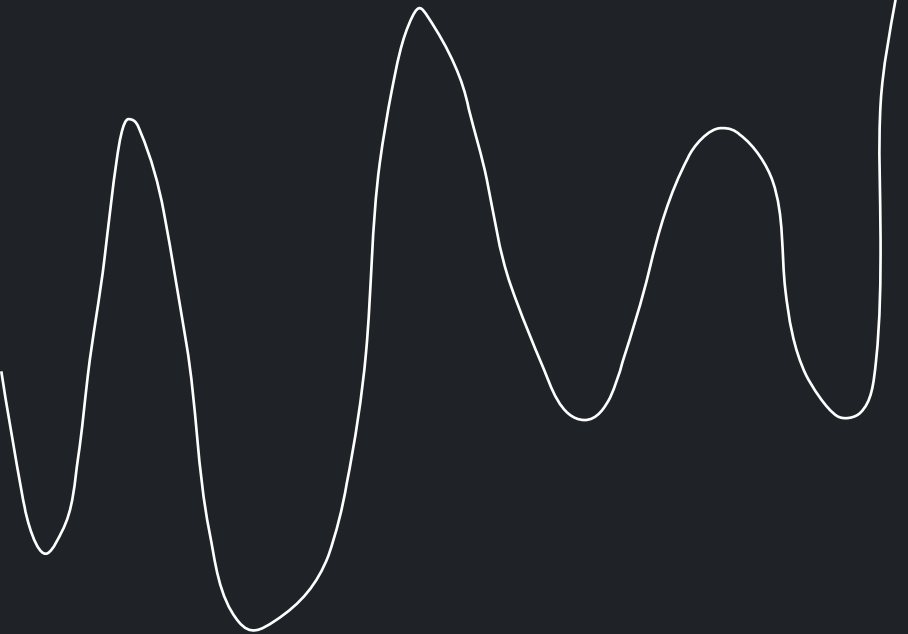


Wandsworth at Night:



Sounds of the Borough

Sounds of the Borough

This is a collection of stories
and sounds from Wandsworth
at night, told and captured
by local residents.

Publica

NIGHT TIME  **OUR TIME**

A Night Time Strategy for Wandsworth



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By Rachel



by Basma

O.

Introduction

What is the project?

This collection captures the sounds of people's everyday lives in Wandsworth, providing a window into the experiences, needs and realities of residents at night.

The project helped us see the borough through various lenses and better understand the various experiences people have of navigating the city at night.

The recordings, which you can access through QR codes throughout the report, invite us into people's lives and neighbourhoods. The recordings are at once deeply personal and relatable. Rather than people telling us about their lives at night, we're invited to listen and put ourselves in their shoes.

From the sounds of running down the stairs at Clapham Junction to the anticipation of a crowd waiting in line for a gig, the recordings bring the atmosphere of the borough, in all its diversity, to life. We encourage you to listen to the recordings and reflect on your own experiences at night and to listen out to your own regular nocturnal soundscapes.

Why sounds?

Our perceptions of sounds, and their impacts on our experiences, are heightened at night. Sounds at night can be divisive. Noise easily becomes nuisance. Silence quickly becomes eerie. Sounds can surprise, jolt or reassure us. They can tell us that we're not alone or heighten our sense of isolation. They can remind us of other places or signal that we're home. Often, they're barely perceptible, drowned out by our thoughts or cancelled out with headphones.

8 The sounds of our neighbourhoods at night have become a by-word for their vibrancy, activity and life: we claim to live in quiet areas when little animates our neighbourhoods past 6pm.

Sounds at night also tell us something about the 24 hour cycle of the city and the social and physical infrastructures that shape our everyday lives. From the sounds of waste collection and food deliveries to hospital waiting rooms and bus depots, our nocturnal soundscapes reveal the extensive processes, diverse workforces and complex logistics that keep our cities running.

A night time strategy for Wandsworth

Wandsworth Council is pioneering the development of one of the first night time strategies in London. The strategy looks holistically at all aspects of the borough from 6pm to 6am to develop inclusive policies to support the diversity of life in Wandsworth at night.

People's experiences differ significantly. For some people, night time means insecurity, fear and isolation whereas others associate night time with community, faith, culture or socialising.

