

Open Call Pews & Perches



Zombie bench by George King Architects, 2012. © Anna Stathaki

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The commission

The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) and The Royal Docks Team (RDT) invite you to create one of several public benches, to be installed in the public realm of the Royal Docks this autumn.

We are inviting architecture and design students, recent graduates and emerging practitioners to submit a design proposal for a bench that will transform the public realm of the Royal Docks as a place to sit, rest and play.

If your design is one of the winners, you will be awarded £1,500 to make your bench and install it during October 2019. This will be a chance to participate in a unique project and showcase your imaginative design to the public and the many festival producers involved.

The Context

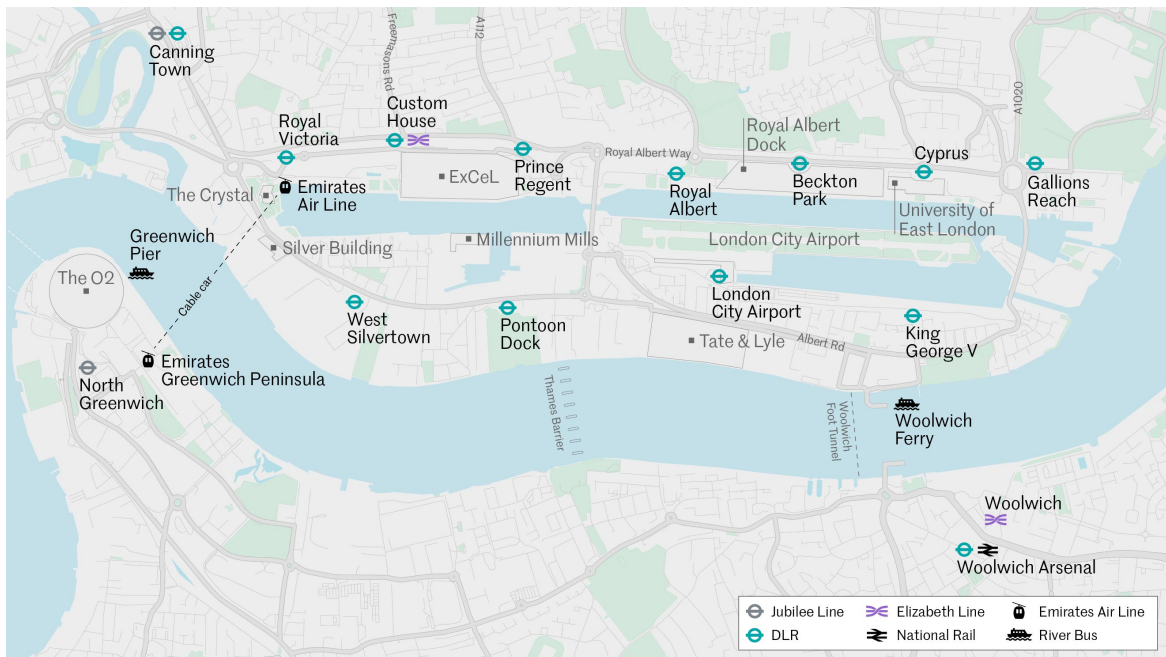
Once London's gateway to world trade, today the Royal Docks is one of the UK's most important regeneration stories. This vast area in the borough of Newham is re-emerging as a commercial and cultural hub of global significance, and an exciting new waterfront.

The docks lie immediately east of Canary Wharf in the London Borough of Newham, covering over 500 hectares of land and 18.4km of waterfront. With the support of funding from the London Economic Partnership (LEAP), this unique part of London is starting a journey to become one of the best examples of regeneration in the world. Located at the intersection of the Thames Estuary, Royal Docks and Beckton Riverside Opportunity Area, and the UK's Innovation Corridor, this is a large area with enormous potential. Through co-operating across municipal borders, the Royal Docks is poised to become a flourishing and diverse commercial district.

The Royal Docks Team is a multi-disciplinary team that brings together officers from across the Greater London Authority, the London Borough of Newham and the London Economic Action Partnership. The team was established in 2017 to help deliver the cohesive transformation of the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone, where seven million sq ft of commercial space will see business rates reinvested for the benefit of the local community.

As part of this ambitious programme, Royal Docks Team are commissioning a series of public benches to be placed around the waterfront celebrating area's new development, heritage and opens spaces. The benches should be sustainable, some colourful but most importantly, inviting the community to sit, enjoy and take note of the surroundings they are in.

The site



A variety of locations across the Royal Docks have been selected for the benches. These are areas where there is significant scope for public realm enhancement or seating provision.

You can indicate a preferred site in your design submission. However, please bear in mind that you might not be granted the preferred site. The design proposal should therefore be flexible and adjustable to other locations. Ultimately the decision on where benches go will be made by the Royal Docks Team.

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Design requirements

Each bench must offer a comfortable seat for a minimum of 2 adults. We are looking for pieces that function for visitors (are not purely sculptural) and are realistic to the brief (do not become pavilions or follies). They must be safe, durable and offer a low-cost design solution.

The designs should also include elements of surprise and play. The benches should offer visitors an opportunity to engage with the project in a fun and creative way. As an example, this could be done through:

- Integrating elements that involve children's active participation with the design
- Improving health and wellbeing by integrating design features that enable physical workout

Maintenance is a key consideration particularly if the bench has planting: designers must consider how plants will be watered and the benches kept clean, litter-free and in good condition.

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Further Guidance

- *Authorship:* The judges welcome entries from, or collaborations with groups in the Royal Docks area and LB Newham who are underrepresented in architecture. This is in line with the Mayor of London's recently launched Supporting Diversity Handbook, a pdf and online version of which can be found here: www.london.gov.uk/supporting-diversity.
- *Budget:* If successful, the £1,500 will need to cover all associated production costs (materials, transport, construction and deinstall). You can use salvaged materials or seek in-kind materials sponsorship to reduce expenses. The budget will be managed by the entrant.
- *Design:* The bench should be designed to prevent use or damage by skateboarders. It should be work as freestanding piece but with the ability to be fixed in a position if needed. The design must also take into account of the site conditions and any slopes.
- *Health & safety:* The drawings will be checked by a Royal Docks / Newham Council engineer who will also carry out a risk assessment. On delivery, the bench will be checked to ensure it is safe for public use. You may be asked to make modifications

but on sign-off the bench will be the property and responsibility of City of London Corporation.

- *Durability*: The project will exist for 12 months and you should consider the longevity and appearance of your design accordingly, to ensure that no or minimal maintenance is required during this period. Subject to durability, the benches may be able to be in place for longer or moved to a different location in Royal Docks for an extended period.
- *Timescale*: The bench is expected to be installed in early October 2019 and stay in place until at least September 2020
- *Installation*: Unless otherwise agreed with the Royal Docks Team installation will take place during October 2019.
- *Deinstallation*: Unless otherwise agreed with the Royal Docks Team deinstallation will take place in September 2020.
- *Afterlife*: There might be an opportunity to re-site the bench within the Royal Docks area after September 2020.

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Budget

The total budget available for this project for one bench is £1,500. This is to include all fees, fabrication, installation and deinstallation costs (materials, transport and construction).

Half of the fee will be awarded in September, on receipt of a signed agreement in which you commit to provide a bench as per your submission and any revisions as requested by Royal Docks Team and London Festival of Architecture. The remaining fee will be given in October after delivery and approval of the bench.

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Submission

This submission should include

1. Full name and contact details including postal address, contact number and email of project lead.
2. Brief biographies of all the project team.
3. Coloured photo of the design team (landscape) for promotional purposes
4. A 200-word description about your practice along with any relevant technical expertise acquired through previous experience.
5. Hand or computer drawn 3D design visualisation
6. Construction detail drawn to scale, with key dimensions noted
7. Outline all materials, budget and production process

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Eligibility

The competition is open to students and emerging architects and designers. We welcome collaborations however the project must be actively led by a named emerging architect or designer. Emerging is defined by being no more than 7 years post graduate.

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Deadline and submission details

- Deadline for submission is Midday, Monday 2 September 2019. Submissions received after this time will not be considered.
- For competition enquires please contact: rosa@londonfestivalofarchitecture.org
- To submit expressions of interest in a PDF format go [here](#).
- The PDF should be no more than 5MB and 10 A4 pages.
- You will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission.

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Schedule outline

Submissions open: Tuesday 16 July 2019

Submissions closed: September 2 2019

Winners notified: September 6 2019

Benches installed by: 15 October 2019

Benches deinstalled by: 15 September 2020

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Judging panel

Dan Bridge (Programme Director in the Royal Docks)

David Ogunmuyiwa (Principal, ArchitectureDoingPlace and Mayor's Design Advocate)

Tamsie Thomson (Director, London Festival of Architecture)

Further judges to be confirmed.

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Further information

- Submissions will be judged on originality, demonstration of creativity and relevance to the brief, as well as feasibility and how the proposal works in the context of the site.
- The ownership of Copyright of the design will be in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, that is Copyright rests with the author of the submitted design.
- All designs remain the intellectual property of the designer however the winning designs when built, will be the property of the Royal Docks Team.
- Please bear in mind that the project requires a fast turn around and may have peak moments when your practice will need to dedicate sufficient staff to deliver the project on time, on budget and to the high standard expected by all stakeholders.

- If selected, your practice/collaboration needs to organise: Professional Indemnity, and Employers Liability (in case you have employees)
- Significant efforts are made by all stakeholders of the project to ensure wide media coverage.
- London Festival of Architecture and Royal Docks Team reserve the right to use images from the submissions for promotional purposes in press, social media and publications. All endeavours will be made to ensure accurate accreditation.

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Useful links

London Festival of Architecture:

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

The Royal Docks Team

<https://www.royaldocks.london>

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Contact

To submit your entry please go to:

<https://www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/pewsandperches/>

For general enquires please contact: rosa@londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

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Disclaimer

The competition organisers are not liable for lost, misdirected, or late entries. Decisions of the jury represent their professional judgments and all decisions are final. While it is the intent to construct the winning scheme, the organisers reserve the right to not proceed with construction for any reason. Material submitted by you shall be your sole responsibility, shall not infringe or violate the rights of any other party or violate any laws, contribute to or encourage infringing or otherwise unlawful conduct, or otherwise be obscene, objectionable, or in poor taste. By submitting such material, you are representing that you are the owner of such material and/or have all necessary rights, licenses, and authorization to distribute it.

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**LONDON FESTIVAL OF
ARCHITECTURE**

London Festival of Architecture

The London Festival of Architecture was founded in 2004, and is now firmly established as Europe's biggest annual architecture festival. The London Festival of Architecture 2018 will feature events across the capital from 1-30 June, and this year will explore the theme 'identity'. The London Festival of Architecture celebrates London as a global hub of architectural experimentation, practice and debate, provoking questions about the contemporary and future life of the city, and promoting positive change to its public realm. The London-wide programme is delivered by a diverse mix of architecture and design practices and practitioners, cultural and academic institutions, artists and many others.

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

Twitter: @LFArchitecture



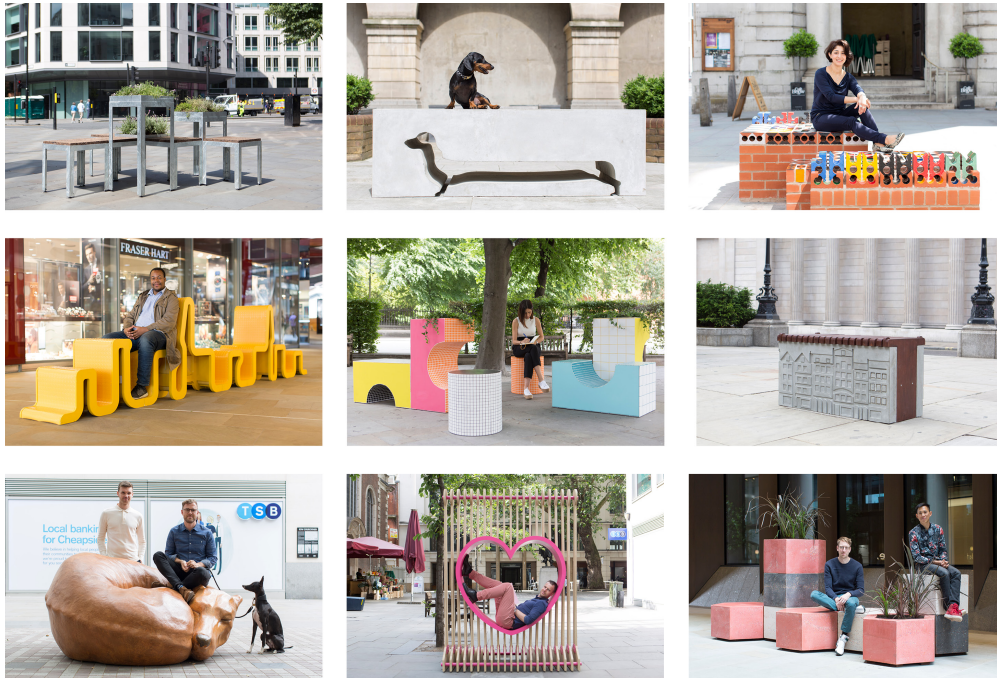
The Royal Docks Team

The Royal Docks in the London Borough of Newham was once a global centre of innovation and industry, supplying goods and services all over the world. Today the Royal Docks prepares for London's largest and most significant regeneration project, with up to 20,000 new homes and 40,000 jobs being delivered over the next 25 years. The Mayor of London and Mayor of Newham have established a new delivery team to drive forward the area's exciting transformation. The team are in the process of finalising a 5-year delivery plan setting out the investment and interventions that will re-establish the Royal Docks as a world-class centre for enterprise and ideas.

www.royaldocks.london

Twitter: @YourRoyalDocks

Reference



2019 City benches in Cheapside. © Agnese Sanvito

The project builds upon the ‘Pews & Perches’ competition, which was run by RIBA London for the London Festival of Architecture 2012 and delivered a series of public benches at waterside locations around the Royal Docks. For one of the winners of this competition and designer of Zombie Bench, George King, the opportunity was a breakthrough moment for him as an architect. He explains:

“Zombie Bench was my first competition win and was the perfect opportunity to design something on a scale that was fun and experimental, yet buildable and functional. It allowed me to think about the qualities I am interested in as an architect and distil them into a small object which still provokes debate to this day.”

More recently, the competition also follows the immense success of the City Benches project, run in collaboration with the City of London Corporation and Cheapside Business Alliance. Launched for the first time two years ago, the first series of public benches were enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people during the LFA in June 2018 before the competition was relaunched this year, featuring a new series of much-loved designs. The hugely popular installations championed fresh design talent and celebrated a new perspective on enlivening Cheapside’s urban environment.