

"imagine a future"

A conference for young people October 2007
The Dunkenhalgh Hotel, Clayton-le Moors, Lancashire.
Organised by Mid Pennine Arts

MUSIC, CALLIGRAPHY, SCULPTURE AND ART
MAJOR FACTORS ON SOCIETY'S PART

POET, CARTOONIST, PHOTOGRAPHER, TECH CREW
COMING TOGETHER IN ONE LARGE BREW

SUNSHINE, WARMTH AND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY
NELSON MANDELA AND HIS WORD ON SOCIETY

THROUGH THE WINDOW, A COW GRAZING GRASS SO CLEAN
SAT IN A ROOM, AN ECO-THINKING MACHINE

Farihah Qureshi
V1 Form Student



the context...

The Conference was part of a programme of creative activity to celebrate the achievements of the East Lancashire Regional Park, led by the Lancashire Economic Partnership; the culmination of some six years' work. It was a direct response to the transformational agenda for Lancashire and the need to engage young people in the process of regeneration. The Lancashire Economic Partnership, the Northwest Regional Development Agency, Elevate East Lancashire, Creative Partnerships East Lancashire, Lancashire County Council and Mid Pennine Arts not only supported the conference financially but all played an active role during the day's activities.



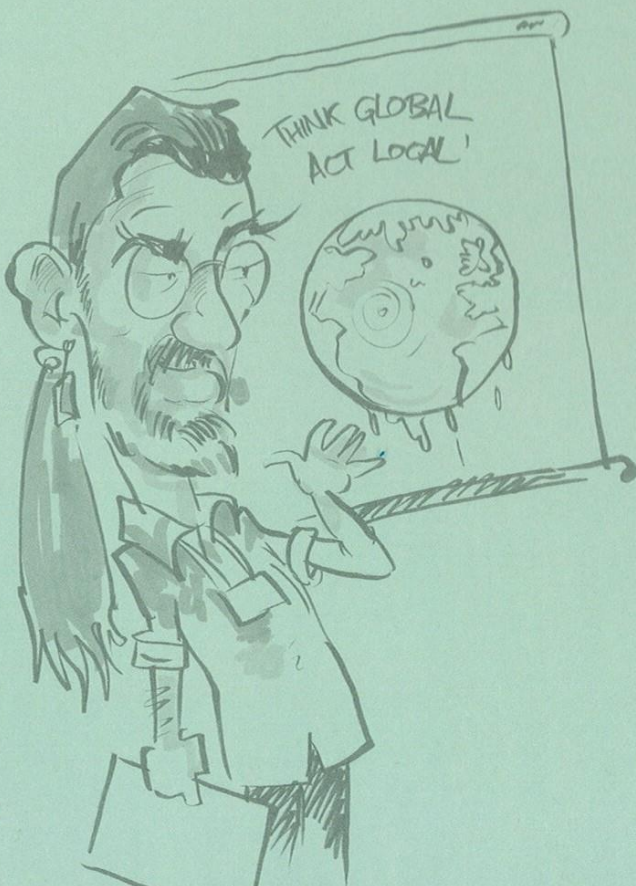
an overview...

The ambition for the conference was to use the creative arts to:

- demonstrate how the arts can influence regeneration by investing in 'Quality of Place' in both town and rural settings;
- give a voice to young people and engage them in the future development of Lancashire and its City Region;
- introduce Lancashire's schools and colleges into the process of engagement with the City Region;
- invest in the future citizens of Lancashire.

The conference achieved these aims by:

- providing access to successful regional and national arts projects which have influenced the regeneration agenda;
- demonstrating how the arts can contribute and add value to Lancashire's creative economy;
- using the conference to explore the issues and how we keep young people engaged in Lancashire's transformational agenda through a range of artist led activity;
- appealing to an audience of 15 to 18 year-old students in Lancashire secondary and tertiary education, teachers from the same sectors, interested professional education workers, and professionals working in the field of regeneration.





The central idea was to explore a series of key themes through a strand of presentations about: “things other people have done” combined with a separate strand of active workshops: “things we might do” – both strands offered inspiration and guidance for participants.

The presentation strand consisted of:

- ‘An opening challenge’: Gordon MacLellan from ‘Creeping Toad’, and Rupert Brakspear from Worcestershire County Council – Education for Sustainable Development.
- ‘The Power of Story - story, meaning and emotion in regeneration’ presented by Sue Hill from the Eden Project
- Dan Jones: ‘Civic’ architects in London
- Panel discussion composed of regeneration professionals responding to questions gathered by group facilitators during the day.

The second strand consisted of ten workshops and seminars. All delegates attended three of these sessions.

In order to support artists leading these workshops and our young delegates, each group was supported by a facilitator experienced in working with young people in the arts.

workshops and seminars...

Rupert Brakspear: Mapping what matters to us

Group members raised concerns over both local and global issues – issues special to them as individuals. They expressed a sense of worry about spaces where young people could go and be included. After a little time analysing the issues of change they realised the importance of thinking about issues which they would normally have ignored. It led them to value teamwork and an approach which would lead them to talk with people they would not normally think of talking to within the community. It led to a deeper appreciation of special places. They felt that issues identified at a local level such as anti-social behaviour, poverty, pollution etc often relate to a wider community. They emerged with an increased awareness of the process of change both positive and negative and our role in it.

