

Social Renewal Story

Foodscapes, Identities and Ageing

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Foodscares was a pilot study concerned with the relationship between food poverty and citizenship. The study explored the everyday lived realities of older residents' encounters with, and experiences of using food banks in their local areas. The recent trend of exponential growth in both the number and charitable sources of food banks, has put food poverty at the centre of political debates and media commentary on social justice, social inclusion and citizenship in the UK. Even so, these debates have become generationally focused on families with young children and take little account of the impact of food poverty on older people. This pilot research, then, offers an entry point for broadening public discourse around food banks to recognise their multi-generational use, and the broader social implications of this. The study is trialling the use of visual collage as a methodological tool, and as a collaborative approach which opens up understandings of ageing, identities and citizenship as visualised in and through a bricolage of participant-generated images and representations of their daily experiences.

The data collection for Foodscares was completed in February 2015, and incorporates a mixed inventory of interview, visual, biographical and observational data. Six older residents participated in the pilot research, and have not only shared their personal experiences of using local food banks, but have also generated a rich portfolio of photographic imagery which powerfully documents and captures the day-to-day realities of living on the breadline. Our participants have also produced 5 illustrative, representational collages, each of which serves as a visual narrative of their food use and its relationship to their sense of self and identity, community and belonging, citizenship and recognition. The visual collages weave together the colourful threads of participants' biographies and oral testimonies, and form the cornerstone of the pilot research and the project outputs.

The challenges encountered in locating older food bank users in the Newcastle upon Tyne area have been considerable. Very few older food bank users (defined as 60 years plus) were identified; we therefore opened up recruitment to those who self-identified as 'older' - 4 of our 6 research participants were aged between 45 and 56 years. These difficulties signal the invisibility of older people from the public face of food poverty. However, it is unclear whether i) older people fall under the radar of service provision/providers; ii) are an especially hard-to-reach community of food bank users; or iii) are simply few in number. Our data will help us to explore these questions. In January 2015, we participated in the Tackling Food Poverty Together Workshop, hosted and organised by Food Newcastle, and involving service providers from the voluntary, private and public sectors. Our dissemination will engage with this important network of food stakeholders, seeking ways in which the research can inform future policy and practice for older people.

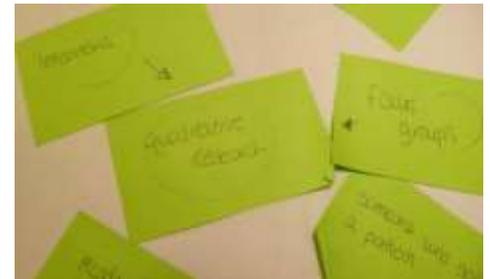
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Student-centred Research Protocol “Getting the Facts Right”

Prof Peter Hopkins, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology

This participatory project worked with young people in a secondary school in Glasgow to develop a student-centred research protocol that will be used to decide what research takes place at their school. In doing this project, the students’ experiences of taking part in research (through participatory research methods) and the experiences of other researchers who have worked in the school, were explored. Developed because students wanted to be better informed about why research was being carried out and to have a greater say in how they participate, the protocol aims to make it easier for decisions about taking part in research to be student-led, rather than made by teachers. It also sets out how research should be conducted and how researchers should behave when working with young people. Shawlands Academy is frequently approached by social researchers as the school is within a diverse part of Glasgow. This brand new protocol provides a framework within which pupils and teachers will be able to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate in research.

This brand new protocol provides a framework within which pupils and teachers will be able to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate in research. The students said that taking part in research gives them a chance to explore a range of topics relevant to their lives, and helps them understand why they think the way they do and why they might disagree with their friends and classmates. As a guide to researchers, a summary of topics young people think are important is included in the protocol.



While developing the protocol, the group of S4 students visited Newcastle University to talk to researchers to learn more about the research process. They then presented their finished work to officials from Glasgow City Council at a special event in June. The group is also mentoring and training younger pupils at the school so that there is a sustainable student voice in decisions about which research takes place at Shawlands Academy. Teachers, pupils and researchers will be able to access the new research protocol on the Glasgow City Council website, and the student-centred research protocol is being introduced in schools across Glasgow.

“The genuine partnership between Shawlands Academy and Newcastle University was built firmly on the principle of allowing students to have more than just a voice about research in schools, but actually to steer the project from inception to outcome.” Cath Sinclair, Deputy Head at Shawlands



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Hearing History

Dr Paul Fleet, School of Arts and Cultures

The journey in capturing sound has been rapid due to the remarkable speed of development in recording devices – from phonographs to mobile phones – and this has forced the public to consciously and subconsciously change their social and environmental listening behaviours. As more and more concert organisers are asking their audience to turn off their phones and engage in active rather than passive listening and academic authors such as Michael Bull (2007, *Sound Moves*) are considering the inclusivity and exclusivity of mobile technologies.



The ‘Hearing History’ workshops actively engaged the public to confront the processes of committing sound to a medium to be stored and what it means to capture the sounds of the past to be then reheard in a future present. It was interesting to hear the fascination in the simplicity of the early technologies and then watch them instinctively reach for their mobile phones to record the recordings that had just been made and were playing back on the wax cylinders and the vinyl lathe. The attendees at the workshops were mixed in age, gender and social class and all had an interest in the idea of not only seeing and hearing but also using these technologies. Many of the attendees were taken by seeing the technologies in action, the cutting of the sound onto the surface and then its tracing in playback. Attendees also came to reconsider the ambient sound of these early recordings as something separate from the sound object itself. