

Alone together, the social life of benches : how filmmaking can help to tell detailed and nuanced stories about encounters, exclusion and wellbeing in outdoor spaces.

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AHRC Connected Communities Call
Addressing the Challenges of Disconnection, Division and Exclusion
Innovation Grant · January–November 2015

**The Un-Sociable Bench,
and other urban micro-territories of encounter and intimidation**

Project partners
Esther Johnson · Reader in Media Arts · Sheffield Hallam University
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Community group leaders and fieldworkers
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The Bench Project · Research Aims

- *To test how making a film can tell detailed and nuanced stories about encounters, exclusion and wellbeing in outdoor spaces*
- To record the ways in which different people use, and think about how they use, benches and other small places of outdoor gathering,
- To explore how the interactions between users of benches may be sociable or may cause problems,
- To find out how spending time outside is good for people, and,
- To understand ways in which public spaces and seating areas are controlled

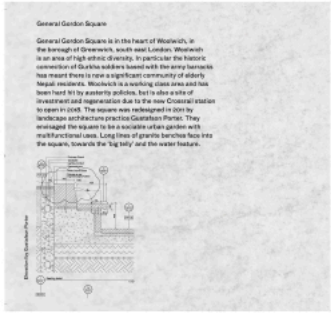
On a day such as this, while roaming around this park,
If you see a thousand faces then it is good for you.
My ancestors used to say that.
— Chali Kumari, General Gordon Square, Woolwich

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Alone Together
the Social Life of Benches

RESEARCH PROCESS
and
FINDINGS

*To test how
making a film
can tell detailed
and nuanced
stories about
encounters,
exclusion and
wellbeing in
outdoor spaces*



Spread from *Alone Together, the Social Life of Benches* DVD booklet, BP028 2015



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