



MATT+FIONA

2024

IMPACT REPORT



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MATT+FIONA team, December 2024



2024 has been a big year for MATT+FIONA, seeing us take on more projects and reach more young people than ever before., we are proud to have partnered with an ever-growing number of placemakers, both within local authorities and developers, exploring new ways to engage local people with the changes that are happening in their areas. In London, we have built on existing relationships with the boroughs of **Camden** and **Waltham Forest**, supporting them to reach more young people who have been able to physically shape their neighbourhoods.

Beyond the capital, in March, we worked with **Tewkesbury Borough Council** to gather creative input from over 100 young people into the strategy for the area's future garden communities. Partnering with more placemakers has allowed us to trial new methods of working in this realm, unlocking possibilities through meanwhile spaces as well as finding opportunities for young people to contribute to emerging planning policy.

In a year of political shifts, we have an eye on the forthcoming curriculum review, an opportunity to reaffirm the vital importance of design and creativity within the national

curriculum. In a landscape where these disciplines are increasingly seen as a luxury, rather than vital parts of a balanced education, we are grateful to have been able to contribute to work by **Design Council** on the future of design education.

This has also formed part of the basis of our **Schools and Teachers Programme**, now in its second year. With the generous support of the **Happold Foundation**, we have been able to build on last year's research and will be piloting the programme with five schools across the UK. We will be evaluating the programme and working with the schools to create a scalable model that we plan to roll out more widely in the future. You can read more about this later in this report.

We'd like to thank our Industry Champions, **Jestico+Whiles**, **Buro Happold** and **The Happold Foundation** for continuing to see the impact that our work has and supporting us to carry out this work. This allows us to continue innovating and to expand our reach further, something that we are particularly proud of. We are excited to bring this energy into 2025 and to continue championing the voices of young people.

Our Impact in Numbers

This year, we have continued to **trust and support young people to make more inclusive and representative spaces and places**. We are proud that we have been able to reach our greatest number of young people yet in 2025.

Our achievements so far in numbers:



6,652 
children + young people



8,901 
direct engagements



305 
volunteers



63 
buildings + installations

Images Credits:
1, 2, 3 - MATT+FIONA
4 - Polly Alderton

2019

6 projects
545 direct engagements
371 children + young people

2020

2 projects
110 direct engagements
30 children + young people

2021

4 projects
462 direct engagements
192 children + young people

2022

14 projects
1,745 direct engagements
958 children + young people
252 volunteer hours

2023

15 projects
2,038 direct engagements
1,528 children + young people
710 volunteer hours

2024

13 projects
2,097 direct engagements
1,887 children + young people
226 volunteer hours

Schools Programme + CIC

with support from
The Happold Foundation



After years of being a predominantly commission-led organisation, in Financial Year 2023/24, MATT+FIONA took the decision to develop our own core programming. We believe this will give us the greatest chance of achieving our core mission: **ensuring that every young person in the UK has the opportunity to learn about and shape their built environment.** Moving to a model where we generate core funding allows us to work towards achieving this aim.

Crucial to this is the establishment of a sister Community Interest Company. We are pleased to confirm that in the summer of 2024, MATT+FIONA CIC was registered with Companies House.

The Schools Programme

Since being awarded a Futures Organisational Grant by the Happold Foundation in 2023, we have been working on the pilot of our Schools Programme, which aims to empower Key Stage 2 teachers to use our creative methodologies to work with their students on built environment-focused projects.

Past experience has shown us that working with schools is a way to ensure a wide range of young people can take part in projects, without it being dependent on parents' cultural capital or time to take their children to extracurricular activities. In this way we are able to reach some of the more vulnerable, disenfranchised and underrepresented young people within the built environment industries.

This year, we have partnered with five contrasting schools across the UK, speaking with their teachers and working with them to understand how we might best bring value to them and their students. After this consultation period, we are now planning to pilot the project with these schools in the 2025 summer term. The pilots will be evaluated in partnership with the schools before we then design the final programme that we will then aim to roll out to more schools across the country in year 3.

Selected Projects



Image: Completed Reflect Panels with HS2, LDA + MDJV (Summer Build)



Reflect

with HS2, LDA Design + MDJV

About the project

Working in partnership with LDA Design, HS2 and Mace Dragados Joint Venture (MDJV), we have this year been supporting a group of young people from the Regent's Park Estate to design and build their own play and performance space. **Reflect**, named by the young designers, is a true product of the group's amazing imagination. The multifunctional pavilion can be used as a performance and play space and uses mirrors to playfully integrate the landscape of the new garden on one of the HS2 meanwhile sites on Hampstead Road, London.



The garden will be open to the public from late 2024, offering precious green space to local residents and standing as a testament to the power of young people in shaping their neighbourhoods.



