

Downriver

The Thames - Post Pandemic Possibilities.



It is clear that the coronavirus will alter society. The way we, work, socialise, invest, relax and travel, are, among other things, all currently 'under review'. Many activities will be different post pandemic, how do we as designers respond? The Thames 'is liquid history'¹, ever moving, always changing - a positive metaphor to think about re-generation. Many economists believe that post pandemic, greener, more sustainable businesses will come to prominence, as people think more carefully about how they spend their money and the effect it will have on the planet. A more cautious, informed customer may emerge.

'The river in its infancy is undefiled, innocent and clear. By the time it is closely pent in by the city, it has become dank and foul, defiled by greed and speculation. In this regress it is the paradigm of human life and of human history. Yet the river has one great advantage over its metaphoric companions. It returns to its source, and its corruption can be reversed. The Thames has been an emblem of redemption and of renewal, of the hope of escaping from time itself.'²

This quote demonstrates the use of the Thames as a metaphor for renewal and positive change. During the Covid pandemic the focus has, perhaps understandably, been drawn away from sustainability and the climate crisis. The lockdown provided us with an opportunity, as a design community, to think about our responsibilities when we do emerge from under the shadow of coronavirus. Which businesses will we support and how do we want the world to be? Will things be 'back to normal' or can the Thames provide valuable clues about reuse and renewal, to create more sustainable designed environments?

The first semester design projects will look at creating interior spaces which question our need for 'new stuff' and examines how we as designers can employ strategies to promote creative, responsible interiors.

350 meters of Thames separates Greenwich from the Isle of Dogs. This relatively small stretch of water has been sufficient barrier to allow the two shores to develop distinct and diverse characters. Greenwich has been linked with royalty since Edward I built a house there. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I were both born in Greenwich. Today it trades heavily in on its historic, naval and scientific past being a major attraction for tourists. It is a World Heritage Site and proudly boasts that it is where time begins, being at 0°0'0" longitude.

On the opposite bank of the Thames is the Isle of Dogs, in many ways the more commercial and brash neighbour to the refined Greenwich. Now a major economic centre, it once formed the heart of the docks of London, loading goods from around the world at the time of Empire. Prior to the docks being built, the peninsular (not at all an island) was largely forest. Today the area which looks immediately towards Greenwich is mainly residential, but as the high-rise developments of Canary Wharf grow ever southwards, how will this change the nature of the area?

Rivers are often a boundary, often used as a metaphor and often the deciding factor in the generation of cities, Madrid for exam-

Module Code:

IAD3110

Module Title:

Integration-Research and Practice

Project Title:

Downriver

Level:

6

Duration:

13 weeks

Tutors:

Michael Westthorp
David Fern
Jon Mortimer
Naomi House

References:

1. Burn, J. (1929)
2. Ackroyd, P. (2007) Thames sacred river. 1st edition. London: Random House. p7

Project Overview:

“...chose a brief from the four described on the following pages...”

London is the only major European city not built on a river. However the Thames also has a darker side. On average one dead body per week is dragged from the water. At Woolwich the Thames Barrier, due to global warming, protects the city from what otherwise might be catastrophic flooding. If the tide rises what does this mean for the way we traverse the city?

“These projects will define your studies, they will form your Degree Show presentation, they will be the major elements in your leaving classification grade...”

Is the Thames an asset that we should be exploiting in a time of increased population and demand on existing services and infrastructure? Is it a welcome gap in the city which should be preserved for its ability to calm us during stressful times?

For the Design Project in Semester One you will be asked to choose a brief from the four described on the following pages. Each option is designed to be a realistic design brief which, to some degree, engages with altering our regular behaviour and engaging with sustainability.

We will be using the river location of the existing buildings to think about the physical surroundings, using the Thames as the dominant element in the site context. How does the location help us think about an approach and design direction? How can it generate ideas and how can it add value to our overall process?

These projects will define your studies, they will form your degree show presentation, they will be the major elements in your leaving classification grade. They will be the projects that you spend the most time on, produce the most work for and, we hope, the best design solutions you produce. It is important that you understand the three factors that will determine the success of your projects:

1. Your project must be a creative, contemporary solution to the issues raised in the brief. It must challenge the meaning of experience-led design, in the digital age.
2. Your project must demonstrate all stages of the design process. Your research should be wide ranging. You should explore many diverse creative and conceptual approaches. You will then develop the project progressively, proposing a final design, communicating it with clarity and conviction. You must show understanding of all aspects of your scheme through materiality and detailing, demonstrating the 'up close and personal' experience of your designed interior.
3. Your portfolio of work must show beautifully drawn, skilful, thoroughly detailed demonstrations of your ideas, using sketches, plans, sections, visuals, materials and models.

