

Voyage of Discovery:

Celebrating, Inspiring and Exploring Community University Engagement in Edinburgh

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Tuesday 26 May, 2015

The Beltane Public Engagement Network and the University of Edinburgh's Community Engagement strand of the Student Experience Project embarked upon a voyage of discovery. Following several months of collaboration between the two projects, the event aimed to bring together the work which both areas encompass: research and public engagement and engagement between students and the local community. By bringing together different audiences we wanted to inspire new approaches to engagement and explore new partnerships through a series of workshops and guest speakers.

We decided to hold the event at the Out of the Blue community space in Leith. The choice of venue was important as we wanted to encourage participants to consider engaging in new areas and we value the breadth of projects which are based at Out of the Blue. The history of Out of the Blue as a drill hall, and its location in Leith led us to our theme of a voyage: a journey of engagement.

<http://www.outoftheblue.org.uk/>



Welcome from **Heather Rea (Beltane Public Engagement Network)** and **Dawn Smith (Community Engagement Developer, University of Edinburgh)**

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Breakout sessions:

The Human Body and the Food We Eat
Eilidh Cowan, Scott Smith, and Sophie Donaldson took us on a journey through our body, visiting organs and following our food as it passes through our body. Giving an example of an interactive school session run by Health Science Students from Queen Margaret University as part of a new volunteering group.



Art and Architecture:

ASCUS Art & Science (James Howie, Miriam Walsh & Emily Grieve) a local non-profit organisation dedicated to bridging the gap between the arts and sciences. They advocate and deliver public engagement through art science interaction and collaboration. They showcased recent artist micro-residency with researchers from the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Immunity, Infection and Evolution, which led to artworks shown at Summerhall as part of Parallel Perspectives and How the Light Gets In exhibitions.

<http://www.ascus.org.uk/>

Sustaining Leith (John Brennan, Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture, University of Edinburgh) talked about Sustaining Leith, a four year project as part of Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture's Masters Programmes in Advanced Sustainable Design. The purpose of the project was not just to look at low carbon building but sustainability in its widest sense. How do we transform areas whilst at the same time respecting them? How do we plan for the future? What kind of development helps economic growth at a grass roots level? Key issues looked at include designing for whole-life and adaptability in 3 areas - around Leith Walk, Leith Harbour, and the Links. Through consultation, workshops and exhibitions an archive of projects that are ambitious have produced, unexpected but very relevant to the challenges faced by all our city neighbourhoods.

<http://www.asd.eca.ed.ac.uk/>.

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The Science Ceilidh Workshop:

The Science Ceilidh Band (Lewis Hou)

The Science Ceilidh is an award-winning educational project which adapts simple Scottish ceilidh dances to explain science concepts. From the Dashing White Blood Cell to the Orcadian Strip the Helix, it aims to bring researchers and communities together across the country through getting creative with music and science. Attendees had a practical "feet-on" introduction, tried some of the dances, and found out more about the project!



<http://www.scienceceilidh.com/>

Students, Sport , Tea and Art;

Educated Pass (Neil Speirs, Senior Widening Participation Department, University of Edinburgh)

In order to promote the participation and engagement with learning to young males from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Educated Pass is a sophisticated approach that is credible to such males. Educated Pass is such an example that draws on early notions of Olympism, 'Blending sport with culture and education'. This is delivered through the 'educational value of good example'. Discussions and of various examples showed that, despite the negative picture you may have, sport, particularly football, can be used to assist in the delivery of positive change in society.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-recruitment/widening-participation/projects/educated-pass>

Contact the Elderly -50 years old and 27,659,238 cups of tea! (Anne Grindley, Contact the Elderly)

The University of Edinburgh has been working with the registered charity Contact the Elderly. The charity organises monthly Sunday afternoon tea parties for small groups of lonely older people over 75, who often live alone and don't see family or friends often. They use volunteers as drivers as hosts for these tea parties. After 2 successful tea parties organised by students at the University last year, they hope to start a permanent University Contact the Elderly group soon involving students and staff.