This project draws attention to the diversity of people's night times. It reminds policy-makers to think of the details that make a nocturnal city something that isn't just passed through but is felt, heard and sensed viscerally.

Have your say

Scan the QR code to access the Night Time Strategy consultation page and have your say. You will also be able to access all of the recordings on this page.



Link to the
Council website



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I.

We are not alone

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Asma



Asma

My name is Asma. I've lived in Roehampton for the last 20 years. I am a housewife. Someone once said to me "Oh you're not working" and I thought: "my work start from 5am and ends at 10pm". Everyone thinks I am not working because I am not getting paid for these household jobs. I've done voluntary work at Queen Mary hospital and in my daughters' school. I have two daughters aged 12 and 9. 20 years ago, when we moved to Roehampton, it wasn't very safe, particularly Danebury Avenue. Lots of incidents of robberies. Snatchings. Beatings happened very often. Now, even though some incidents still happen, it's much much better than before.

Despite this improvement, we were the victims of one incident around 18 months ago when somebody attacked our house with a very big stone and smashed our sitting room's window. After 5 days, he attacked again and broke the kitchen window. In total, he attacked 5 times, always between 7pm and 9pm. These incidents affected my eldest daughter's mental health very badly. She was near the windows when the attacks happened and did not sleep for about a month. We contacted the GP and he referred her for counselling. We tried hard to build her confidence back and to help her out of this anxiety and depression.



We are not alone

“Change for peace,
change for safety, and
change to make a fearless neighbourhood”



II.

Choir of birds

Basma



Basma

Hi, my name is Basma and I live in Roehampton. I am a secondary school student. At night, I'm mostly outside when coming back home from my extended family's house or from the shops or anywhere. Sometimes we go for walks with other friends at night as well.

I like my neighbourhood because it's a very close community. During the night time, I used to feel very anxious and scared because you never know what can happen. I feel much safer at night now because I feel more connected with my community.

I really like this project because I feel like when people hear our recordings and our stories, they will feel like they can relate to our night time activities and I think they will feel much safer going outside knowing that other people are making night time in Wandsworth a safer place.



Choir of birds

“We would always wave our hands
along with the sounds and
the beat of the songs”

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III.

Consultation meanders

Blanka



Blanka

Blanka Hay is Local Growth Manager (Policy and Strategy) at Wandsworth Council. She leads on the production of a new, first of its kind, Night Time Strategy document to improve the borough at night. As part of this, she is exploring new ways to digitalise engagement, hoping to reach a wide range of residents, workers and visitors to inform the project. Her recordings were made during a series of night time consultation events in October.



Consultation meanders

“There’s an aura,
it’s eerie”

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IV.

A trip to Sainsbury's

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Cody



Cody

My name is Cody McCracken. I am 18 years old and have lived in the borough of Wandsworth since 2019, specifically in the suburb of Putney. Before then I lived outside of the United Kingdom altogether, in a city in Australia named Melbourne. My family moved to London for work-related reasons, and managed to end up in Putney because of a complicated family connection. I am currently a student at Ark Putney Academy, studying photography, sociology, and literature. In my spare time, I focus on recording and writing music. I view this as my main skill which I hope to bring to a university course.

On top of this, I also enjoy acting as a member of the youth theatre company Group 64, and indulging in visual arts such as drawing and photography. I chose to become involved in the Wandsworth at Night project because I was interested in pursuing a creative endeavour which I wasn't too experienced or comfortable with, which to me was field recordings. I thought that this would be helpful in shaping my understanding of sound editing. Alongside this, I chose to become involved because to me, I wanted to share my own experiences of Wandsworth at night, and in turn learn about the experiences of others in this borough. The project has done all of this for me.



A trip to Sainsbury's

“The definitive supermarket
for Londoners”



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V.

We want candy!

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Ellie



Ellie

Ellie grew up in Wandsworth, where her parents still live. It is the focal point for all family gatherings and where they have celebrated all significant holidays and milestones. Although she now lives further east, Wandsworth will forever be 'home.' Plus, the trick or treating is just much more lucrative around here.



We want candy!

“It’s chaotic and exciting.
We’re all on a mission”



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VI.

