

LIBBY STRUDWICK

**HERITAGE COLLECTIONS MANAGER
FOR BRENT MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES**



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- Q Great to hear about Libby's story and development as a leader. How firmly adopted is the Scratch process in the small team at Brent?**
- A Scratch is different at Brent from BAC. We are certainly programming our activities to respond to needs to of Brent residents. Reactive, instead of having firm plans and ideas to what we think people would enjoy.
- Q What has been the most difficult?**
- A Actually getting out there and talking to people. It's the best way of making community connections, but it takes time and sometimes capacity doesn't allow it.
- Q How did you manage to lead the project whilst feeling uncertainty about it?**
- A The uncertainty is what was exciting. Managing through uncertainty was fine, providing you are transparent with your actions and can justify the project and your aims.
- Q Can you tell us more about how to use Scratch for your well-being and confidence at work?**
- A For me, Scratch enabled me to be more creative in our programming. This made me feel more confident is delivering programming that would engage people. This made me feel like I was doing a better job.
- Q Have you seen the Brazilian community still continue to come to the museum even though the special project is over?**
- A Yes, the Brazilian community continue to use library. Not able to confirm numbers on visiting the museum just yet.
- Q How did you gain buy-in from above? (Not scaring the horses!)**
- A I explained that this programme would enable us to use the budget more effectively, in that we could be more confident that communities would support projects and we weren't wasting money on irrelevant projects.

Q It sounds like the project has had a great lasting impact, have you kept in touch with the Brazilian community?

A We keep them on our mailing list and invite contacts to events. They continue to be part of our on-going community network.

Q What was different [before and now] about Brent Museum to BAC?

A They operate Scratch in a more in-depth way. Shows are trialled out several times. We use Scratch to develop exhibitions through workshops, not through performance. BAC is also not organised in the same way as a Council and has a different set of constraints.

Q Will you repeat the process for other Brent communities?

A We are currently doing just that with the Hindu community in Brent as part of our [Ganesha](#) project.

Q What has the impact of your Scratch project been on audiences, both in terms of numbers and profile?

A It has certainly made us stand out as an organisation who pursue creative and collaborative work and encourage communities to contribute. I think it has made us seem less 'Council' which is really important for us and I think people are a bit more receptive and trusting of us.

Q You mentioned in your story being "reactive." Can you say more about that? Usually a negative word in my experience.

A Reacting to the needs of our community including people with mental well-being issues, substance mis-use, an aging population, poor physical health, lack of cultural uptake or lack of civic pride.

Q What has been the reaction of the council staff and elected members to Creative Museums?

A The Brazil project was well received, particularly as we had the ambassador attending. It made Councillors and Council staff wake up and take notice of us. Our Ganesha project is currently generating a lot of interest from these people.

Q How can this new approach to your temporary space inform the permanent space? Go deeper into overall purpose and mission? Infiltrate the local authority?

A We can make small changes to our permanent museum, but I have not created plans to use the limited budget to change this, unless there was significant interest/call for it from community.

Our purpose is about supporting our community, telling their stories. Since CM, we have made our purpose link more directly to communities. I have recognised that

our only real purpose is to engage and reflect the community, as without them we aren't really anything. We can't rely on our collection or a historic building for purpose and relevance.

Q **Will you go back? Legacy 12 months on?**

A If budget allows, however we have lots of different communities who we have yet to work with so there is lots to do!

Q **Are you proactive or reactive in finding communities?**

A I hope so. We are certainly not waiting for them to come to us.