

Introduction

The development of London Docklands is probably the most dramatic change in London since the Great Fire of London. It has captured the attention of politicians, planners, the press and people throughout Britain because of the regeneration of inner-city areas, done by the LDDC, which stands for, 'The London Docklands Development Corporation'. The regeneration itself has raised a new topic in the history of Britain. It has become a tourist attraction. My project will tell you everything you need to know about the docklands, such as the advantages, the disadvantages, the reasons for regeneration, etc... but before going into the regeneration, I'll first tell you why the docks were there in the first place, and an introduction about its history.

The start of the docklands

London has been an important port since Roman times. The City was the centre of Britain's trade with the rest of the Roman Empire, and its own empire. Wine, olive oil, glass, pottery and other manufactured goods were imported into Britain and a wide range of goods were exported.

A: Map of Roman Britain showing the main road network.



D: A bird's eye view of the city of London in Roman times from a reconstruction drawn by A. Forestier.



In the sixteenth Century, a shipping style had developed. New docks and warehouses filled both the sides of the Pool of London, and due to all this busyness of the harbor, crime/smuggling of goods became common.

On the other hand, Queen Elizabeth I had designed twenty harbors on the north bank as legal harbors through which cargo had to be unloaded, and cleared by the customs.

The legal harbors had soon provided too little space to cope up with the increasing trade in the port. More space was needed and in the eighteenth century, and that's why sufferance docks were opened on the north and south bank of the river, which worked in the same way as the legal harbors built by the Queen. All this made London one of the world's biggest ports.

As the trade grew, more ships started to arrive faster, and the space was limited making the area very congested. The ships had also increased in size so that instead of 3 trips, 2 trips would be enough. This made the harbor very busy. To overcome this problem, ships had to be tied up, side-by-side in midstream while more than three thousand lighters* went with their cargoes to and from the busy docks. At this point, London's port was very successful, in attracting ships, but crime was still high.

Patrick Colquhoun (a magistrate), had written another problem in his book he had published in 1800, which said:

'A Ship-Master who had been a stranger in the River finding himself beset by a gang of bold Lumpers (Dockers), who insisted on carrying away plunder in spite of all his efforts to prevent it, while he was engaged upon deck in searching these miscreants, a barrel of sugar (his private property) which stood in the cabin, was in the course of a few minutes, emptied and removed in bags through the cabin windows, under which a Waterman with his boat lay to receive it, and got clear off without discovery, to the surprise of the captain when he returned to his cabin.'

The Residential Areas of that time

As it were the Dockers that lived there in the docklands themselves, they couldn't afford a lot, and lived in terraced houses, back to back, with low quality facilities. This was because there were huge amounts of Dockers needed and there was not a lot of space for to have their own house, they didn't have enough money. Houses were that's why built cramped together with no hygiene, poor sanitation and poor sewage.

As time had passed, these residential areas had changed a lot due to the decline of the docklands, in which many of the Dockers lost their jobs, making them live

* Lighters were small boats which carried goods from ships to the docks. They could land goods without paying a fee to the dock or dock owner.

in even worse conditions.



This is a kitchen of those times ---^

The Reasons of decline in the Docklands

The Dockers had no fix time limit to work. Their hours were long because ships were loading and unloading in both day and night. Wages were calculated by the hours, what was 5d an hour in the 1880s. More important was the number of hours' work a man could get or if he could get work at all. The situation was different for permanent employees who, according to The Times in August 1889, could receive from 20s a week. A docker's work was always hard, and few, if any, facilities such as toilets were provided. Working in cold and wet conditions also contributed to the high accident rate in the docks.

These conditions weren't good, and on top of that they got badly paid. The workers then demanded for better wages and conditions, else they wouldn't work. This of course made things more expensive and so, companies tried to find a cheaper and more efficient way of transporting goods. They came up with container Lorries. With them, fewer people were needed to carry the containers around because machines did the work which then resulted many thousands of people jobless. River Thames could no longer support the massive containers on the ships because it wasn't that deep. This made the other ships move to other ports that were close by, and not that crowded with bad roads and large city to cover a lot of the land.

Inner cities had a lot of slums in them as well. These slums gave the area a very poor and dull image to everyone else. Slums lacked basic facilities such as proper sewage treatment. This polluted the area, as well as made it unhygienic. There were a lot of narrow and congested roads there making it look uncivilized and poor. Uncivilized is a view it was also seen as because, if they (as in the residents of the area) were civilized, they would be able to afford a proper house, and that area wouldn't look that bad.

Why did the Government regenerate it?

