

King's Cross

KXPLORE.COM

Argent LLP





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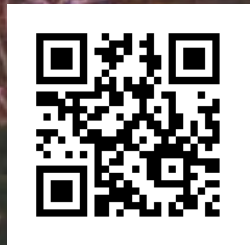
Gasholder No. 6, Vanessa Triplata



gas holder industry
In the early 1900s London was using huge amounts of heat, light, cooking and power. Gas holders like these were used to store and release it under the correct pressure into the main pipes.

At one point there were 12 gas holders like these here. They stored gas produced from coal by the Imperial Gas Light & Coke Company at St Pancras, the biggest firm of its type in the country.

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DRAMATIC URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS

Client: Argent LLP

Date: 2015 – 2016

The Challenge

Developers, Argent LLP, were undertaking the major regeneration project across a 64 acre site at King's Cross, central London.

This iconic area of London has a vibrant and well-remembered past, both in living and in literary memory. As the area was set to change, almost beyond recognition, it was important for Argent to engage the local community with their project, to capture and share the heritage and past lives of King's Cross, as well as to explain the current transformational project, and their vision for the future.

USING THE PAST TO INTRODUCE THE FUTURE

Our Response

Working with the Argent team, local historians, Alan Dein and Kevin Flude, film maker, Ryan Samuda, and with a generous donation of archive images from the [Canal Museum](#), we created KXplore – an evolving, free-to-access/no download digital tour of the area that adapted as the huge building site changed and shifted over time.

To do this we developed a location-based, hotspot approach, that linked particular stories to the visitor's location and what they could see. Triggers to the tour (URLs, QR Codes and NFC tags) were integrated with graphics on the building site hoardings, and a map/leaflet and quiz that visitors could collect from the King's Cross Visitor Centre.

This approach, delivered through the versatile *Nutshell* digital platform, meant that content could be instantly shifted between (reassigned to) hotspots as the hoardings moved, new areas of King's Cross were opened up, and what visitors could see changed.

The tour content explored the salubrious and vibrant history of the area, its impact on London life, as well as interviews with the design and development teams responsible for envisioning and realising the new King's Cross, at the time, "London's newest postcode."

<http://kxplore.city-insights.com/en/>

URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Learning

- **Sensitive:** Urban transformation and regeneration projects are, by their nature, disruptive and sometimes upsetting for the local communities. Through a sensitive and accessible, digitally enhanced communication of the project and its aims, that takes into account the existing emotional attachments to the area and its heritage, you can engage the local community and even activate them to participate.
- **Evolving:** These types of projects are dynamic and create an intriguing and shifting urban landscape. Communication and stakeholder/public engagement strategies around a project can be designed to naturally evolve and adapt as the project and urban space shifts, and new spaces open up.
- **Hidden:** Hoardings are 'mystery walls'. They appear and activity goes on behind them and then they come down and something new has appeared. They are a hugely under-utilised asset for public engagement and outward facing communication about who you are, what you stand for and what you're doing.
- **Unrealised:** The opportunities for public engagement in the projects that are shaping the places where they live, work and visit are vast, and for the most part, almost completely ignored. Our experience has shown us that the more you engage the public in what is going on around them the more supportive and understanding they will be.

CONTACT

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