

# Winter Term 2010 Newsletter

*'Inspiring people to make better places'*

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to the Building Exploratory's winter newsletter. Here you will find information on all the exciting work with schools we have carried out throughout the term, as well as learning opportunities for your classes for the Spring. To take advantage of these offers, please complete and return the booking form attached.

As built environment learning becomes more relevant to out of the classroom learning and BSF engagement, schools look ever more to their local neighbourhoods as a resource to support learning across the curriculum. The Building Exploratory continues to help schools access the rich resources that are on our doorsteps with a practical new feature in this newsletter. The 'Building Explorer's Fact File' will focus each term on a particular London site, space or structure that offers a wealth of learning opportunities. This term, due to our recent project work with Heatherwick Studio, we are featuring their innovative Rolling Bridge at Paddington Basin. Continuing the bridge theme, you may also be interested on our KS2 Building Bridges in-school modelmaking workshop on offer in March.

We wish you all the best for the Spring Term and look forward to working with you.

Claire Toogood  
Head of Learning



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## School Site Exploration with Horizon Special School

The Building Exploratory began work this Autumn Term with Horizon Special School in Hackney. Our team worked with students in Blue class to unlock the unique learning opportunities that the school's buildings and spaces hold.



Students used maths and observation skills to discover shapes and measure spaces, appraised colours and materials within the school's indoor and outdoor spaces and applied their investigations to creating temporary changes and improvements to their learning environment. They also designed new play patterns for the playground and weaved colour into the school using ribbons and fabric through railings. The students' ideas will contribute to the school's BSF redevelopment, with opportunity to apply their newly developed critical and design skills to local building visits in the spring.

If you would like the Building Exploratory to help involve staff and students in the transformation of your school, or to support you in unlocking the learning potential of your school site, please call 020 7729 2011.

## Construction & Built Environment Diploma

Year 10 C&BE Diploma students from Hackney Free and Parochial School have been learning about masonry and timber construction in recent visits to three local building sites. They met with and questioned architects, project and site managers and went on to lay bricks within the Klein Wharf courtyard scheme.



**'The best education resource in Hackney... there is nothing else like it. There are students here who don't normally handle maths very well, but in this session they are making connections and they are so keen to work out the calculations and apply them to making something...it brings maths to life. This is what I think education should be about.'**

Yr 5 teacher, Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls Primary School

### Scale: Measure & Model

Our popular interactive Scale workshop has been adapted for use with Hackney Museum's exhibition. Teachers who have trialled it with their classes have seen maths come to life for their students!

If you would like to try this FREE workshop yourself, please see the booking form attached for available dates.

## The Lord Mayor's Show 2009

On Saturday 14th November the Building Exploratory, Sebright Primary School, Heatherwick Studios and City Bridge Trust all braved gales and rain storms to take part in the 682nd Lord Mayor's Show. The day marked the conclusion of an innovative and creative learning project commissioned by the City Bridge Trust to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the first stone crossing over the Thames. Our float, a scale model of a 100 metre long opening bridge designed by one of the UK's leading designers, Thomas Heatherwick, was part of the parade that travelled through the City of London.



The project paired up designers and engineers from Heatherwick Studio with Year 6 students from Sebright Primary School and examined the concept and construction process of a bridge designed 'to get out of the way'. Sebright students became experts in bridge making through a range of creative learning activities including site and studio visits, acrobalance and dance workshops, exploring forces and movements with their bodies, modelmaking and testing.



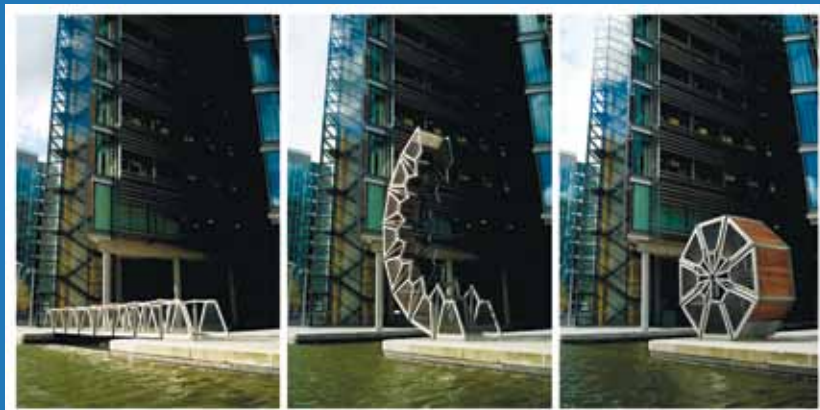
Many thanks to the City Bridge Trust, Heatherwick Studio, Candoco Dance Company, Circus Space, the Senior Bees and the students from Sebright Primary School for making this project such a success.

