupils to reflect on their identities, experiences and connections to the estate, alongside the qualities that make Alton a distinctive place to live. Pupils also decorated and personalised their own table tennis bats, expressing their individuality and developing a sense of ownership of the new equipment.

This work helped establish an ongoing relationship between the school, the project team and the wider Alton Estate renewal programme.











Journeys Into Practice Event

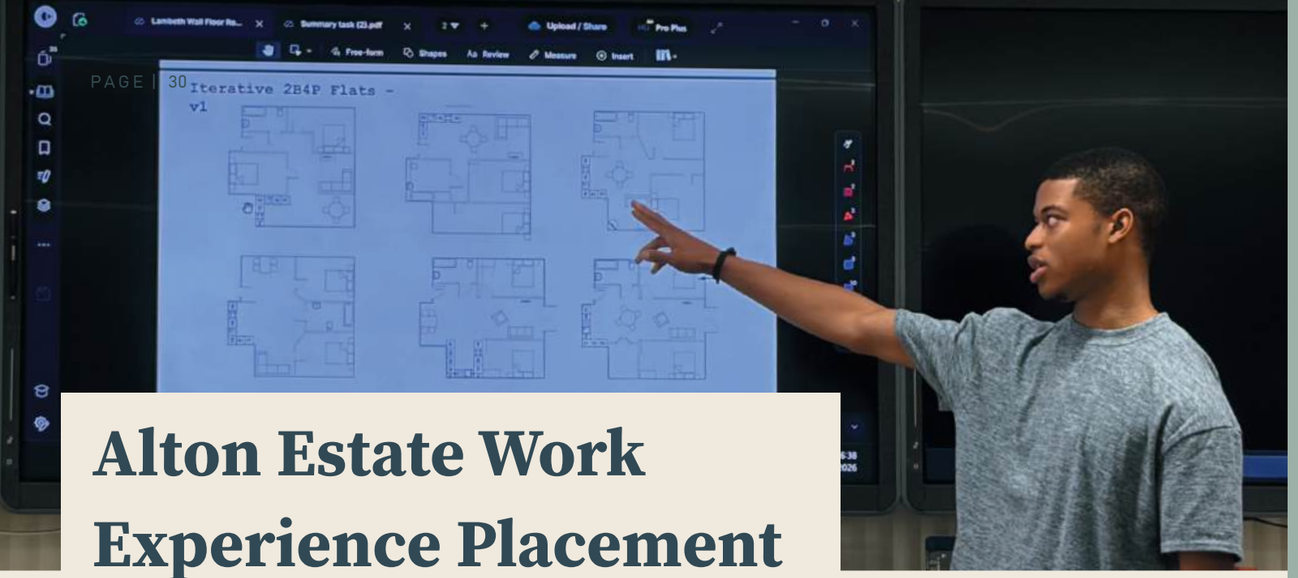
The Journeys Into Practice event brought together alumni of the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation to share their experiences entering and progressing in the architecture profession through scholarships, bursaries, and work placements supported in Stephen Lawrence's name.

Attendees heard from several alumni who reflected on their personal journeys, career development, and the impact that Foundation support had on their professional growth. Architect Tanatswa Borerwe was part of the panel discussion and spoke openly about her own experiences navigating the profession, offering valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities she encountered along the way.

Her reflections reinforced the importance of representation, mentorship, and access to opportunities. The event concluded with networking, providing attendees with the opportunity to continue conversations and build new professional connections.







Alton Estate Work Experience Placement

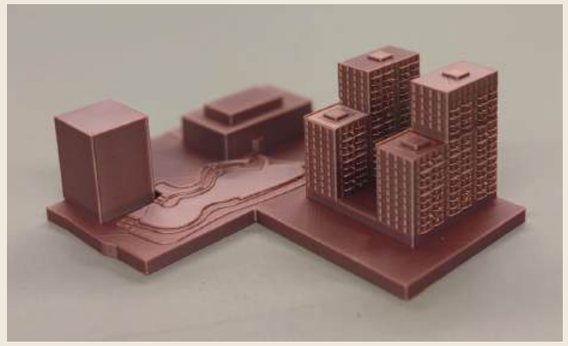
This year, Chukwudi Enyiorji joined HTA Design for a summer work experience placement as part of our social value commitment to the Alton Estate regeneration project. A resident of the estate in Roehampton, Chukwudi had recently completed his first year of Architecture studies at the University of Plymouth, providing a valuable opportunity to gain practical experience within the built environment sector.

