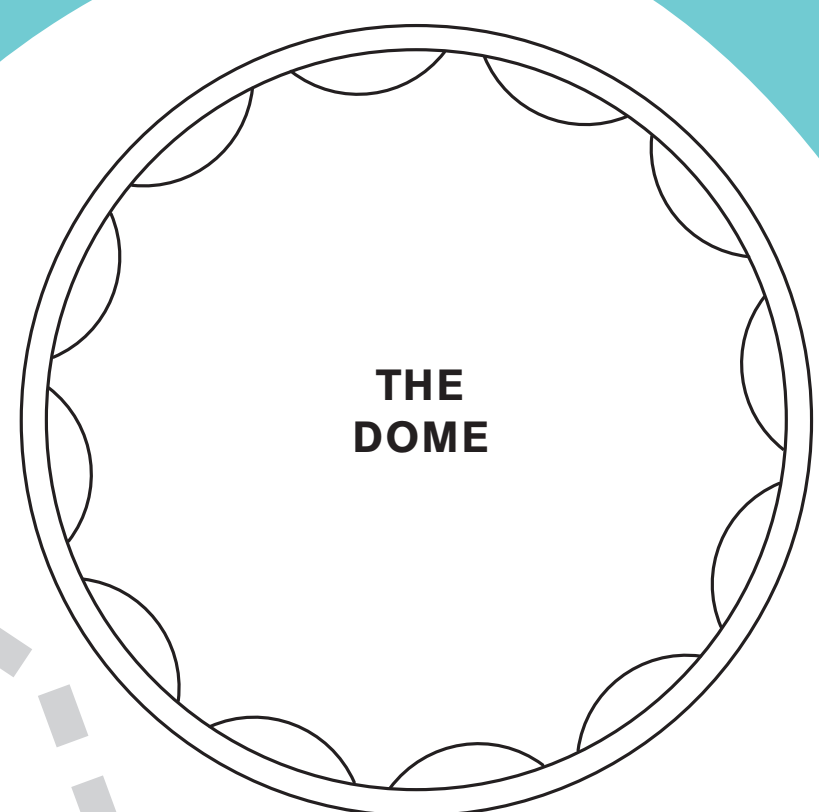


RIVER THAMES



THE DOME

I'm a Greenwich Councillor. One of my colleagues suggested we all came along and I'm the only one who made it. It was very interesting going onto the foreshore. I thought this was going to be a guided walk. The A-Z I have is out of date. We need a map that's up to date.

This area is lovely. We use it a lot. We go cycling right round and rollerblading. It's 20 years since I wore a pair of roller skates. It feels so different down by the river. It's like the countryside.

MILLENNIUM MOTEL

I didn't know what to expect but I'm going along with it. The children are enjoying it and it's a nice night, so what better way to spend the evening? We go down to the river a lot and we call the area the beach. Jessica's mum says she walks all the time. I walk a lot. I don't have a car. I don't want a car.

The fountain isn't always switched on because of the drought. I went to check with Thames Water online - you can fill your paddling pool and fill your fishpond but you can't wash your pets or water your garden. It says it's a 60 year old law, that's why it's so back to front. So I filled the paddling pool and then I got everyone in the courtyard to fill their watering cans and water their gardens. A neighbour wanted to stick their dog in, but I thought that was going a bit too far.

In this weather, the houses and the materials they are built of are too hot. We might get run over by a boat. Jessica, not that fence. We'll probably find some disgusting things. I found an oyster shell. Gosh, that's a good find. Watch out for rusty nails sticking out of the wood. Found another one. Mind that fella with the big stick. Look I found a trowel - and it's not even rusty. We're not chucking anything back to the tide.

Dragging that big piece is a good idea. Scavenging and tree house building. It's like building bridges, it's good doing something locally where we live. That's like Laurel and Hardy.

This takes me back to carefree times. You don't usually devote time to this kind of thing. The enthusiasm of children before life grinds them down. Underneath we're all guerrillas. I think the gardeners have just been, so you might be lucky.

I'm here because someone sent me an email - I work in Meridian Delta. What are the kids telling us to do? Meditate? I think George got that from his cousin. She used to do that. It all takes me back to the sixties. I'm afraid I can't do that. Get in that foliage and show us how it's done.

It's prickly grass. Calm down. It's good that the architect came. This is delicious.

A: A lot of people think it was the Dome that cost a lot of money but it was actually the groundbreaking way of decontaminating all this land. It used to be the gasworks, a huge area of brownfield site contaminated with Benzadrine and Cyanide. There are layers underneath here and you're not actually supposed to dig down or plant trees because it's contaminated soil.
B: That's why we haven't got any soil in the gardens
C: I was thinking that we could grow vegetables but would we want to eat them?
D: The first layer is ok, down to about that depth (2 feet). There's a marker there, so you'll know when you hit it.

A: But then water was rising up and you think what's in the water? When there's ice on the pond and the kids are eating it, you think on my goodness is that the Cyanide and Benzadrine? But where did they take the soil? They probably took it to Wales and somebody else is living on it because that's how they do it.
B: Quite a lot of people got ill while it was being done. But I said I don't mind, given I'm not going to have any more children, so no chance of having one with two heads.
A: It does play on your mind.
B: It does a bit subconsciously because I don't drink the tap water.
A: The tap water won't come from round here. I know further up from your street, there was water rising from the ground. The kids want to take their shoes off and paddle in it and you think what's in the water?
B: I should imagine they took great care to get it done properly.
A: This is where they spent most money - people said that it was a white elephant but it was the capping of the land that cost the money.
E: They did pump out the ground water and cleaned it; they actually took the residual water out of the ground and pumped it out.

What is your group called? Cave people. What about something to do with wood? Guerrillas. Wood Guerrillas.

A: If the men did as "good" a job as building the estate over there, we can't really trust them. It's all falling apart, so how good a job did they do with the soil?
B: Don't jinx my house, my house is fine.

A: Mine's ok too but there have been a lot of people who've had problems. I spoke to the workmen. Now they're building places where the windows don't open. Someone opposite me has got a terrace but they've got no door to open out onto it.
B: Someone else can't open her windows.
A: When they built our flats, they were groundbreaking, 21st century, the blueprint for Europe. It was supposed to be private, everyone was supposed to be buying, then Ken Livingstone said no it's got to be 43% social housing.
B: It's not now though, it's 16%.
A: Has it gone down again? Well, Ken Livingstone said you can't build anymore, so then they started cutting corners and the specifications weren't so high.

B: Mine's a town house, so you've got the ground floor, the middle floor and the top floor. They realised that by building town houses, they took up too much space. So they build them smaller now and fit more houses in. I've been there 5 years next week.
A: I feel lucky I've got one of the apartments. It's well made. The next lot they're building aren't as good.
B: I wouldn't swap it for the world though, for the kids more than anything. It's so safe. There's a lot we moan about but recently I went through the Ferrier Estate and I thought "there but for the grace of God go I".

- Trusting activity - hide something in the bushes and come back for it later
- Curious activity - look for a frog
- Resourceful activity - find driftwood on the shore
- Challenging activity - build a shelter
- Playful activity - walk along the low walls in central park
- Nurturing activity - plant seeds in the flowerbeds
- Exuberant activity - play in the fountain
- Playful activity 2 - play on the bike racks
- Patient activity - sit quietly and wait for a mouse to emerge
- Compulsive activity - follow desire lines
- Foraging activity - find wild food
- Lawless activity - enter the enclosed green space on Old School Close
- Devious activity - go into the bushes with someone
- Primal activity - make a fire on the beach and sit around it
- Lazy activity - find a place to lie down and do nothing, sleep in a tree