This topic, which will cover the final two semesters of your degree course. There are three distinct projects for you to complete in the final year; two in the first semester and one in the second.

SEMESTER 1	<p>IAD3110 Design Project 1 Submission date - MONDAY 18TH JANUARY 2021 UniHub submission.</p>	<p>50% of semester grade</p>
	<p>IAD3110 Research Project Submission dates - Draft - FRIDAY 11 DEC 2020 Final - MONDAY 18TH JANUARY 2021 UniHub submission.</p>	<p>50% of semester grade</p>
SEMESTER 2	<p>IAD3120 Design Project 2 Submission date -TBC - MAY 2021 UniHub submission.</p>	<p>100% of semester grade</p>

Project Brief:

You will be presented with four options, each is positioned within a major sector of the Interiors industry and each explore themes which are important to the wider physical area. In the first semester each option will involve a principle environment which invites in potential customers and deals with issues of sustainability. You will be encouraged to think of your design as an installation within the building envelope. What is the dialogue between the existing and your proposal? "Always design a thing by considering it in its next larger context - a chair in a room, a room in a house, a house in an environment, an environment in a city plan."³

Option One:

Tourism and Heritage - Hospitality Design

Tourism is big business for Greenwich, during 2019 over 1 million people stayed overnight in the area, with visitors spending an estimated £1.3 billion within the borough. It is easy to see Greenwich's attraction for both UK and International tourism, with its many attractions and Unesco status. With a dramatic decrease in foreign travel likely, Greenwich must think about how it attracts more local visitors. The river Thames acts as a gap cutting through the city. Far bigger than any park, it is a natural arena which allows the urban surroundings breathing space, a great place for visitors to relax. Something about the ebb and flow of the water and the constantly changing nature of the river speaks of transience and liminality, the perfect place for a walk.

The Thames Path passes directly past our site. It extends for 184 miles from nearby Woolwich to its source in the Cotswolds. Hundreds of thousands of walkers travel a part of the trail every year, from casual strolls with a dog, to seasoned 'Ramblers' attempting to complete the full length of the path. Walking is good for you with the NHS promoting

its benefits. It is also the greenest mode of transport. You are tasked with designing a Visitors Centre which promotes the Thames Path. At its most basic it must provide information about the route and its various walking itineraries. It should also provide shelter and recuperative facilities for the experienced walker who will use the building as a refuelling point, before completing the last leg of the path eastwards. It needs to generate excitement to encourage people new to walking to take up this healthy hobby. A cafe might be the main component, how do you design for this specific user? Lockers, a changing room, small shop selling walking shoes, maps and other equipment would also benefit visitors. How is the building accessed/signed? How is activity encouraged?

In the second semester we will be looking at supplementing this topic with a leisure and tourism related interior based in the hospitality sector. Hotels are a key example of hospitality spaces where people go to relax, be taken care of, perhaps escape their real lives for a while. The rise of Domestic Abuse during lock-down might prompt a project which allows secure, safe accommodation for those in need.



Suggested reading:

The Architecture of Public Display – Grafe and Bollerey

The Architecture of Professional Hospitality – Avermaete, Tom

Option Two:

Trade and Business - Service Sector Design

Both sides of the river have histories closely linked to trade and industry. The Isle of Dogs was once the major dock of London, while Greenwich's Naval history was instrumental in unlocking valuable trade routes around the world. Today many businesses thrive in the area, serving the local community and the visiting public.

In our current economic climate many businesses are thinking about how they might change to be more appealing to a younger, more responsible customer. The coronavirus has prompted the debate about what sort of companies the government are willing to support, with economists arguing that this is the moment to steer the country towards greener industry. One such company embracing this spirit is Precious Plastic.

The company wish to open their first space in the UK. They want to set up a showroom and production site which can demonstrate their products as well as engage the local community with recycling, experimenting and making. They have selected Greenwich as it has cheap rents, a large residential population and good, green transport links. Precious Plastic make machinery to recycle plastic into components for small scale production. They want a

full set of their pro machines installed to produce sheet and extruded plastic. They need a collection point so that the public can drop off their plastic bottles but they also want to have a making space where customers, of all ages, can experiment with building things out of recycled plastic, -skateboards, 3D printed objects, small scale furniture. They also want to display a set of furniture pieces which have been made by a selection of international furniture designers, which the public can buy or use as inspiration for their own creations. Finally a small office, toilet and kitchen facilities will be needed for the four full time employees.