<http://www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk/>

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“Great to hear about [@contact_tears](#) [@edbeltane](#) [#cueEd15](#) and how tea parties with elderly people can have a big impact.” Iona Beange [@ionabeange](#)

Access to Creative Education in Scotland (Robert Davies, ACES Project Officer, Edinburgh College of Art)

ACES (Access to Creative Education in Scotland) is a national project, involving the four major art schools in Scotland. It aims to help young people (S4-S6) from eligible schools with an interest in studying Art and Design or Architecture at university to explore their options, and to experience working in a studio environment and break down perceptions students have about universities. Workshop sessions allow the school students the opportunity to start building a specialist portfolio for application to art degrees. The project also employs student ambassadors, who are ECA undergraduates; they assist in building ACES pupils' specialist application portfolios.

<http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/eca-home/undergraduate/schools-outreach/aces>

Students and Science in Schools

Pro Science. Jessica Shepherd and Daniel Tritton (University of Edinburgh Student Experience Project)

Pro Science has operated through the University of Edinburgh over recent years to provide science teaching support for local high schools. Student volunteers are provided with training to go into classrooms and help teachers where they need support, either to assist pupils who are struggling with the curriculum, to extend pupils who are excelling or to provide additional laboratory skills and supervision. All of the volunteers go into the programme as teaching assistants, but most of them also end up as role models for the pupils they interact with.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/staff/enhancing-student-experience/initiatives/sep/community/student-community-engagement/projects/pro-science>

Small Plumbing. Pam Cameron (Novo Science, on behalf of Heriot Watt University)

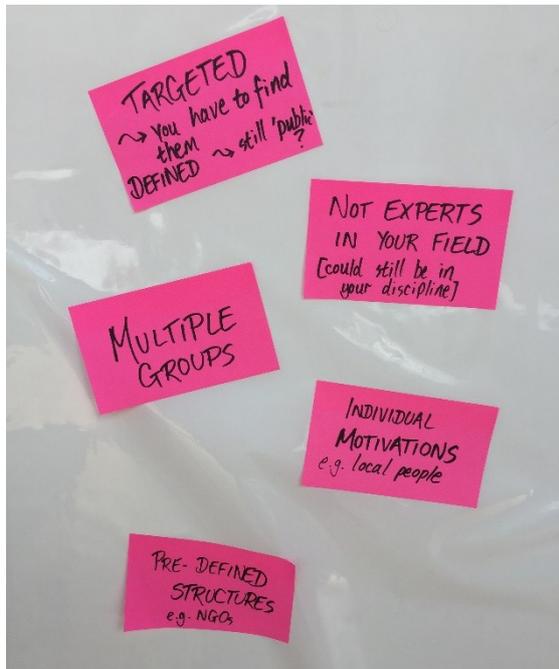
“Small Plumbing” aimed to fight against the Strong, pervasive stereotypes that persist in how the general public see those who work in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). The project was designed to engage S2 pupils with an aspect of engineering research and to let them all design a microfluidic chip, for a real-world application of their choice. Group facilitators were all researchers (50% of whom were female) but who also presented themselves as engaging, “normal people” in addition to being engineers and scientists. The hope was that all pupils, but girls in particular, would see that a STEM career could be for someone like them.

<http://www.novoscience.co.uk/>

Doing Publics Workshop

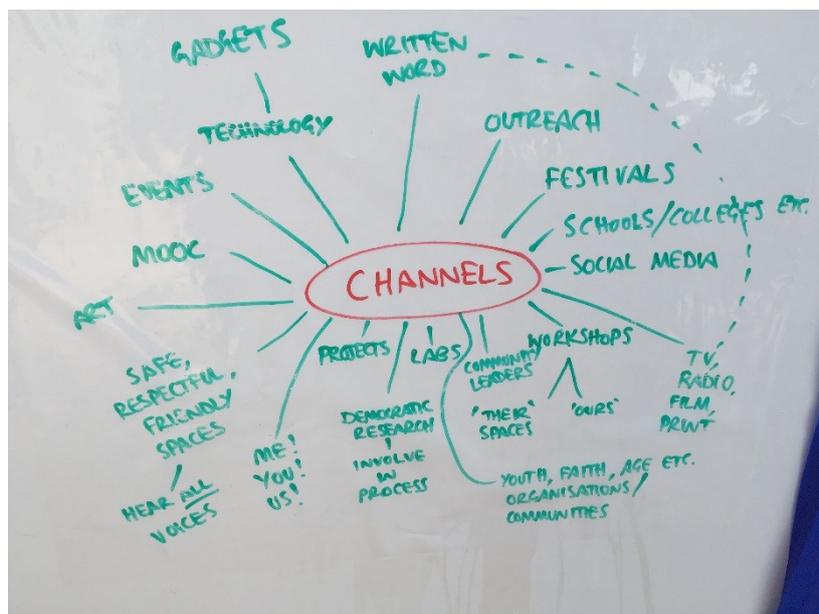
Professor Graham Turner (CTISS, Heriot Watt University) & Clare Taylor (Edinburgh Napier University)