Despite the fact that the Docklands is located in the inner cities, its population fell by 20% between 1971 and 1981, while the unemployment rate in 1981 was 17.8%. This tells us that only a few people lived there, and most of them were poor, and some were unemployed. There was a lot of empty land in 1981; around 60% of it was empty. This was worrying because even though it's close to the CBD, nobody gets advantage of that land, and is left useless.

The state of the docklands had to be improved to catch visitors. Once this state would be better, land there would be expensive because it's very close to the CBD, where mostly all the services are located. There would also be a decrease in the crime rate because the change of state would make the docklands seem very posh and the crime rate in posh areas is low because there is a lot of security for posh areas. The docklands would change from a dirty and poor area to a very posh area where the noble or rich people can only afford to live, but to make it that, the government would have to regenerate it.

To summarize, the location of the Docklands had drawn attention of the government for regeneration, while the state/condition, had led the government regenerate it for its consequences.

How is the Docklands now?

After the hard work done by the LDDC, the Docklands had changed completely, from poor to posh area, where only the rich people could afford to live. If you were unemployed, living there would be next to impossible. Here is a little description of each service now in the docklands.

Transport Access: There is big deal about transport in the new Docklands now because the LDDC has done the following tasks to improve the docklands transport system.

- The train will now carry more than 80,000 passengers daily.
- The roads have been improved.
- There now is high specification pedestrian and cycle networks that has given priority to ensure that Docklands is fully accessible to all, including disabled people.
- The London City Airport has now advanced to carry 1.2 million passengers in 1997 and has championed the Jubilee Line Extension of the Underground which opened in spring 1999, carries 22,000 people an hour in each direction and connects London Docklands directly with London Bridge and Waterloo BR stations and the West End.

Utilities: The Docklands now have utilities such as drainage and electricity supply - in which they were previously lacking of. It has a more efficient energy supply, and electricity supply that has heat and energy, both through local networks.

Environment: It now has elegant footbridges to ease the barrier effect. Water sports facilities have been provided in every dock. Well funded arrangements have been made to secure these services.

The wildlife and their habitats are being protected there as well. There is an ecology park at Bow Creek and a wildfowl sanctuary at East India Dock Basin.

There is an attractive environment there, with high quality of urban design, street furniture, public art, open spaces. There are 160,000 trees planted. The docklands has received 94 awards for excellence in landscaping, planning, architecture and conservation.

Commercial Development: There is a commercial/office market in Docklands. It attracted a lot of investment and international businesses. The docklands had led to the start of a new business district for London, including the Canary Wharf development as its centre-piece.

Housing: In 1981 housing in the UDA was of poor quality and in short supply.

- Overcrowded.
- Poor or uninhabitable condition.
- Housing was rented, mostly through the local authorities. Owner occupation was 5%

The proportion of home ownership has leapt from 5% to 45% - still below the London average.

Community Infrastructure: A lot of the money from the Docklands was invested on education and training and on health and other community activities, which include:

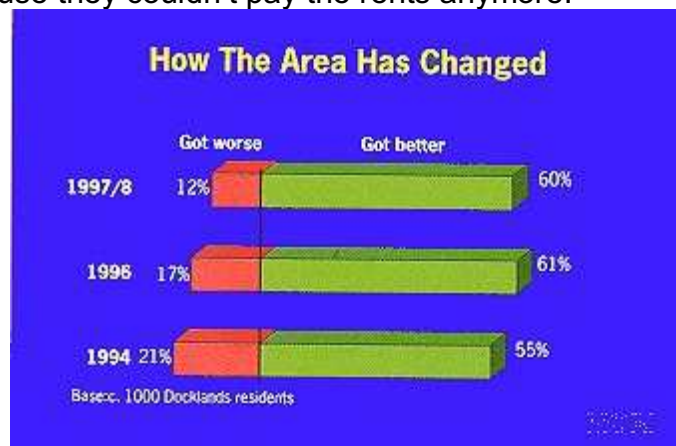
- Tower Hamlets College
- Bacon's College
- 12 new primary schools
- Extension and improvements to 17 other schools
- Provision of IT equipment for the schools in London Docklands
- The Butler's Wharf Chef School
- 5 new health centers and 6 refurbished existing health centers, plus social care facilities, including three children's day care centers

What are the disadvantages/advantages of the Docklands?