Jim Buchanan: Land Art – the Labyrinth

The workshop explored an ancient labyrinth design as a way of guiding us in our decision making. Participants discussed the ways in which a labyrinth is different from a maze. The labyrinth is a pathway to follow with no dead ends and no confusion where it is important to give yourself over to the journey. Delegates were shown labyrinth drawing techniques, and saw examples of labyrinths to walk, run, and swim around. They were all engaged in walking a bamboo labyrinth especially constructed for the day in the hotel grounds. They looked at the importance of thinking about space to support creative thinking and decisions. Our intuition was presented as a most valuable skill which can help us to navigate through life's choices. Discussion focused on issues of freedom, responsibility and the challenges of creativity.

Helen Callaghan: Panopticons – new landmarks for Pennine Lancashire

The group showed particular interest in the aspects of public art which affected the concerns of local communities such as the environmental impact of design. They felt that it was always important to value the legacy of such art work for the local landscape. After discussing the benefits of public art with a great deal of interest in the Angel of the North, they felt that these benefits should be given a much higher public profile. There was a general agreement that young people would like more involvement in the design of public art in their communities.

Alison Clark: Making effective statements

Working through the medium of a drama workshop the group explored the value of role play as a way into problem solving. They found a value in the way it took the spotlight away from any individual. Not only did the experience give everyone something to talk about, it worked for all ages in supporting effective communication.



Dan Jones: Demand-Led Design

As students explored the issue of 'what exactly is good design' they focused on three key points: function, delight and quality. They discussed the issue of how consultation can affect design in the built environment which led on to the ways in which design can change the use of space and influence people. There was considerable interest in exploring the ways in which young people can become involved in the early stages of public design.



Sue Hill: Ideal Worlds

After an inspirational presentation, Sue's practical art workshop was based around utopias - imagining personal ideal worlds. It focused on the 'local'; emphasising co-operation, using the creativity in all of us to make our world a better place. This is a creativity which responds best to 'play'. By getting back to a sense of play we can begin to stimulate the mad ideas which are at the heart of creativity. The focus was on fun, invention and offering a messy hands-on approach to self-sufficiency. Working outdoors with a tray of soil each group of three began to develop their own utopia, negotiating compromises to create a place which was peaceful, friendly and environmentally sound, a place which had elements of both public and private space.

Kerenza Hines: Channel 4 Big Art Project

The delegates wanted their opinions about art listened to and for an opportunity to be found to influence decisions about art in public spaces. They agreed in the power of conversation which needs to happen to achieve a sense of unity between art and place - art and artists cannot be divorced from a sense of place. They felt that public artwork should be informed by young people, other members of the local community as well as the environment in which it is placed. It was agreed that artworks can be a meeting point for people and are a good place to think and talk about inspirational work. One constructive way of getting young people to be involved is through the creation of a youth council. The importance of artists and the community working together cannot be overemphasised.



Students share their 'Ideal Worlds' with Sue Hill

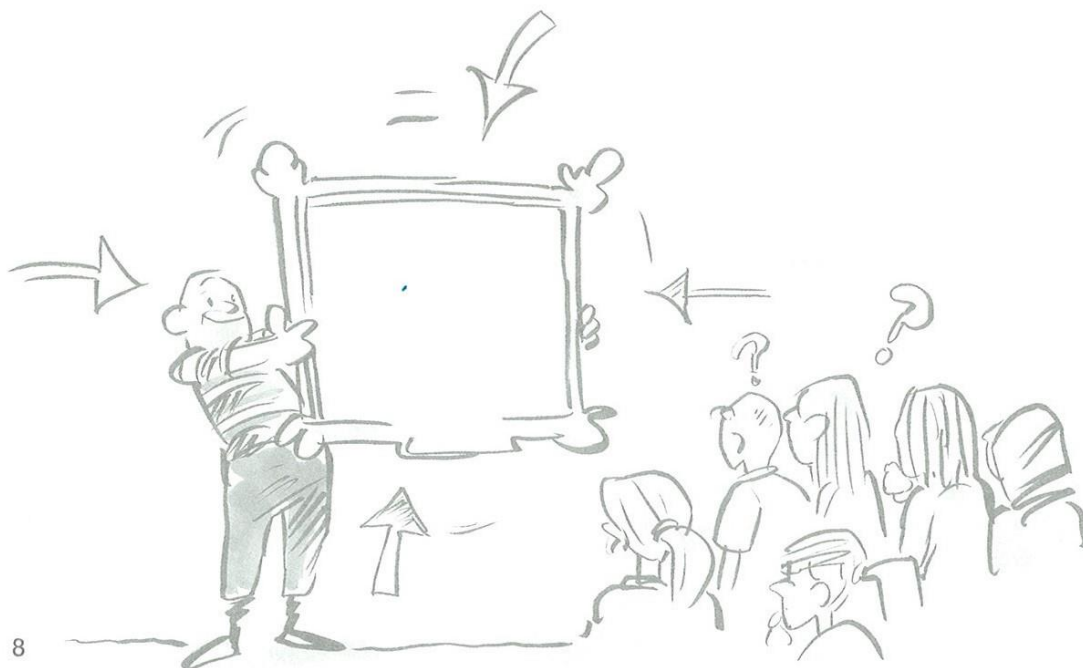


Sarah Males: Mapping a Future

Sarah's art workshop focused on the group's dreams and ambitions for the future. They brainstormed the ingredients for their ideal world. They looked at issues of recycling and sustainability and discussed whether the world would be able to fulfil their vision for a better future. The workshop made the group come alive with possibilities and seemed to bring other sessions together. Their discussions covered a land with no poverty, no stereotyping, clean energy; a land with small scale arts regeneration projects uniting people through music and art, a land where the pubs would let dogs in! It raised lots of questions and provoked a constructive debate about solutions, about what is possible in making our environment a better place to live and work in.