Graham and Clare helped participants ask the right questions to bring out the best way to “do” your publics. They discussed that the public doesn't exist nor is 'It' a homogeneous object just sitting there waiting for you to come out and play. Instead if you're serious about 'public engagement', try looking at it this way: PUBLIC IS A VERB.



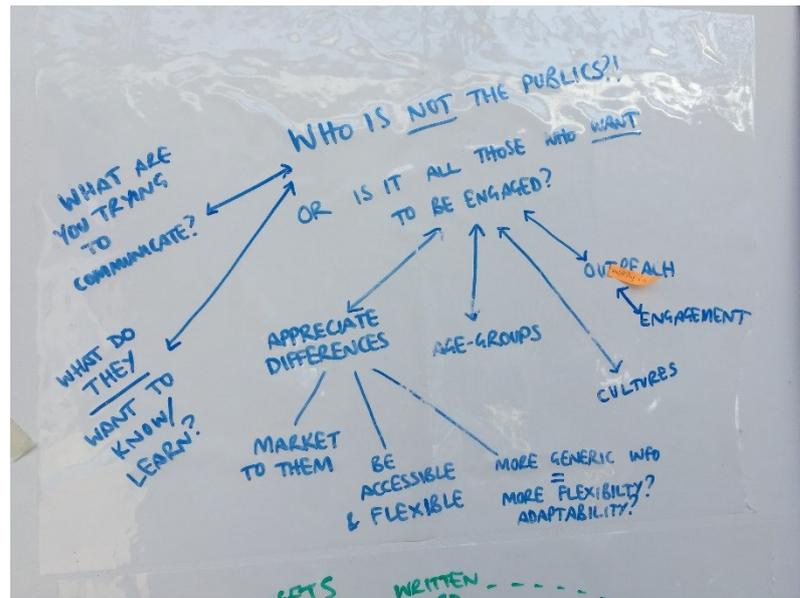
“Session on ‘who is the public and channels to engage’ was a highlight.”

“Thinking of channels for public engagement ... great mind map for #MyUrbanPast too. Having great time at #CueEd15” Carol Stobie @newfiescot



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Community Based Learning

Geoscience Outreach. Andy Cross and Brian Cameron (School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh)

The Geoscience Outreach course is for final year honours students, in which they work with external clients to develop a range of educational resources for the wider public.

Community engagement is at the heart of the course and its success. During the talk Andy and Brian highlighted how the course runs with a range of examples of student's work, and a wider look at community engagement work at the School of GeoSciences.

Swinging the Lamp: using storytelling to share research

Bugs and Bones - the treasures of the Ashworth Natural History Collection. Hilary Snaith, Edinburgh Infectious Diseases, University of Edinburgh

Using Bugs and Bones - the treasures of the Ashworth Natural History Collection. Hilary took us through how to use different mediums to communicate our message. The project used workshops that intended to inform, educate and inspire children within class time and the Curriculum for Excellence. The collection was brought to life through stories; about the explorers who collected the samples, about the specimens: where they lived, what they ate, how they died, and about infectious diseases – how they affect us today and how our current research is combatting them.

The Story-Telling Project.

Professor Lesley McAra, School of Law, University of Edinburgh

The Story-telling Project was undertaken in collaboration with the Grassmarket Community Project, exploring factors impacting on the well-being of people facing homelessness and/or deep social exclusion. Through life-mapping interviews, drama and photography, a key objective was to promote empowerment through creative participation. This contribution told the story of the research and show extracts from the film made about the drama. The

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stories that were shared with the researchers were sometimes heart breaking, but always inspiring. They highlight the ways in which creativity has a key role to play in healing and supporting social inclusion.

