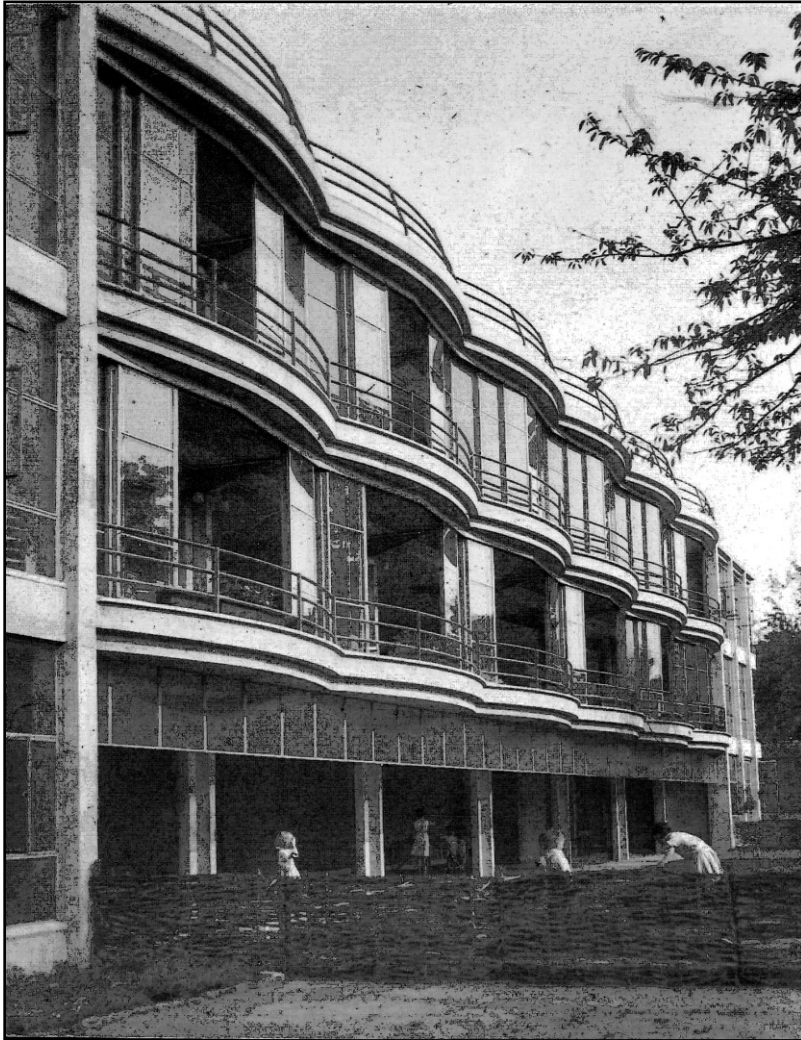


The Peckham Experiment 1935-1950



Pioneer Health Centre, St Mary's Rd, Peckham

The new Pioneer Health Centre was opened in May 1935 in St Mary's Road, Peckham as a result of many years of fund raising and planning. This new centre, bigger and better equipped, would enable around 2000 families to develop better health in a way that the old Peckham Health Centre could not cope with.

The design of the new building in Peckham was of particular importance to Dr Scott Williamson.

His concept was a space that would provide the right kind of social environment for families of all ages to spend and enjoy their leisure time but also one in which careful observation could be undertaken to research and study their health.

Hence, the appointment of an engineer rather than an architect of the building – Sir E Owen Williams.

The centre was modern building and praised nationally for both its design and interest. It provided for comfortable movement and good visibility from one area to another enabling people to wander around, take part in activities, make easier contact with friends and family or simply enjoy watching others in their activities. There were no closed doors or corridors. Glass replaced concrete for the main internal walls.

The building housed the second largest swimming pool in London and could be seen from the cafeteria and lounge fronted by glass.



It also contained among other things, a gym, theatre, badminton court, two adaptable spaces one which was used primarily for dancing; committee rooms, a theatre, adult games rooms, children and baby play areas.

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