This brief will lead to the second semester project featuring experiences concerning work and its wider context; shared workspace, studios, workshops and other spaces of enterprise would be good examples of this. Has the way we work altered forever? Will the ability to Work from Home lead to a sense of isolation in the workplace, do we only need fun places to meet our team once a week? Alternatively you might want to design other building uses associated with the service sector; - a bank, a cinema, private members club, etc. any use where the 'service' provided is more important than the bought item.



Suggested reading:

After Taste: Expanded Practice in Interior Design - Weinthal, Kleinman, Merwood

Detail in Contemporary Office Design - Plunket & Reid

References:

3. Eiel Saarin; Keller H (2014) The work of Eiel and Eero Saaren. AD

Option Three: Discovery & Culture - Exhibition Design



Suggested Reading:

Basics Interior Design 01:
Retail Design - Mesher, Lynne

Emotional Branding: The new paradigm for connecting brands to people – Gobe & Mark

Mudlarking could be regarded as one of the most green activities. Digging lost and abandoned items out of the Thames shore has been an ever popular pastime since the early Victorian era. The British Museum has a large collection of valuable object and artifacts which have been recovered from the Thames, objects which chart the various people and cultures which have called London their home. The museum wish to display some of the objects in a temporary exhibition which will travel to various other cities around the world.

The design of an exhibition must intrigue, inform, engage and educate the visiting public. Through careful analysis of the content, the designer must facilitate the delivery of a central message and make sure that the information is clear and entertaining. Even the most exciting exhibit can be lost in an unstructured design, while the most boring object can reveal the most extraordinary of stories, when given an engaging context and explanation.

Many of the objects displayed in your scheme cannot be handled by the public, however not all have to be behind glass, in archive conditions. How does the visitor travel through your exhibition? Is it a linear path, or are alternate way-finding strategies more appropriate? What is the story you are trying to tell through the exhibition- is it about revealing what was

once lost, excavation, the story of the objects life, or are you presenting the objects as part of a mystery the visitor might interpret? How can you best educate the visitor about the story of this collection?

As well as a main exhibition area students should also include a reception desk, for buying and collecting tickets and storing coats, as well as a small shop area selling merchandise such as books, toys, postcards. A single wheelchair accessible wc must also be installed.

Students who tackle this option in the first semester may wish to develop their second semester projects into social and community spaces. Options could consist of any type of library, study space or perhaps alternative cultural spaces which address particular issues. An archive which houses a collection of documents or objects around a particular theme could also work, perhaps focussing on it's public/private interface. Perhaps an 'incubator' space for craft makers which allows trades people from the local market to have a workspace which encourages the public to observe, commission and buy the designers/makers products. Other options could be around music, a recording studio or a venue where bands perform at night, which engages the local community during the day, perhaps promoting grassroots talent. Perhaps a sporting past-time needs a centre where people of all abilities can be active.

Option Four: Shopping & Health - Retail Design



Suggested Reading:

Basics Interior Design 01:
Retail Design -Mesher, Lynne

Wellbeing in Interiors: Philosophy, Design and Value in Practice - Grigoriou & Francis

Shopping is changing. The decline of the high street, largely due to supermarkets and internet shopping, has led companies to pursue alternative ways to engage with customers. Experiential shopping experiences have become more commonplace, shops which do not focus on selling but rather placing the importance on promoting 'brand values' while giving the visitor a good time. This is selling by stealth, we feel good about a product because of the experience we've had and are therefore more likely to buy, either in store or afterwards online. Will confidence return post coronavirus, how can retailers reconnect with their customers? What will encourage people to visit shops?

BiteBack 2030 exist for a healthier generation. They are an organisation established by young activists who want to put young people's health first. By campaigning for change they have already successfully been part of the move to extend the free school meal support to children throughout the summer.

They now wish to open a shop which will encourage a healthy diet and promote foods which are transparent about where they come from, what they contain and have minimal packaging. They need a shop which acts as a headquarters for their mission to promote, engage and 'improve the flow of affordable, healthy options for young people'. They will be selling local produce, all sourced locally.

A selection of seasonal fruit and vegetables as well as store cupboard ingredients, will be sold alongside a range of snacks and freshly prepared meals. Only 25% of this food will be refrigerated as any leftover will be distributed daily through food charities. The display of this food has to be enticing for young people, 18-30 year olds, the shop has to be an exciting place to hang out, learn, try out things and ultimately- buy. Cookery demonstrations and classes will be a major part of how the shop educates and feeds people. How can a small supermarket/grocery store create a buzz?