Gordon MacLellan: Two art workshops: 'First Steps' & 'Mapping a Future'

Delegates explored their feelings about home and places which meant a great deal to them. As they thought about how to represent the place they called home they felt that it made them think about the things they valued most about the place where they lived. There was a consensus that it's always easy to see a need for change but it is important to appreciate what you have; yet simple changes to our environment can make a big difference. There was also considerable interest in the issue of how you allow a balance between spaces which allow freedom and spaces which need control.



'INTEGRATE HEAD, HEART AND HAND' (PATRICK GEDDES)
COME JOIN THE EAGER AND AWAITING BAND.
CULTURE, RELIGION, SOCIETY'S FRICTION;
TURN A BLIND-EYE AND JOIN IN THEIR REGENERATION.
CREATE NEW RELATIONSHIPS, BE SEEN AS ONE.
LET THE LIGHT OF INTEGRATION BE SHONE.
THE ORCHESTRA OF LIFE, THE DRUMS – BOOM, BOOM, BOOM –
THE EVER-BEATING RHYTHM OF THE LOVING HEART;
THE BEAT OF LIFE, EACH PLAYING THEIR VITAL PART.
COME INTO THE WELCOMING ARMS.
EMBRACE YOURSELVES WITH THE COMPASSIONATE PALMS.

Farihah Qureshi
V1 Form Student

student responses to the issues...

There was a 94% response from students to the questionnaire they were asked to complete. What emerged, overall, was genuine sense of discovery about the number and range of public art works already in place in Lancashire. They felt that they could look with fresh eyes at the place where they live. They showed a sense of surprise yet understanding of how the arts could generate a sense of belonging and respect both for themselves and for their communities.

The impact of the conference was to inspire people to find ways to become more involved but at the same time the students signalled a frustration at not knowing how they could become involved and make a difference to their surroundings outside their immediate school environment.

One of the aims of the conference was '...to give a voice to young people...' for this reason, a selection of responses from the young people who attended the conference is presented unedited.

A selection of responses from students to the day is presented unedited.

What did you learn from your experience of the day?

- How people are using art to reflect the effects on Society of our way of life.
- I learnt how much is actually going on with art in the community around me and in other places that I didn't know about and how much it can really help people feel that they belong.
- How much art can be involved in our everyday lives and in issues and events you wouldn't normally associate with it: e.g. art as a catalyst for regeneration.
- I became more aware of all the projects going on around Lancashire.
- Opened my eyes to the sheer volume of what is going on.
- A lot about art projects going on around the world and the different ways they help communities.
- How art can be used as a tool to engage and unite communities.
- Art is a successful way of conveying messages to and between people – it really can bring people together.
- Art is a great way to make people feel good and optimistic about where they live.
- That making a difference to our communities is not just up to mayors and councillors but that we can make a difference too by getting involved
- There is more than one way people can work together.
- How art has helped regeneration in Cornwall and boosted people's self-confidence.
- Improves unattractive areas and highlights and draws people to beautiful areas which they might not ordinarily visit.
- Art brightens up a place.
- I learned some ideas about what we can do to contribute.



What made a significant impact on you?

- The examples of how art can be used to help and regenerate troubled communities: Kosovo. I was moved by the effect of the art project in Kosovo and how it has changed people's lives.
- An artist from Eden filled me with inspiration. What has happened in Cornwall is really eye-opening.
- How the arts can be used to help people communicate with each other bypassing language barriers.
- People from different communities can get along but there is a need to compromise.
- I realised how much involvement in art can influence the ways in which people in town can work together.
- I was really touched by the impact art can have on the lives of people.
- Art can make a big impact on the local community – draws communities together – it's a great thing.



- The conference showed me how to think differently about the place I live in.
- I was made to think about all the things which make my local area as it is: good and bad.
- Each different place has a different special character; I explored what makes them that way.
- How areas can be improved through art.
- The range of arts projects happening in my local area.
- Panopticons is a very exciting project for Lancashire.
- Meeting the artists in the workshops made me want to be involved.

How did the day not live up to expectations?

- Some of the speakers could have been more relevant to schools.
- There could have been more about the benefits of the arts other than to local residents.
- I would have liked more on the effect on tourism, landscape, environment and being eco-friendly.
- There should have been more about environmental issues.
- Key-note speeches were not interactive enough.



UTOPIAS!



