

Hellhole? Hell, no! This is what it's really like...

A UNIQUE housing estate in South Hampstead, which has come in for more than its fair share of criticism over the years, is to be revealed in a positive light on the big screen, writes Ben McPartland.

The Alexander and Ainsworth Estate, in Rowley Way was described as a 'stadium' and a 'concrete crocodile' in the past, but now the history behind the distinctive design of the estate is to be made clear.

One Below the Queen – Rowley Way Speaks for Itself is a film made by the estate's residents and explores the idea behind that design.

The film was screened at the Tricycle Cinema, Kilburn High Road, on Saturday.

Interviews with residents aged three to 103 revealed what it is like to live on the estate which experienced its fair share of troubles over the years.

Tired of the estate being portrayed as a crime-ridden hellhole, the film makers wanted to give the residents a chance to speak out.

Matthew Rosenberg, who co-ordinated the making of the film, said: "The idea came about to counter the often negative way the Grade II-listed estate is shown on film and TV and in the press, but the project grew into a film which explores the ideas behind the design of the estate and how it works.

"An inter-generational

group of residents worked with an arts and educational charity to decide on themes and ideas to explore and underwent training to enable them to do all of the interviews, the filming and the sound. The music for the film was also composed and performed on the estate.

"We interviewed fellow residents of all ages as well as architects Neave Brown, Max Fordham and Janet Jack. All three were at the launch as well as a cinema full of residents of the estate."

Following the film there was a question and answer session with the film-makers and architect Neave Brown. All households will receive a DVD of the production.