In the second semester students choosing this topic, will supplement their food shop with a space which promotes healthcare for either physical or mental well-being. Empirical evidence concludes that spending time in 'green' and 'blue' spaces can have positive physical, mental and emotional health effects, 'the Thames plays an important role in our overall well-being'⁴. Spaces which provides support for those undergoing treatment, or recuperation would be good briefs. Alternative briefs might include an RNLI station, the headquarters for a charity working within healthcare, a sporting activity centre, or a healthcare retreat, all could be developed into exciting final major projects.

How the first and second semester projects work together, will be an interesting aspect for a successful combined body of work. The options have been designed to be of similar intellectual and creative weight.

4. De Vries, S., Ten Have, M., Van Dorsselaer, S., Van Wezep, M., Hermans, T., & De Graaf, R. (2016). Local availability of green and blue space and prevalence of common mental disorders in the Netherlands. *BjPsych Open*, 2(6), 366-372. doi:10.1192/bjpo.bp.115.002469

Final Major Project

Downriver: Part 2



'The subjective analysis/mental reaction, to neighbourhood behaviours related to geographic location.'¹ This definition of Psychogeography directly connects with the way you have developed projects which capitalised on various site specific opportunities within the first semester. For your final project, you will be further exploring the potential of the river in and around Greenwich.

During the first semester we looked at how the river Thames can be a creative resource and how a building located directly next to it can benefit in multiple ways. For your FINAL DESIGN PROJECT of the course, we will be looking at how to capitalise on this knowledge. You will have a choice of two sites, one on the Isle of Dogs and one in Greenwich.

The Poplar Rowing Club building was constructed in the late 1960s after what today would be called a crowd-funding campaign. Built very simply of a concrete ribbed frame, which is supported by brick and concrete perimeter structure, the building comprises two large floor plates. The ground floor windows, only allow a little light to the main room which is currently used predominantly for boat storage. The large timber doors which form the river frontage, stand at the top of a large concrete ramp which feeds directly into the river, making a physical connection with the water. The upper floor has a high ceiling and has more light coming in from both sides. The upper floor extends onto a balcony which allows fantastic views of Greenwich.

Block K2 of the Greenwich Reach development is a mixed use residential building which has the Sail Loft bar on its ground and first floor. In many ways it can be seen as the antithesis to the Poplar Rowing Club. It is a new build, concrete-steel composite structure. The facade is a curtain wall, which is not supporting the building structurally. Opening up onto a wide boulevard, it has the possibility of a strong

connection with the street and therefore views onto the river. The upper floor, with the positioning and design of a new staircase, offers interesting design opportunities, perhaps allowing a public/private divide within the space. The floor to ceiling heights of both levels are generous, allowing for more complex spatial arrangements, within the shell. This site has perhaps less intrinsic character, it does however offer the student a relatively blank canvas to work within.

Both spaces can lead to amazing design solutions. It is important that at an early stage you decide upon your brief and that the scope of this brief clearly fits the scale of the building you choose. Some briefs will suit one building more than the other. Discussing your 'Pitch my Project' questionnaire, is your opportunity to convince the tutor group that your research has led to a comprehensive understanding of both building usage and choice of site. There is no right or wrong site choice, however it has to match the scope of your brief.

You will be setting your own briefs for your final major project. Some of you already have a strong idea about the direction you want to go in. Many others will be unsure how best to capitalise on your work from the first semester. We have already looked at how successfully targeting a particular user group, or customer, could lead to a more informed approach and in turn a more accomplished design outcome. Taking this strategy forward into this next project should also be beneficial.

Module Code:

IAD3120

Module Title:

Interior Design

Project Title:

Downriver

Level:

6

Duration:

15 weeks

Studio:

R212

Tutors:

Michael Westthorp
David Fern
Jon Mortimer

References:

1. Janicijevic, A. (2013). Psychogeography now – window to the urban future . Photoblog. urbansquares.com. USA.
2. Thames Estuary Partnership

Project Overview:

“This project will define your studies, it will form your Degree Show presentation, it will be a major element in your leaving classification grade...”

Continuing our exploration surrounding themes based on user experience in our contemporary culture, in the final semester we will be concentrating on one final design project. The result will be a comprehensive display of your time on the course.