“Food vital to sharing, trust - Lesley McAra tells brilliant story of UofE creative project with Grassmarket folk on their lives #cueEd15” Carol Stobie @newfiescot

Guest speakers

Sophie Duncan, National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)

Sophie manages the overall work of the centre including communications, partnerships and NCCPE projects. The NCCPE supports universities to increase the quality and impact of their public engagement activity. The aim is to enable a higher education sector that makes a vital, strategic and valued contribution to 21st-century society through its public engagement activity.

“Value the partnership & social change you're seeking” Sophie from @NCCPE discussing community engagement with @cuppbrighton #cueEd15” Lewis Hou @fiddleBrained

Getting Started with Community-University Partnerships: Lessons for Community Partners

1. Be able to **describe your project** in a paragraph or 5 minute conversation
2. Have a think in advance about **what you might want from the university** (help with research, student time, use of university facilities, funding, advice or training?)
3. Think through **what you can offer a university**
4. Find out if the university has a way to help you **find your way around** (the community engagement team, student volunteering office, helpdesk, public engagement?)
5. If there isn't an official channel, **try and find a sympathetic academic**
6. Check with your **local voluntary sector** to see if they've had contact with the university
7. Look at the university's website to establish what their **teaching and research** strengths are
8. Find out if the university has a **written policy** for working with community partners
9. Work out which of the **local universities best fits** with what you're looking for
10. Remember that **different parts of the university may be able to help** if you're not initially successful.

<http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/work-with-us/uk-community-partner-network>

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Juliet Millican, Community University Partnership Programme (CUPP), University of Brighton
Juliet manages both the student community engagement and the international research and development programmes within CUPP. CUPP has been part of the University of Brighton since 2003. The aim is to tackle disadvantage and promote sustainable development through partnership working. We share a strong belief in the potential for communities and universities to work together. Their combined resources have been seen to make a tangible difference to the effectiveness of the community sectors, the quality of university education and research and the lives of local people.

*“Learning is much more than employability - think engagement says Juliet,
@cuppbrighton #cueEd15” – Pam Cameron @cam_pam*

The Importance of Engagement with communities for the HE Sector:

Lessons from the Community University Partnership Programme

1. **The tripartite mission of universities and how to achieve this:** Is it actually in your mission?; How do people work with you?; The Cupp Helpdesk (to make navigation easier), the importance of being responsive (if you are going to be effective); The notion of mutual benefit
2. **Defining in the Doing** – Making general principles appropriate to local contexts
3. **Engaging through Teaching:** Exploring aspirations, (what do you want to achieve in the world and how might you do it, where does your discipline fit in?); Learning citizenship (what are my responsibilities as well as my rights?); Gaining experience (in dealing with people and difficult situations); Undertaking meaningful research (where someone is really invested in the results).
4. **Engaging through Research:** REF Impact studies, Seed start-up funds, Building long term partnerships with local gatekeepers, Developing Communities of Practice through Knowledge Exchange.
5. **Connecting with other universities, nationally and internationally.** The Talloires Network, GUNI, ‘Developing Community University Partnerships’ new programme April 2016.

www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp

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Watching

Film viewing “Watching” project. (Dee Isaacs, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh)

‘Watching’ is a new opera for children which aimed to excite interest in the function of sleep among families living in the city of Edinburgh. Recent studies have established that sleep is important for memory, and have emphasised the correlation between healthy sleep patterns and educational outcomes. An exciting collaboration between academics, scientists, theatre practitioners and primary schools, *‘Watching’* hoped to raise awareness of the links between sleep and academic performance whilst allowing children to experience theatre activities of international quality. In a series of workshops, children explored sleep from historical, biomedical, musical, dramatic and literary perspectives. Working with a team of visiting arts professionals and students from Music in the Community at the University of Edinburgh, they rehearsed a new opera which explored past and present sleep and sleeplessness. *‘Watching’* culminated in four full-scale performances by twilight in March this year open to the general public, in the landmark Glasshouses of Edinburgh’s Royal Botanic Garden