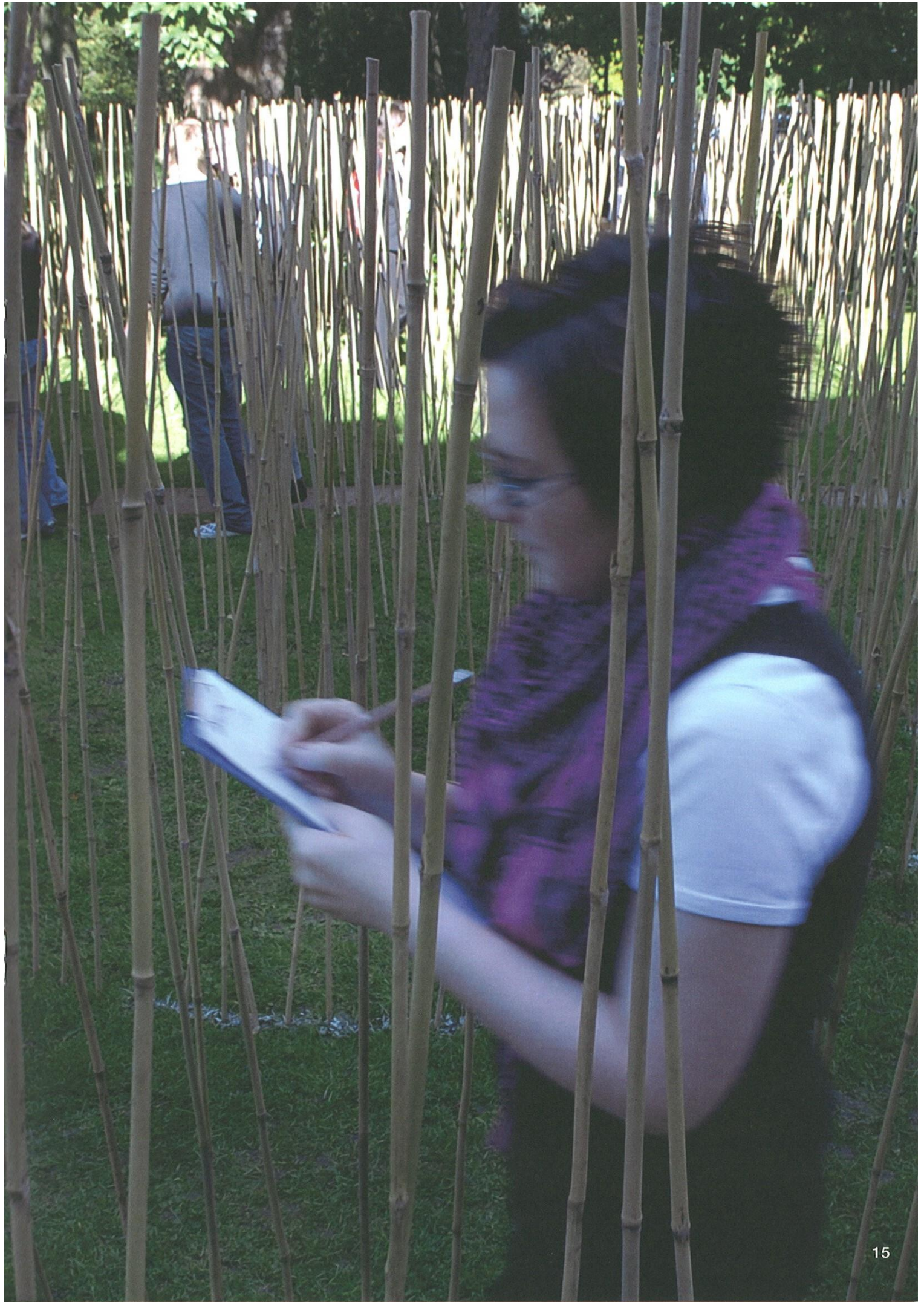
What can you do in the light of the conference in your school/college... in your locality?

- We've started to run environmental meetings in our Year and are currently raising awareness around the school. We could invite artists to work with us in our school grounds.
- We have begun running our own day of workshops involving team building and the space around us.
- Some of the ideas from the day are already being addressed in the design of our new school building. We are keen that it should include some new sculptures.
- More art to be shown and created in school to build friendships. It is to be raised at our school council.
- We should celebrate our creativity more – because it's really good. A starting point is in our schools which should have more art work displayed.
- I can share my experience of meeting all these artists on the day with other students and teachers in my school.
- Create and start a project in school linked with the conference day.
- I'd like my school to work with artists to promote eco-friendly beautiful art in our local area.
- I can talk to teachers about how we can make improvements to the School and the local surroundings.
- I would like artists to work alongside students and our teachers.
- Some areas in our town where lots of people meet are perfect for a piece of interactive and stimulating public art which would be an asset to the town centre.
- Students can be involved in creating sculptures in parks, in the town or just in school; art which highlights different issues: being green, community life and nature, art which should be in the interest of local people. People should be able to relate to artworks and gain inspiration from them.

General

- The conference exceeded my expectations.
- I wasn't sure what to expect but on the whole thought that it was a really good day.
- We liked how the day was recorded through photographs, cartoons and poetry.





the teachers' view

"Overall, a very worthwhile experience with too much happening because I wanted my students to be involved in all of it!"