There were a lot of advantages for the docklands and obviously disadvantages, but the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Below is a table showing the advantages and disadvantages of the London Docklands.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
New airport built => easier transport and communication.	A lot of pollution because it is close to the CBD, which is a very busy area.
It is close to the CBD (center of the city) which has a lot of services in it, as well as a lot of jobs to offer.	There is a limited space, so not everyone gets land there making the land very expensive
It has access to a river to be taken advantage of by boat riding, demonstrating a calm environment, or water sports.	There are no gardens because of the lack of space available.
It has brilliant transport links within the docklands itself, and links outside the docklands	There are hardly any space for recreation, and other facilities
Nice apartment blocks which attracts the rich and makes the area look better	
Its very modern, and attractive to all tourists, and residents of London	

Below is a graph which was taken to see the residents' view on the regeneration, and as you can see, there were only a few displeased with the regeneration, and study shows that those people were the poor who now have to leave the docklands because they couldn't pay the rents anymore.



Before



Surrey Docks



Acorn Walk



West India Docks before



Limehouse Basin



Shadwell Basin

After



Surrey Quays (Shopping Centre)
now



Acorn Walk now



Canary Wharf and the Isle of
Dogs



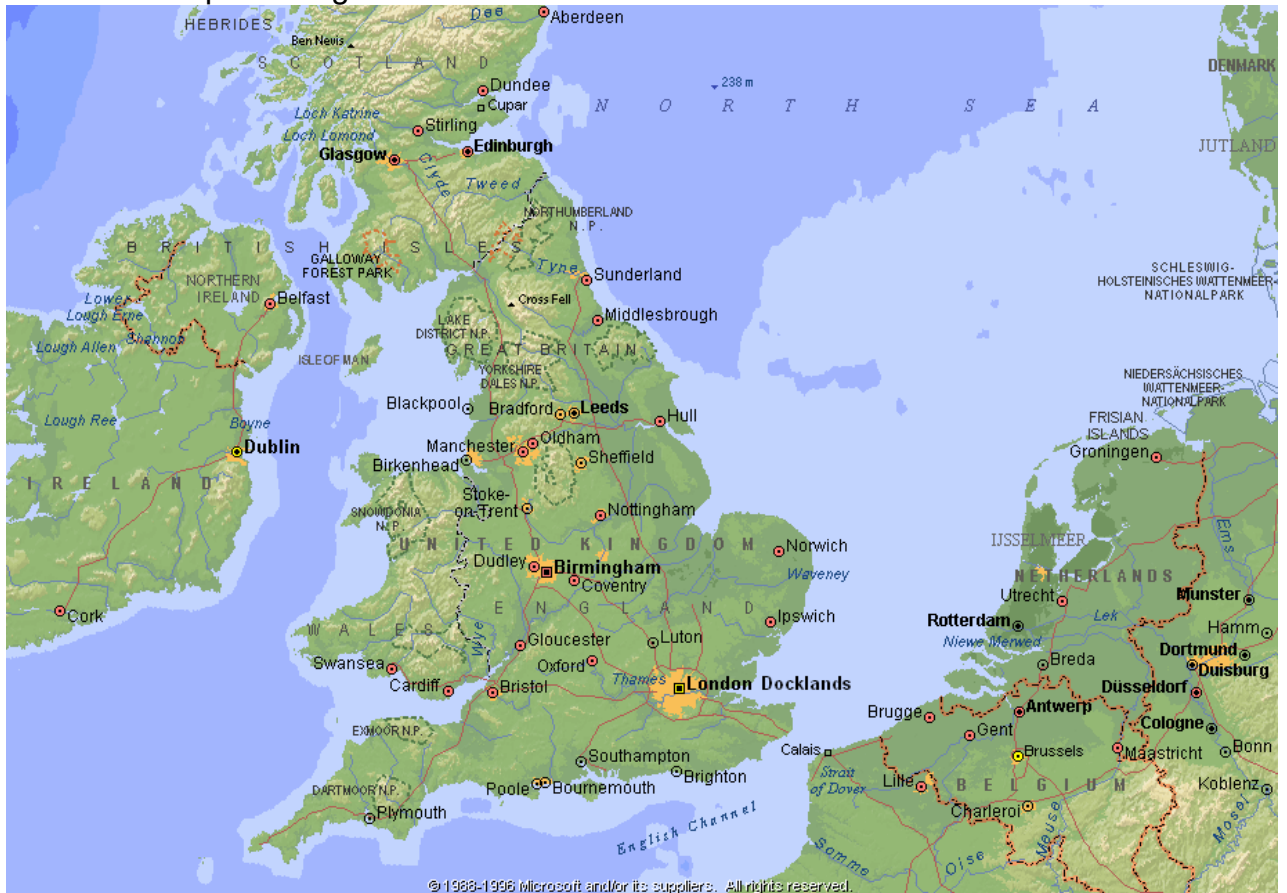
Limehouse Basin now



Shadwell Basin now

Maps

Below is a map showing where the Docklands are in the UK



Below shows a brief map of the Docklands