During his placement, Chukwudi worked within Associate Partner and Senior Architect Rhea Shepherd's team, alongside Senior Architect Hasan Cenktas. This gave him first-hand experience of architectural practice and an insight into the day-to-day operations of a professional design studio.

He explored different stages of the design process, learning how early concepts and drawings evolve into detailed design proposals, while also gaining an understanding of the social, environmental and community considerations that shape successful projects.

As a resident of the Alton Estate, Chukwudi brought valuable local knowledge and lived experience to discussions. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Chukwudi as he progresses through his studies and as the Alton Estate regeneration moves forward, with the first new buildings now beginning to emerge on site.





> During my time at HTA, I was able to learn more about the different stages of the design process. I'm very grateful for the experience and looking forward to taking what I've learned into my second year of university - Chukwudi Enyiorji

Transcribing Accra Talk

For Black History Month 2026, Part II Architectural Assistant Nana Kwarteng delivered a talk titled Transcribing Accra, reflecting on her month-long exploration of the Ghanaian city as part of the Nomadic African Studio programme. Drawing on her research and first-hand experiences in Ghana, Nana explored how culture, community and commerce have shaped Accra's distinctive character and urban landscape.

The presentation highlighted the city's unique places, striking architecture and diverse environments, examining how they have contributed to its evolving identity. Through her research, Nana revealed not only the physical fabric of Accra but also the vibrant stories, cultural influences and everyday experiences that bring the city to life.





Honouring our Communities Talk

During Black History Month, Dian Small, "The Cultural Architect", led a thought-provoking session exploring whose knowledge is valued in shaping decisions within the built environment. Focusing on community engagement and social value, the talk challenged participants to consider how evidence is defined, whose voices are heard, and whether local knowledge is incorporated early enough to meaningfully influence project outcomes.

Through discussion and reflection, attendees examined the assumptions and judgements that underpin design and development processes, and explored how more inclusive approaches can lead to better-informed and more impactful outcomes for communities.





Outreach Overview

Primary School Students engaged: 240+

Secondary School Students engaged: 150+

University Students engaged (18+): 60+

Hours of volunteering for social value and outreach workshops: 30+ hours

Organisations engaged: Beyond The Box, Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation, HarPa

Support for schools: The City Academy, Trinity High School, Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy, Alton Forest School, Falconbrook Primary School, Highbury Fields School

Supporting Colleges: South Thames College

Universities engaged: Ravensbourne University, London School of Architecture, Edinburgh University

School workshops: 5+

Engaged schools in the following cities: Manchester, London and Bristol

Work Experience Placements: 30+

Work Experience Placement Hours: 1,100+

Tours of our office: 10+







Useful resources & activities

HTA subscribes to Health Assured - Employee Assistance Programme providing 24/7 help and support when you need it. Now available in the palm of your hand via their Health e-Hub App.

The Architect's Benevolent Society has teamed up with Anxiety UK to launch a new mental health support helpline specifically for Architects, Architectural Assistants, Landscape Architects, Technologists, and their families.

D&I: Do you have any Diversity & Equality events planned?

If you are planning to arrange or attend any diversity and equality related events or meetings within the next few months, please let us know about it!

We would be interested to hear what others are doing both internally and externally, please also send any photos of the event if appropriate to do so.



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HTA Manchester: Clayton House, 59 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AQ - T: 0161 236 9185
HTA Bristol: Spike Island Artspace, 133 Cumberland Road, Bristol, BS1 6UX
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