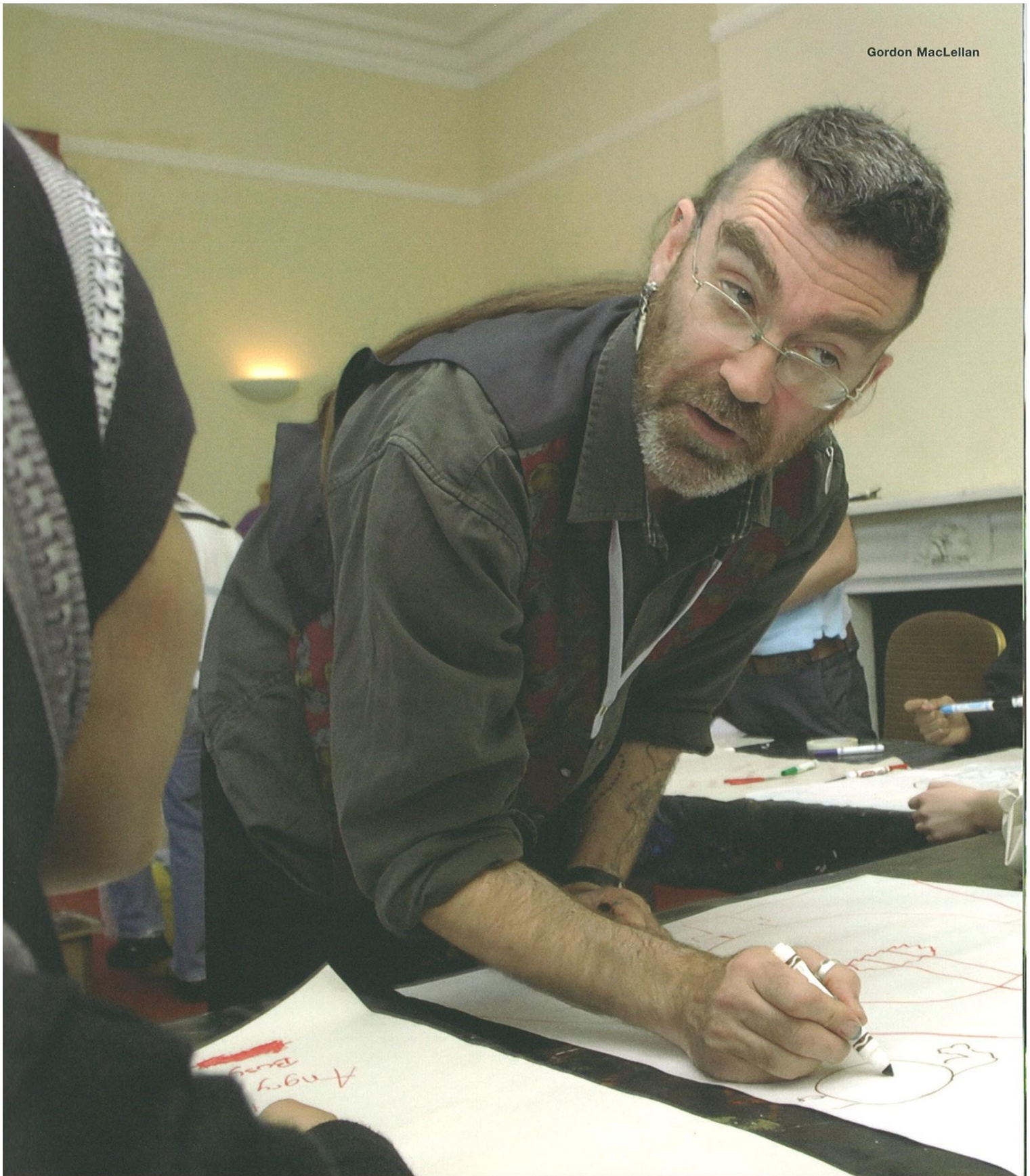
Most teachers were aware of the opportunities at the conference for their own professional development. They agreed that the conference had raised awareness of the importance of the arts in regeneration: "...we were all inspired and have lots of ideas to develop at our own school. I would love to be involved in an arts and regeneration project". It highlighted for many: "...the links with art in the community..." It was clear too, that they valued the networking opportunities offered: "...it was good to meet an active group of key players in the area of arts and regeneration; people ordinarily we would never have a chance to meet..." Their response to the workshop programme was again positive: "...very helpful and the documentation useful... I gained new ideas of how to use arts activities in workshops... they provided an opportunity to discuss issues related to post 16 students".

Although two teachers commented that some of their students were a little overawed and confused by some of the sessions there was general agreement that the conference had been beneficial for their students: "I thoroughly enjoyed the day – never been to anything like it before". They felt that their students had been "inspired and motivated" and that they had not only enjoyed the workshop sessions but had learned new practical skills and knowledge. Most important was the opportunity for participation in intelligent discussion and the questioning of presenters. It was an occasion where "communication skills with others from different age groups were put to the test!" Many teachers commented on how their students had simply laughed and enjoyed themselves as they met new people. The conference had provided much "food for thought" and challenged the idea that the arts can make little difference in towns where people have a very negative response to artistic projects.

One teacher regretted that students did not have the opportunity to express ideas for projects in their own communities whilst another felt that there was no opportunity to share what others gained from their workshops.

In identifying the successes of the day praise was given for the overall concept, planning and organisation which "did so much to make it a student friendly event". They felt that the opening presentations were inspiring and that excellent facilitation contributed a great deal to the success of the workshop sessions. They felt that the 'novelty' of documenting the Conference through cartoons, performance poetry as well as photography added to "the friendly, enjoyable feel of the day" where "the final poem composed to sum up the day was brilliant". The view was expressed strongly that it was an "inspirational day" for students; "a brilliant subject to develop further – definitely worth a follow-up, perhaps with some of the student ideas being used to develop the project further". But the day had also made a "significant impact on our own professional development".

One teacher identified a wonderful development opportunity to follow up the Conference by inviting a particular school to develop an arts regeneration project with its local community.



“...we were all inspired and have lots of ideas to develop at our own school. I would love to be involved in an arts and regeneration project”.

the facilitators' view...

The facilitators were all arts professionals whose job it was to support young people in the artist workshops and seminars to make sense of the day.

There was agreement that the students engaged well with the practical activities and were able to express freely their views and ideas. The students were "positive and enthusiastic about the day and the issues being discussed" and as one would expect, "they became more animated and responsive as the day went on". All agreed that: "particularly for young people, the experience of being consulted, listened to and responded to in such an adult way must have had a very positive effect".