If you would like to use ideas from the project to inspire your students then find out more in our Building Explorer's Fact File overleaf.

## Building Explorers Fact File

### Rolling Bridge

In this section of the newsletter we aim to bring you information about London sites and structures that you may wish to visit or include in your class work.



Photograph: Steve Speller

**Designed by:** Heatherwick Studio

**Built:** 2004 by Littlehampton Welding Ltd. Located on The Grand Union Canal at Paddington Basin, London

**Opening times:** The Rolling Bridge opens at noon every Friday unless wind speeds reach more than 30mph. To check call 0207 402 5299.

**How does it work?** The Rolling Bridge uses an innovative opening mechanism. Instead of a single rigid element opening, the Rolling Bridge curls up until its two ends touch, getting out of the way of boats and creating a stunning octagonal structure on the bank.

**What is it made of?** The bridge is 12 metres long. It is made of eight steel and timber sections which curl by hydraulic pistons set into the handrail between each section.

**What type of bridge is it?** This pedestrian bridge is a unique example of a retractable bridge that curls. It is a kinetic version of a traditional truss bridge.

**What else?** The Rolling Bridge won the 2005 British Structural Steel Award

For more information about the Rolling Bridge and other London bridges explore these links:

Heatherwick Studio <http://www.heatherwick.com>

Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Rolling\\_Bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rolling_Bridge)

Tower Bridge Exhibition <http://www.towerbridge.org.uk/TBE/EN/>

London 2012 Footbridge <http://www.hparc.com/f06.html>

Mile End Green Bridge <http://www.czwg.com/en/Work/Public%20Buildings%20and%20Major%20Exhibitions/The%20Green%20Bridge>

For more ideas or advice to help realise any of these suggestions, or to book the Building Bridges workshop for your class, call 020 7729 2011.

### In the classroom

- If you intend to take your class to visit the bridge, it is well worth visiting Tower Bridge on the Thames to compare how these different types of bridges open and close.
- Plan a walk to spot and record examples of local road, rail and pedestrian bridges.
- Travel back in time from the Rolling Bridge along the Thames to investigate the history of London's Bridges.
- Explore forces (tension and compression) by using a range of classroom materials to design and make model bridges that can span a fixed length and hold a certain weight.
- Use drama and movement to use your bodies to understand the ways that bridges move and the forces that act upon them.
- Test your students' ingenuity by challenging them to design a bridge that 'gets out of the way'.
- Explore the design process. Where do designers take inspiration from - what organic forms might have inspired Thomas Heatherwick's Rolling Bridge Design?
- Be inspired by the movement of the Rolling Bridge to create your own simple stop frame animation.



## Exploring Adventure

Since May 2009 the Building Exploratory, in partnership with designers erect architecture, has delivered a programme of creative learning and engagement opportunities for local people to shape a new adventure playground for Kilburn Grange Park. As part of this programme, Year 5 pupils from Kingsgate Primary School explored the changes to the park over 160 years and the notion and value of adventure. Students identified and mapped existing trees and plants and, having investigated structural principles, went on to make temporary interventions to enhance the spatial qualities in the park. Their ideas have informed erect architecture's designs, and the pupils have been invited to build elements of climbing frames and platforms with the contractors in the spring term.



## INSET for Teachers

The Building Exploratory's learning team can deliver inspiring training at your school. Sessions will help teaching staff identify creative ways to explore and utilise your school buildings, grounds and local area to meet curriculum needs.

Special Offer:

1 x 90min workshop (minimum of 8 teachers): £15 per teacher  
1 x 90min bespoke workshop tailored to your specific environment\*: £200

\*Please note this will require Building Exploratory staff gaining access to research the school site prior to the session.

## What Makes a Square Wonderful?

Since September 2008, the Building Exploratory has been working with Islington Greenspace Service and remapp landscape architects, enabling local people to explore and inform the redevelopment of Arundel Square Gardens. Year 9 students at Saint Magdalene Academy are investigating and documenting the gardens through experimental photography. Looking out from the balcony of a new apartment on the southern edge of the square and a tree in the centre of the gardens, students worked together to map the views and co-create panorama photographs.



The students went on to make pinhole cameras from junk containers, and transformed the dilapidated play hut on site into a dark room to process their photographs. The students will document the changes throughout the construction phase and their ideas will inform a learning resource to be launched in summer 2010.

If you would like the Building Exploratory to help you in identifying the learning opportunities in your neighbourhood and discover how your school can engage with changes happening in your local area please get in touch.

## The Building Exploratory

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