<http://www.watching.eca.ed.ac.uk/introduction/>

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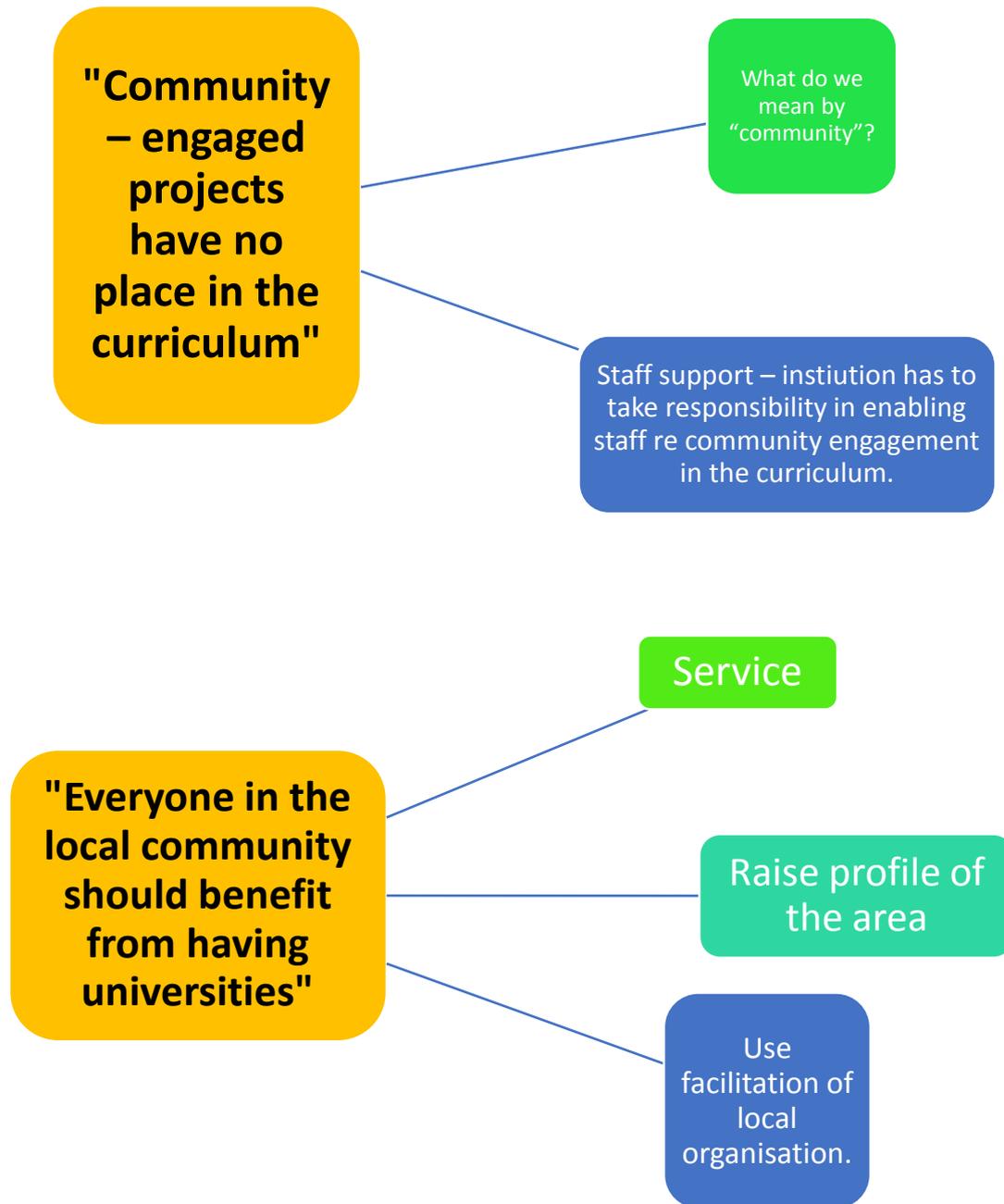