The conference day "connected young people with the 'arts world' and the people working within it. The keynote speeches and workshops were good at showing the young people some of the 'behind the scenes' processes involved in public art and delivering an understanding of how art sits in a local and global context." It made "...the young people I worked with really think about their role in regeneration, what affects them in their own locales and what matters to them as individuals. I think some of them will be motivated to take action in some way." Facilitators commented that the young people developed confidence to speak in "a genuine conference experience without compromising on facilities, speakers etc."

"The publications and other materials available were very good. The workshop activities were fascinating and enabled the young people to think differently about the impact they can have on the world around them. I thought that the speeches were particularly engaging and had just the right mixture of a serious rational approach, emotion, playful inspirational and creativity to environmental issues whilst developing a sense of responsibility and activism within the audience".

The day was a challenge too for the arts professionals who "didn't always talk the same language as the young people and it was interesting to hear them grappling and explaining themselves outside 'regeneration-speak'!"

Teaching staff especially seemed to have a "renewed enthusiasm for arts in the environment by the end of the day...they found it interesting and inspiring". The Conference "raised people's knowledge and awareness of public art and regeneration on a local and national scale...it offered delegates an insight into a more creative way of approaching issues..."

For their own professional practice, Facilitators found "the day to be immensely valuable both in terms of developing an overview of what's going on and as a reminder of what is possible". Listening to the presentations and young people in discussion gave a sense "...that the role of the arts in regeneration was finally being understood and utilised more broadly across the country and that there are strong models of practice which can back it up".

A major success identified was "seeing the responses of particular young people becoming more and more passionate and sensing that they understood the possibility within themselves for involvement..."



“...the experience of being consulted, listened to and responded to in such an adult way must have had a very positive effect”.

the artists' view...

Artists felt that working with other arts professionals brought a “fascinating scope to the day”. They gained a wider view of the work of other creative practitioners in this field, particularly in Pennine Lancashire. “...It was great to meet and hear other artists (working in wildly differing media but with the same core values) talking about their work and demonstrating it in practice. I think that’s something that sometimes gets overlooked - it’s not just the young people who benefit from these gatherings. We all learn from each other”.

There was a recognition that young people “...seemed keen to link art with higher global issues...” The students had arrived with “open minds and an intuition that getting involved might lead to other opportunities for them”. Some had “obviously thought about environmental issues” and were already involved as an “eco-school” or in school council initiatives, “...but others were new to these ideas. Thoughtful and ready to engage with or challenge new ideas, they were themselves, challenging – and challenged by the day.”

It was felt that delegates responded strongly to new ways of getting messages across:

- using arts to make issues, thoughts, new ideas more dynamic and engaging,
- using creative activities to help think through an idea,
- using arts to present their feelings in non-confrontational and striking ways,

but overall by encountering “new ways of communicating rather than talking and arguing when a many of them felt that their voices were lost.”

One artist commented that “...an ideal follow-up for schools would be more structured discussion, time to give participants time to mull over their experiences and then to talk and share thoughts and ideas.” He went on to suggest that “... the biggest challenge within the day were some of the teaching staff and the feeling that while we were serving our young people well, their schools might not let any new ideas we came up with be applied.”

Artists valued the conference opportunity as a “...reminder of the excitement of working with teenage groups: the challenge of engaging them, of making ideas relevant and interesting to them and then observing the sharpness of their responses...” The conference day had created a ‘space’ where young people could feel confident to question ideas; it had offered: “more ideas to explore with teenage groups and activities to work with...” It was felt that there was certainly an opportunity to ‘jump-start’ some ideas for future project work and a reminder that “art is a part of people’s everyday lives.” But overall the artists enjoyed the stimulation of working with young people: “...their lack of cynicism, their optimism and sheer creativity give one hope for the future”.



The students had arrived with “open minds and an intuition that getting involved might lead to other opportunities for them”.

where next?

The key message which has emerged from the Conference is the enthusiasm of the young people who attended to be actively involved and make a positive difference to their own surroundings. This, of course, leaves the sponsors a serious question to answer. How do we find ways to involve young people in some of the major regeneration initiatives in Lancashire in the near future?

If we are to establish this link between young people and the proposals for future developments in Lancashire within the 'Green Infrastructure' and 'Dreaming of Pennine Lancashire', there is a need for a period of research and development and creative consultation with the partners, the schools and organisations working with young people, which will need to be funded.

It makes sense then for a series of meetings with the key partners, brokered by Mid Pennine Arts, to identify what opportunities exist within the 'Dreaming of Pennine Lancashire' and the 'Green Infrastructure' programmes.

Ways forward:

- Mid Pennine Arts to facilitate a meeting in September 2008 of partners: Elevate East Lancashire, Lancashire Economic Partnership, Lancashire Arts Development Service, Creative Partnerships and other possible partners to
 - discuss the findings of this report,
 - receive an update on the 'Elevate Arts Ambassador' research,
 - receive an update on the cultural mapping led by Lancashire County Council,
 - identify funding opportunities.
- Agree a series of core principles for youth engagement modelled on the existing Lancashire Young People's Charter (see www.lancashire.gov.uk).
- Fund a research & scoping exercise to identify successful models showing how creativity can be used as a tool for youth engagement, models which show engagement making an impact on decision making.
- Identify key individuals within relevant organisations for engaging young people: schools, colleges, neighbourhood management officers, youth organisations outside formal education etc.
- Bring the identified 'key individuals' together through seminars or conference to identify possible models to engage young people in Lancashire.

