



AN INFRASTRUCTURE OF CARE

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Stone beacons embossed with past and present narratives give civic permanence, whilst human-scaled infrastructure shaped around everyday rights to water, time and community celebrate care and belonging.

An Infrastructure of Care

Whitechapel Market has long been central to civic life in Tower Hamlets, continually reinventing itself as a place of exchange, arrival, and encounter for both established and newly arrived communities. Today, with the arrival of the Elizabeth Line and Tower Hamlets Town Hall, the Market stands on the threshold of another reinvention.

With 140 languages spoken in Tower Hamlets, our proposals build upon universally understood symbols of hospitality and care: beacons of light, provision of water, a Tower Hamlets collection of flags to be displayed with pride outside the Town Hall.

Materials used will be timeless and chosen for longevity. Up close the stone beacons will reveal a layer of delicate imagery of Whitechapel now and from its past, their narratives developed and selected through a process of co-design and translated into images cut into large scale friezes centred on the themes of Care, Faith, Resistance and Work.

Alongside the new planned changes to the market, we have placed human scaled 'caring' pieces of infrastructure: among them are a clock, a noticeboard, a collection of playing tables. Each of these 'Guardians' expresses a simple public right: to water, to community, to play, to celebration, to wayfinding and to culture. These rights emerged from observing how people move, rest, play, work, worship and exchange across Whitechapel Market. They speak to care for all: traders, residents, visitors, elders, children, commuters and newcomers.

The pieces that are installed will be carefully chosen and placed in the right locations with help from the people who know and use the market.

Collectively, these Whitechapel Gateway projects are an opportunity to leave a mark in time that commemorates Whitechapel Market as it is now and what it is becoming: a place that welcomes at both a civic scale and at a human one.