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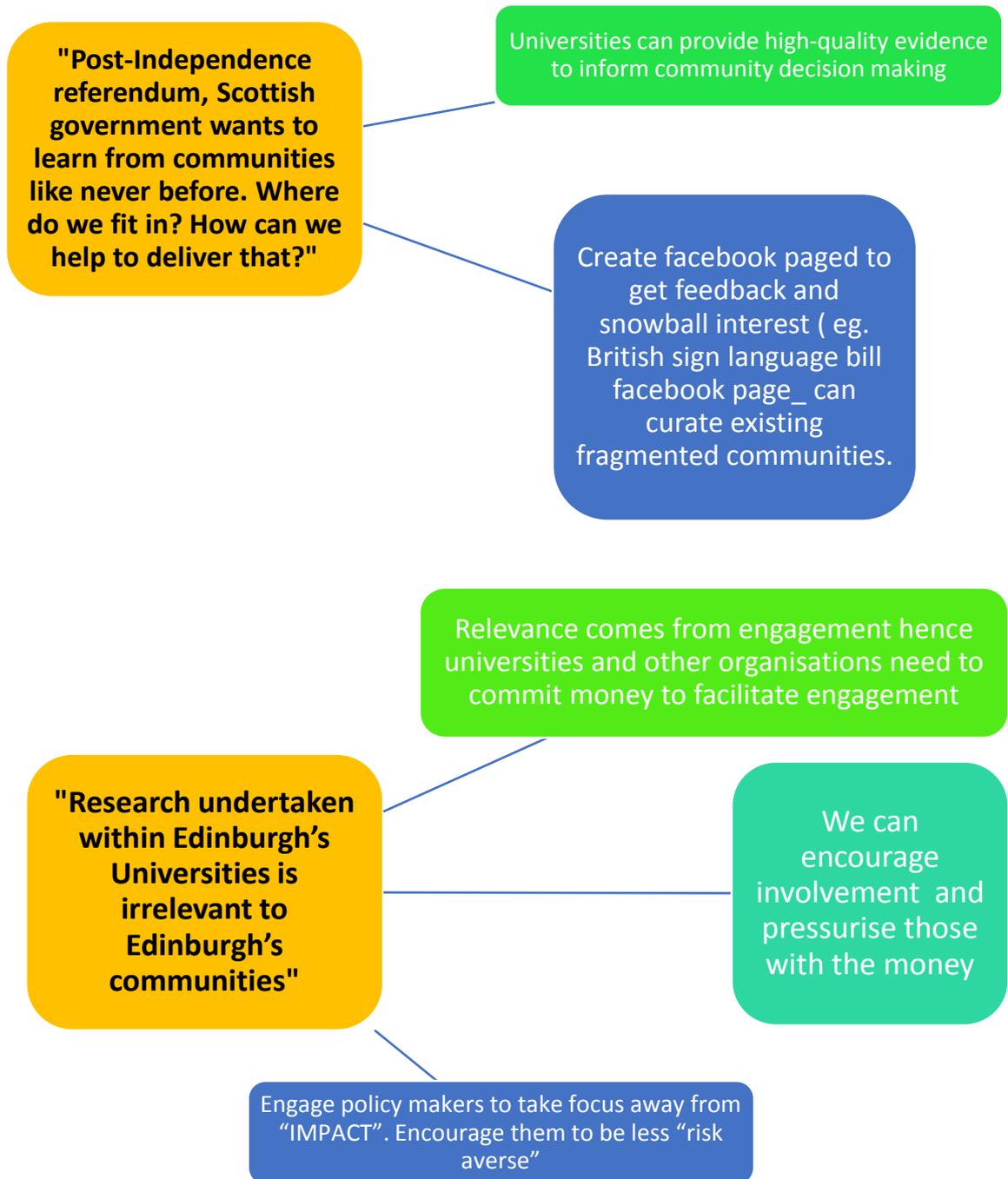
Engaging with Rural Communities