In many ways this project will define your studies, it will form your degree show presentation, it will be a major element in your leaving classification grade. It will be the project that you spend the most time on, produce the most work for and, we hope, be the best design solution you produce. It is important that you understand the four factors that will determine the success of your project:

1. Your project must be a creative, contemporary solution to the issues raised in the brief. It must challenge the meaning of experience-led design, in the digital age.
2. Your project must demonstrate all stages of the design process, from understanding the client's needs and expectations, to understanding the needs of the public. You should explore many diverse creative and conceptual approaches. You will then develop the project progressively, proposing a final design, communicating it with clarity and conviction.
3. You must show understanding of all aspects of your scheme through materiality and detailing, demonstrating the 'up close and personal' experience of your designed interior.
4. Your portfolio of work must show beautifully drawn, skilful, thoroughly detailed demonstrations of your ideas, using sketches, plans, sections, visuals, materials and models.

SEMESTER 1	IAD3110 Design Project 1 Submission dates - Mon 18 January 2021	50% of semester grade
	IAD3110 Research Project Submission dates - Mon 18 January 2021	50% of semester grade
SEMESTER 2	IAD3120 Design Project 2 Submission dates- Mon 24 May 2021	100% of semester grade

Project Brief:

Working as a continuation of your first semester project, each student is encouraged to develop their own project, however it should logically and fundamentally relate to your first semester work, connecting with your Design or Research Project. Below are suggestions as to what you might design. Think of these options as perfectly valid routes, you will not be assessed on the originality of your chosen use, however we want to allow you the choice to design something you care about, as your final design project at University.

Option One:

Tourism and Heritage

In the first semester we focused on a Tourist Information Office. In the second semester we will be looking at supplementing this topic with a further tourism/hospitality related interior:

One possible option would be to design a hotel. In many ways hotels try to be a 'home from home' allowing the customer a place to relax and unwind whether during a business trip or after a hard day of sight-seeing. However many hotels are not like people's own homes. To fulfil our desire as consumers, to provide experience led environments, hotels often try to provide unique places to hang out and be seen. Hotel lobbies are frequently open to the public, the owners hoping to create a lively atmosphere, to reinforce the idea that this hotel is a great place to stay. Many hotels cater for a particular audience, who is your target customer and how can you attract them? Is a hotel a liminal space? Can it be regarded as a third place? Is it fun just to escape

and pretend to be someone else for a while? Should we be concerned that we are paying large amounts of money to surround ourselves in luxury, as an extension of our existing consumer society, or can hotels provide us with much needed solace from the difficulties of our everyday lives? Does the rise of domestic abuse during lock-down lead you to think about shelter and escape in a more critical form?

Other options around hospitality and leisure can be considered. The Hospitality sector has been severely affected during the pandemic, this could be an opportunity to re-evaluate what is important as we emerge from coronavirus. How will people gather together post-pandemic? Food has always been a key reason to assemble, as has people's desire to join with friends and meet new people. How can existing hospitality spaces such as restaurants, pub, gyms and nightclubs provide spaces that allow connection, as a reaction to our current restrictions?



Option Two:

Trade and Business

Moving on from your design of your Precious Plastic space, in the second semester we will focus on experiences relating to business and its wider context.

Many alternative office environment exist. Shared workspaces, workshops, studios and communal offices have all gained in popularity, receiving lots of press and becoming desirable as high profile office environments. With us all currently working from home has the office become a highly desirable destination space again- a place where we can escape the domestic? If we are to avoid vast floor areas of abandoned office space, now is the time to re-think the design of our workspaces. Few of us like to commute. Are fun, flexible and creative office environments a way to draw people back into communal workspaces for meetings one or two days of the week? These spaces could be temporary or allow adaptation depending on the changing use. Should we be promoting spaces that allow us to concentrate, away from the many distractions of home? Work can be very stressful how can the design of a space help to alleviate this? Can part of a new type of office space be virtual? You may wish to concentrate on one particular type of work space- perhaps a creative space or something with a more sustainable direction.

Private member's clubs might also be considered. A place where like minded people meet and network, attend cultural events and perhaps entertain guests. For example, you might imagine a scenario where a club is opened with the specific intention of enhancing women's ability to attain the highest possible level of promotion. Alternatively you might want to create an establishment which is about helping young designers start a business. Your club might just be about having a good time, work hard – play hard. Whatever you decide, your design must carefully respond to your prospective client group. The space might contain hospitality elements such as a bar or restaurant, as well as meeting rooms and perhaps a gallery. Some clubs concentrate on pampering and relaxing. Which parts are open to the public, which parts are members only can also add an interesting dynamic.