Autumn Crunch

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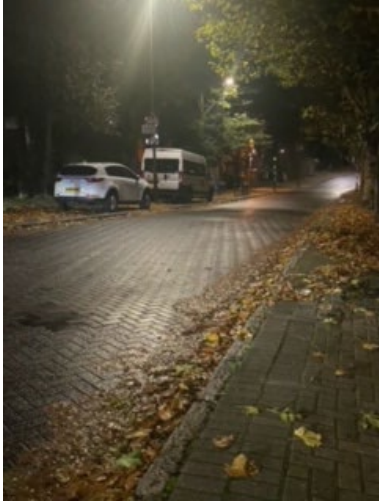
Fareeha



Fareeha

I usually spend my time in Wandsworth at night just to walk home or do small errands, sometimes meeting friends at local parks. I really like my area during the daytime but I do feel like the quiet can be pretty eerie at night time. I've enjoyed working on this project because of how it made me pay attention to day-to-day things that I usually take for granted.

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Autumn crunch

“The faint car horns from
a different street”

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VII.

Black Joy in Clapham Junction

Rachel



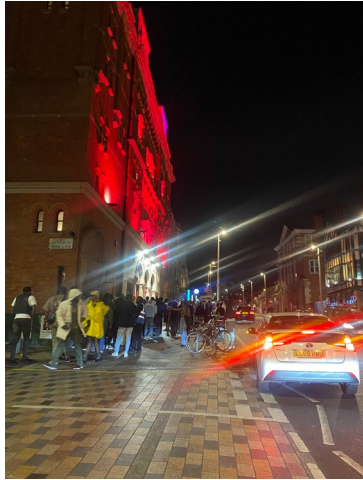
Rachel

Born and raised in South London, I am a local government officer, who enjoys theatre, travel, and soap operas! At night, I am often walking from Southfields station, having been at a theatre show.

I love Wandsworth as a borough, although I tend to stay in Clapham/Southfields/Putney area. I like how green Southfields is, the entertainment (pubs/bars) in Putney & the transport links in Clapham Junction.

I would improve the lighting in areas of Southfields. During this project, I rung the Council twice to fix the lights outside the flat. I would also hope the night-time transport could improve. District line being added to the night schedule would be amazing and having night bus routes that go to other areas in Wandsworth.

I really enjoyed this project; listening to other people's recordings of places I've yet to visit in Wandsworth.



Black joy in Clapham Junction

“I was seeing a lot of Ghanaians,
a lot of Nigerians,
just a lot of African people”



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VIII.

A moment of peace

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Rev. Betsy



Rev. Betsy

I live in Battersea with my husband Alastair (we have a grown-up son and two lovely grandsons). I grew up in North London and left school at 16 to go to the famous Italia Conti Academy to train as a performer. I worked extensively in theatre as an actor, singer and dancer and then as a theatre producer, and spent time producing work for new audiences for the Royal National Theatre. After 20 years in theatre I studied at Oxford I was ordained into the Church of England in 2003. Since then, I have worked in parishes across London and established a number of new and innovative projects, particularly around the arts.

I took up the newly created post of Pioneer Minister in the Arts in Nine Elms in 2018 and, since then, have led Nine Elms Arts Ministry, co-ordinating small- and large-scale arts events focussing on wellbeing, spirituality and social-justice.

Coming from a theatre background, night time has often been when I worked and then socialised after. I love that the dynamism and energy of such a diverse area really comes to life at night but I also reflect that we need spaces for quietness and contemplation within the 'noise'.

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A moment of peace

“The group are silent,
except for the occasional cough.”

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IX.

Please be safe

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Tatiana



Tatiana

My name is Tatiana, I'm 33 and I live in Roehampton where I work as a Senior Library Assistant at the Public Library. I love going out after dark for a walk, I find it really relaxing, especially after a long day at work. I go out with my girlfriends once a month where we dance until the early hours of the morning. This was one of the reasons I decided to join the Wandsworth at Night Project, to be able to work with the council towards making our street safer for girls and women.

I have noticed that there are not many places to go after dark if you don't have any money, most of the places in Wandsworth are not very well lit and it's honestly scary walking alone after dark. I loved talking with people from other neighbourhoods and exchanging experiences.

I believe that Wandsworth is a really nice place to live; I especially love Roehampton and our community full of wonderful people that are always ready to help you.

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Please be safe

“I really hope that
something can change”

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