Connecting stem cell scientists with Scottish communities (Cathy Southworth, MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine, University of Edinburgh)

In 2013 and 2014 we travelled around Scotland connecting stem cell scientists with Scottish communities. With so much news and information out there about stem cells and potential stem cell treatments we found many people would like to chat face to face with people working in the area - this is the story of how it went.

Parley – Table discussion around the following statements (in yellow)







Creating convoys: Mary Bownes, Vice Principal Community Engagement, The University of Edinburgh

As Vice Principal for Community Development, Prof Bownes works to develop strategic alliances with other organisations in order to promote cooperation in teaching, research and service to the community, and encourages working together on activities and projects where there is an alignment of strategy and objectives.

- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU): To promote co-operation in teaching, research and service to the community by working together on activities and projects where there is alignment of strategy and objectives.
- National Museums of Scotland:
 - Supported Museum in bid to Wellcome Trust for refurbishment of Science and Technology Galleries (1.2million), collaboration with Beltane Network and Science Festival and other events, pilot of joint Masters degree in Curation
- Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- National Galleries of Scotland

"Mary Bownes, partnership with zoo, museums, galleries provide lots of way for students to be trained and do useful work #cueEd15" James Stewart @jamesks

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There were also a number of poster and demos throughout the course of the day.

DEMO & POSTER: Small Plumbing. Pam Cameron, Novo Science, on behalf of Heriot Watt University

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<http://www.novoscience.co.uk/>

DEMO: HeatHack & Science of Church. Jean Carletta, School of Informatics, University of Edinburgh.

These are 2 aspects of a community/university collaboration that looks at the problem of thermal comfort, energy efficiency, and management for community spaces such as churches and church halls. We design and build temperature and humidity monitoring sensor networks for these spaces, as well as other kinds of instrumentation, and deploy them, sometimes in special events or student projects.

www.heathack.org

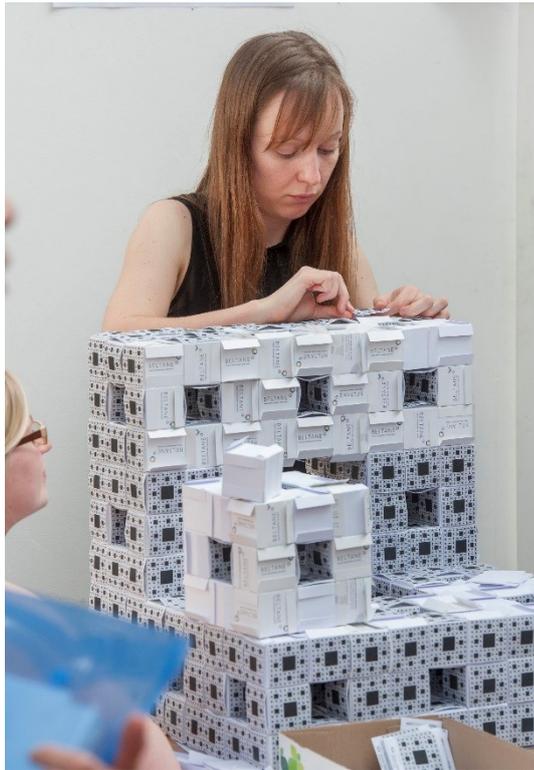
POSTER: The Studio Garden, Craigmillar Kate Carter & Jill Zhao, Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

The Studio Garden engages architecture, and interior design students to work with a community group to design a growing space at the heart of their new Passivhaus homes being built in Greendykes, a regeneration area in Craigmillar. The design creates indoor community space, and indoor and outdoor growing areas, with a strong emphasis on sustainable and low energy technology. We hope to take the project forward to a self-build, involving members of the community, students and staff from University of Edinburgh.

<http://www.ilwevents.ed.ac.uk/event-by-day/studio-garden-craigmillar-1>

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DEMO: 'MegaMenger'

Julia Collins, Schools of Maths, University of Edinburgh.

Help us build a fractal cube from your old business cards! You can donate your own cards or use the ones we provide. This will give a flavour of the MegaMenger project we were involved in last year that got thousands of people engaged in mathematics across the world. If the project intrigues you, come and see our finished sculpture on Level 3 of the James Clerk Maxwell Building down at King's Buildings.

