

On Elephants, Castles and Dancing With Systems: A Case of Inner City Regeneration in London

By Wayne Visser

Yesterday I visited Elephant Park, in Elephant & Castle, south London, to do some filming with **Dr Sally Uren** for our new podcast (provisionally called “Dancing with Systems”) that will launch next year.

We chose Elephant & Castle for a number of reasons (besides my love of elephants and chess). It has a rich heritage dating back to Roman times and was named after a pub from 1765.

In more recent decades it was known for being socio-economically deprived. However, it is in the process of transformation, thanks to a £2.3 billion inner city urban regeneration project.

The area is being greened, eco-efficient houses are being built, combined heat and power is supplying the community, bicycling is being encouraged, and small businesses supported.

Hence it is a great example of systems change, which never happens in a vacuum. We are always embedded in existing nested systems. And success comes from changing multiple parts.

This means that we are “the system”, and together we can change the system. We are looking forward to sharing more about this exciting new podcast in the New Year.

Meanwhile, here is a quote (which inspired our podcast name) from legendary systems scientist Donella Meadows:

“We can’t control systems or figure them out. But we can dance with them!”

Source:

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