The project is a response to an initial community engagement programme, including an open iftar and family workshops on the Regent's Park Estate, which identified a clear need for more recreational spaces dedicated to young people living in and around the Euston area. The Young Placemakers then came together to design the structure over 12 weeks. While the main frame was assembled by contractors, the decorative panels that form the impressive top half of Reflect were built by the group at the Euston Skills Centre over the course of a week in August 2024.



Images: Reflect with HS2, Jon Shmulevitch, Nick Turpin



The Meanwhile Garden

with Latimer

About the project

As part of the wider youth engagement activities being carried out on behalf of **Latimer by Clarion Housing Group** on the **Garden Community**, we have supported a group of young people in north Essex to design their own furniture for a rubble garden in Colchester. **The Meanwhile Garden** is a joint venture between **Beth Chatto's Plants and Gardens** and **Darryl Moore Design** who together have rejuvenated a derelict plot of land in the city centre – formerly the site of a bus depot – and gifted it back to the city as a meanwhile space.

The Meanwhile Garden embodies the spirit and values of the future garden community which will be designed on the principles of a 21st century garden city, combining new housing with generous open spaces and parks. Crucially, it is being shaped by young people, through an extensive youth engagement programme that will continue into 2025.



Over the course of our **Summer Studio** in August 2023, the group was asked to come up with their own designs for furniture that could be installed in the garden. After a site visit and initial sketching of ideas, they modelled their furniture designs out of cardboard at 1:1 scale. We have since adapted and combined these designs to create **two furniture pieces** which were professionally fabricated by local makers and installed in the garden as a testament to the power of young people's voices in the shaping of new places.



Images: Meanwhile Garden with Latimer, French + Tye

Mission Grove Play Streets

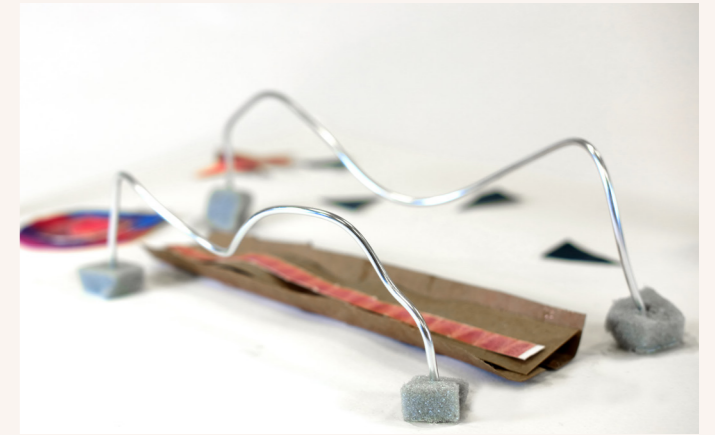
with the London Borough of Waltham Forest



About the project

In autumn 2024, we resumed our ongoing partnership with the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Over the last two years, we have been working with our partners at the council to support them in reaching local young people across the borough and integrating their voices into emerging planning policy.

Their designs have now been passed on to the design team to be taken forward and will be fabricated and installed in 2025, for all the community to enjoy. The project is part of the council's wider Government Funded (Levelling Up Fund) 'Walthamstow Culture for All' Programme to improve safety, greening, inclusiveness, and accessibility in the town centre.



This year, we have been working on a project with a built output, supporting local primary school children at Mission Grove Primary School to co-design play elements in the new Play Street proposed for Mission Grove, just off Walthamstow High Street. We ran a series of workshops across the autumn to determine what young people want to see in their local area. The three workshops were delivered with support from staff from the council and the design team for the wider project.

It was clear from the workshops that the children see huge value in elements that will allow them to play and move from one area to the other, therefore making 'play on the move' essential. We were so impressed with the children's creativity and the play elements they have designed.



Looking Ahead

2024 has been an exciting year of growth for MATT+FIONA, and the team is excited to continue advocating for the voices of young people in 2025.

Thank you to all of our supporters, volunteers and Industry Champions for another amazing year!



Work With Us

Our Partner Organisations

2-3 Degrees, Amsterdam International Community School, Arts Depot, Brixton House, Built Environment Trust, Bywater Properties, Camden London Borough Council, Clarion Housing Group, Euston Skills Centre, Floating Classroom, Great Ormond Street Hospital, Greater London Authority, Grosvenor, HS2, Hull UK City of Culture, Institute of Imagination, Kew Gardens, Lakeland Arts, LDA Design, London Borough of Waltham Forest, London Festival of Architecture, Museum of Architecture, Museum of the Home, National Maritime Museum, National Saturday Club, North Norwegian Centre for Design and Architecture (NODA), Royal Academy of Arts, RSPCA Mallydams, Soane Museum, Sutton House, Turner Contemporary, U+I, UAL, UCL, Whitechapel Gallery, Young V&A

Our Industry Sponsors

MATT+FIONA is grateful to our Industry Champions for their support of our pioneering mission, to enable children and young people to make their own spaces and places.

The Happold Foundation

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