<http://www.maths.ed.ac.uk/~bgoddard/Menger>

EXHIBITION: Using different media (art & philosophy) as tools for engagement Hamer Dodds, Artist in Residence, Centre for Regenerative Medicine, University of Edinburgh

**DEMO & POSTER: Edinburgh Napier University's Outreach Programme
Frank Greig, Outreach Coordinator, Edinburgh Napier University**

Our outreach programme covers a broad range of public engagement activities and our focus has been largely on reaching our local school communities, however, in the last couple of years we have widened our sphere of activities to include more general public events, for example, the Science Festival and Maker Faires. These activities have given us valuable insights into the requirements for engaging with widely differing groups of people and our live experiences have given us a fairly good understanding of what works and what doesn't in the public arena. We will showcase our activities, including our workshop content; discuss how we get our students involved and how we plan to grow.

POSTER: Mapping Student and staff community activities in Edinburgh Johanna Holtan, Institute of Academic Development, University of Edinburgh

Inspired by a recent crowdsourcing activity to capture the University's presence in the city - we didn't want to stop. We want to collect more stories of staff and student-led initiatives, in and outside the curriculum that are taking place throughout the year. Drop your pin on our map.

<http://edin.ac/1AphYRW>

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DEMO: Making Cocktail and Mocktails

Lindsay Murphy, Be Experimental

Be Experimental's 'experiments in a glass' are unique cocktails with a science twist. Making each of our delicious drinks involves doing a mini science experiment.

<http://www.beexperimental.co.uk/>

POSTER: Citizen Science and Crowdsourced Data and Evidence Network, University of Edinburgh Eugenia Rodrigues, School of Social & Political Science; James Stewart, STIS & Mark Hartwood, Informatics, University of Edinburgh

Our poster introduces the Network and its main objectives highlighting some of the benefits that Citizen Science and Crowdsourced projects can have for community groups and community life in general.

<http://citsci.ed.ac.uk/>

Participants' Feedback

95% found the opportunity to network useful and interesting and 86% said they came across new ideas/practices in engagement.

- “The opportunity to meet university folk interested in working with communities – and their positive attitude towards this”
- “Opportunities to network and see interesting projects...the two guest speakers (Juliet and Sophie) were excellent”
- “Opportunity to network with other colleagues promoting change at the university”
- “Networking with like-minded people and firming up my ideas about public engagement “
- “The opportunity to meet new interesting people with advice or experience to share”
- “Getting to meet up with the Edinburgh Engagement Community and also meeting new folk and hearing about new developments and student engagement work.”

70% felt inspired about doing community engagement

- “The enthusiasm was infectious and it was nice to catch up with people.”
- “It was just something completely different and great fun. The theme was great and attention to detail was fab. “
- “I learnt some important ideas for organisation of public engagement, such as thinking about “what’s in it for me” for everyone involved in the event.”
- “More awareness of ways to get involved with the community – more out of the box thinking from the usual dissemination/engagement methods”
- “Motivation to keep working on this area – focus on democratization of knowledge and access to university resources”

97% felt that community engagement had been celebrated.

- “A really inspiring mental image of the number of fascinating projects going on in Edinburgh”
- “University of Edinburgh has an impressively thorough approach to partnerships with local institutions “
- “It was great to meet people across the university and hear about their projects”

100% were happy with the organisation of the event.

- “The event was very well organised- all those helping know what was happening , and the programme had a good flow”
- Huge amount of effort evidently went into what was a really great event
- “I was really surprised by how much the excellent catering acted as a social lubricant ... I never thought this was an important factor before but the number of fascination conversations I had through our mutual surprise at the quality of the food (and then later the cocktails) has made me re-think this!”

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- “I liked the theme – I think this worked really well and allowed people to relax and in turn be a bit freer in their discussions.”
- “Loved the cocktails and sweets in a jar – a random object such as sea-creature shaped sweets or shells seems to be useful in stimulating discussions with strangers!”

“Cocktails to help digest the info from today's voyage #cueEd15 @QMUniversity @edbeltane” Laura Wyness @Laura_Wyness

What participants will take away:

- “Better understanding of the breadth of public engagement activities”
- “The idea of how wide “community” can be and also the inspiration to look more widely for ways our students can work with their community. “
- “Instigate University engagement- work with moray house colleagues on a community practitioner/community/university knowledge exchange”
- “Following Sophie’s talk I want to review our department’s partnership agreement to ensure its meeting our needs and the need of the community organisation.”