This approach, to establish a strong partnership of committed players in this field, will allow us to take up the opportunity to develop a 'joined-up' strategic programme of creative activity which will build on identified best practice.

The following stage can then be worked up with the young people themselves, in partnership with their schools, colleges and youth organisations.



appendix

Attendance

72 students

14 teachers

6 professional education officers

7 regeneration professionals

14 artists

113 in total

17 schools and colleges were represented at the conference:

Accrington & Rossendale College.

Alder Grange Community and Technology School, Rawtenstall.

All Saints Catholic Language College, Rawtenstall.

Burnley Schools' Sixth Form.

Clitheroe Royal Grammar School

Fearn's Community Sports College, Rossendale.

Fleetwood Sports College.

Haslingden High School.

Lancaster Girls' Grammar School.

Accrington Moorhead Sports College.

Parklands High School, Chorley.

Shuttleworth College, Burnley.

Sir John Thursby Community College, Burnley.

St. Mary's College, Blackburn.

Unity College, Burnley.

West Craven High Technology College, Barnoldswick.

Worden Sports College, Leyland.

Contributors

Iain Bennett

Panel Member: Sector Leader Digital and Creative Industries, Northwest Regional Development Agency.

Janet Barton

Panel Member: Director of Economic Regeneration Lancashire Economic Partnership.

Lucy Bergman

Facilitator: Artist.

Rupert Brakspear

Keynote Speaker: Education for Sustainable Development Officer, Worcestershire County Council.

Mike Bryson

Cartoonist documenting the day.

Jim Buchanan

Workshop Leader: Land Artist.

Helen Callaghan

Workshop Leader: Mid Pennine Arts.

Terry Caffrey

Performance Poet, documenting the day.

Allison Clarke

Workshop Leader: Artist.

Caroline Fraser

Conference Chair: Head of Regions for CABE (Commission for the Built Environment).

Kate Goodrich

Facilitator: TIPP (Theatre in the Criminal Justice System)

Paul Hartley

Facilitator: Youth Arts Engagement Consultant

Sue Hill

Keynote Speaker: Artist & Artistic Director for the Eden Project 2000-06.

Nigel Hillier

Photographer, documenting the day.

Kerenza Hines

Workshop Leader: Public Art Curator and Consultant.

Catherine Holbrook

Facilitator: Musician.

Dan Jones

Keynote Speaker: Architect, Civic Architects.

Sarah Males

Workshop Leader: Artist.

Gordon MacLellan

Keynote Speaker: Artist & Environmental Educator: 'Creeping Toad'.

Dave McGinn

Facilitator: More Music.

Jacky Riddell

Facilitator: Director of Springboard Arts.

Claire Tymon

Panel Member: Creative Community Engagement Officer for Elevate East Lancashire.

A report from delegates from Lancaster Girls' Grammar school:

“Fortunately, we were the first group to arrive which allowed us to meet some of the key artists. We got our hands full of mud (which felt good) whilst helping to construct an environmental sculpture with the artist Jim Buchanan in the hotel gardens made out of bamboo sticks. After experiencing and helping to build with nature we were now ready for the day! We also enjoyed our brief discussion with the poet Terry Caffrey who made us all chuckle with his Irish jokes. Terry was employed for the day to write poems about the conference events. This was to be one of the highlights at the end of the day.

The first two opening talks were on how to start that thinking process of change and transformation and how to create a vision for our future. We were immediately engaged and thinking about how to involve ourselves in one's local place, with the people and our wildlife; how to think and process ideas for the future that focused on sustainability. There was a big emphasis on why one should have an arts approach to support the environment and this all allowed us to think about possible regenerative art activities which can affect the lives of people. One inspirational quotation by Maya Angelou remained with us for the day: ‘...the question is not how to survive but how to thrive with passion, compassion, humour and style...’ and at the end of the discussion we certainly had gained an insight into how the creative arts can be a force for change and we wanted to know how we could contribute to the ‘quality of our place’.

We were immediately whisked off to various workshops and during the day; we all attended three different very exciting activities. We attended a workshop on ‘Panopticons’. We did not know what these were but we learnt that these were a series of architectural sculptural pieces placed in the landscapes of East Lancashire, iconic pieces which generate interest and high levels of visibility even in areas of economic and social decline. During our workshop there was a very heated discussion on the viability of these sculptures and whether they truly regenerate the community. We were assured that the Panopticons were used to engage communities and we began to appreciate how the potential of creativity can motivate and promote new concepts and ideas which can lead to a social ownership of a place.

We left wanting to find out more about the Panopticons and we now know about sculptures which have been creating great economic impact in East Lancashire called ‘Singing Ringing Tree’, ‘Atom’, ‘Colourfields’ and ‘Halo’. ‘Halo’ is an 18 metre-diameter steel lattice structure in the Rossendale valley. It is lit by the latest LED technology and by night glows a sky-blue colour, giving the effect of hovering above the town. This iconic gateway piece overlooks the A56 welcoming visitors to East Lancashire. Do you know these iconic sculptures? Perhaps you only know the ‘Angel of the North’? If you don’t it is best to find out. We now have a display of the Pennine Lancashire Panopticons Trail Map in our Art room. Could we perhaps have one of these contemporary artworks in Lancaster?

In our next workshop we made flags. We had to make a symbol of our local environment and then depicted this very simply on a piece of fabric in the shape of a triangle. This was fun and we all learnt an exciting new technique. I am sure we could use this in our 'International Fair Day' at our school. These flags lined the pathway at the end of the conference and again reinforced our commitment to developing a future with a purpose.