The service sector is very wide ranging. Students may wish to develop briefs for any type of space where the 'service' is more important than buying a physical item. Uses as diverse as; banks, cinemas, funeral directors, solicitors or citizen advice, gyms and education spaces can all be described as within the service sector and could make exciting design projects.



Option Three: Discovery & Culture



Following on from your exhibition projects, students may wish to consider a project which places emphasis on serving the local community and spaces which are more about bringing people together within a cultural context.

Libraries were once seen as a valuable resource within a community. Cited as a key influence in social mobility, have libraries now become an indulgent luxury we can do without? Public funding cuts has led to many libraries merging or closing altogether. Has the need for a place to simply lend a book been negated in our digital age? What can a library now do to regain its relevance in the 21st century? One way that libraries are fighting back is by engaging their immediate community. Providing classes and get togethers, for specific and multi-age groups re-familiarises the public with using the library again. Often libraries today provide many varied types of accommodation along with their more traditional roles. Cafés, exhibitions, desk spaces and performance areas are often contained within a library building. Book readership has gone up in recent years, how can a library capitalise on the upturn?

Another variant of the library space is the archive. Archives differ from libraries in that they usually collect one type of item or are concerned with one particular subject. Items within an archive do not usually circulate, meaning that they have to be requested and examined on the premises. This can lead to a certain amount of display so that the visitor can experience the scope of the collection. The archivist performs a very influential role as the

keeper of the items. How are the public attracted into the archive? Could an archive be relative to the Greenwich/Docklands area? We know that they have a rich history leading up to the place we see today, perhaps an archive could serve to illustrate the past, or provide a resource for the future. Perhaps an archive centre dedicated to Mudlarking would help describe the changing face of the area.

Many people within the local community would value a study space. Young professionals lead busy lives and with the dominance of digital information, via computer and phone, often find it difficult to concentrate on one thing for an extended period of time. It takes effort not to look at your phone while working. How do we concentrate with a myriad of distractions, all within a busy city environment? Perhaps a study space should contain elements of library and archive within them. How does a study space promote community and collaboration? Perhaps the community needs a space where children can be cared for while their parents work?

Another option would be a music venue where bands perform at night, which engages the local community during the day, perhaps promoting grassroots talent. Could this include a recording studio? How would such a space operate 24 hours per day when the focus seems to be only on evening performances? Should some of the spaces be designed to be flexible, so that they can transform to meet a wider range of user?

Option Four: Shopping and Health



In the second semester students who chosen this topic, will supplement their food shop with a space which in some way promotes healthcare for either physical or mental well-being. Empirical evidence published in recent years concludes that spending time in 'green' and 'blue' spaces can have positive physical, mental and emotional health effects. 'Whether you enjoy taking leisurely strolls along the Thames Path, riding a boat down the river, or just sitting near the water to revel in the sights, smells and sounds, the Thames plays an important role in our overall well-being². Harnessing the potential physical and mental benefits of the river; students may develop briefs which allow users to escape from the stresses of life such as hotel retreats which focuses on a healthy lifestyle, or alternatively a space which provides support for those undergoing treatment for medical conditions. Identifying a medical, physical or social condition which could be assisted by a new facility would be the logical starting point.

The provision for healthcare is changing; for both those who provide care and treatment and those who receive the ministrations of others. Human evolution has evolved slowly and carefully over the millennia, however technology is changing at such a pace it is difficult to stay in step and even harder to design spaces. Thinking carefully about how healing can best occur is central to this idea; what can we do as designers to make better healthcare resolutions?

Students who have opted for this theme may also wish to engage with the annual Architects for Health competition.

Another possibility within this option is a community space which addresses particular well-being issues. For example, a new headquarters for a mental health charity such as MIND, which examines how we help those experiencing anxiety or depression to get support, understanding and respect.

Students may also wish to think about the river's emergency services. Currently operating from Lifeboat Pier by Waterloo Bridge, the RNLI would benefit from a more permanent home. The Thames Lifeboat station is the busiest in the country. It houses a crew at the station around the clock, providing rescue to the hundreds of people per year who find themselves, for whatever reason, in the Thames.

Retail environments which challenge the norm could also be considered. Perhaps you wish to include retail with an alternative scenario such as competitive socialising, beauty/ pampering or sporting/ activity venues. The two final project spaces are too large to simply be a shop. Those of you who want to emphasise retail should look at creating hybrid spaces where the other uses support the primary shopping experience.