Our third workshop , 'Effective Statements', looked at how to engage communities where there are difficulties in talking to each other. We used role play and after dressing up as 'disco babes' and as 'coco cabana island chicks' we were left to pose problems and to engage in bringing people together. This was fun and yet we were subtly using powers of effective communication whilst balancing on islands and using only string, pegs and paper bags to communicate with.

One of the highlights of the day was a discussion by one of the creative team players at the Eden Project, Sue Hill. She had examples of some of her large scale carnival images and earth sculptures and she told us how she had been employed on programmes to support the regeneration of communities through culture and art. Her examples, especially the one in Cyprus, where she explained there had been friction between the Turks and the Greeks and how the artists had used dance and community art festivals to break down barriers. This was very inspiring as one began to understand how art can be used to revitalise and renew communities. We thought the earth sculptures were wonderful and thought about having our own mud or living-earth sculpture in the gardens in front of our school.

At every workshop we were asked to present a question to the panel and at the end of the day there was a panel discussion. This was very useful. We had the chance to see who was heading the arts' sustainability programmes in Lancashire and perhaps who we could contact.

During the day there had been a cartoonist documenting the day by sketching the events, facial expressions and activities. These were very funny and clever and one of us had definitely been drawn!

The conference day ended on another very high note with Terry Gaffrey's poems. He had summed up our thoughts, our culture, our environment, skills, concern for sustainability, creative industry, the various partnerships involved in regeneration and many other achievements and aspirations of the day."

conference poems

During the conference day, poet Terry Caffrey recorded his response to the Day through poetry which he presented to delegates at the close. Shadowing Terry throughout the conference was sixth form student Fariyah Qureshi from Burnley Schools' Sixth Form.

Plantation, the life and soul of the world,
Uniting people with the greenery and freshness of life.
Herbs used for food, others for a change of mood
Every living thing, dependent on this source,
Eliminating uneasiness by creating remorse.
Plantation, the voice of every nation
Sharing and caring – birth to regeneration.

Fariyah Qureshi

Art is... charisma, passion and love
Art is... willingness, thought and sent from above
Art is... you and me
Art can range from a sculpture to a pea.
Art can be music, each note reaching, touching the soul.
Art can be outspoken, unstoppable, on a roll.
Art is... how and what you want it to be.
So, go ahead, be you and be free!

Fariyah Qureshi

Listen

Tied back, or
held up
curly or straight
organised,
headless chickens
some delegates late
all bums are seated
and coughings depleted.
Flip charts
and switches
new technical hitches.
Shuffling bottoms
scratches and itches.

Now START!

Tight hair – and no hair
Tight jeans and bright faces
Croissants and coffees
wide open spaces.
Brown bags and
Name tags
Bum bags and staggers
Young adults in fashion
Cool eco swaggers.
Cardies and hoodies
Even school Blazers
Streetwise and growing
Potential Hell raisers
mints and flash bios
listening ears
concerned about Meltdown
and community fears.
The Artic is melting
Rainforest severe
Namibian Tears
God rest Mother Earth
After millions of years.

Change has to happen
This planet is dying
put your ear to the ground
the world's children are
crying.

Terry Caffrey

"Going Going"

Penguins have been spotted in Argos
Eagles are leaving their nest
Foxes are no longer with us
they've disappeared just like the rest.

Polar bears are now driving Taxis
Reindeer fled the south and gone West
The grey squirrel has deserted the woods
they've disappeared just like the rest.

Sea Lions collect trolleys at Asda
The Blue Parrott's been shot as a pest
The ice cap's a hot water bottle
It's disappeared just like the rest.

Deserts are now creeping forward
Carbon footprint on a Global scale
The otter the tiger the rhino
Who will help save the ocean's Blue Whale?

Your community's next on the hit list
Make your life-space a manageable dream.
Don't let them kill nature and put trees in a museum
Then charge the people a dollar and a half just to 'see 'em'
For they've
Paved paradise and put up a parking lot
They've paved paradise and put up a parking lot.

Terry Caffrey

Curser, Keys and Joysticks. Fingers, toes and thumbs.
Help design where you live, do it with your chums.

Curser, Keys and Joysticks. Roundabouts have bends.
You can help design them, do it with your friends.

Curser, Keys and Joysticks. Parts are really great.
Go out and help design them, do it with your mate.

To the tune of 'My Old Man's a Dustman'

Terry Caffrey

Ticking

Puppets and braid
Belfast parade
Decisions are made
In political shade.
Get out of the sun –
Away from the gun
Climate –
Re-arrange its
time to make change.
Make love not War
John Lennon said
If bullets were flowers
No one would be dead.
And if rain went up –
Or kids taught their teachers
The world would be less full
Of arrogant preachers.
Puppets and braid
Belfast Parade
Turn over a new leaf
Lights better than shade
Be yourself, you have a voice
This is your planet
You make the choice.
You don't need permission
Set yourself free.
Harmony throughout the world
Is the right way to be.
Everyman who's born
Into sunshine or rain
Must unshackle their spirit
Let it fly up once again.
Puppets and braid
Belfast Parade
Take your finger off the
Trigger,
The world's a grenade.

Terry Caffrey

Special thanks are due to Gordon MacLellan of 'Creeping Toad' for his considered advice before, during and after the conference day.



LANCASHIRE
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Moving Forward:
The Northern Way



Elevate East Lancashire
New life for neighbourhoods



Creative Partnerships

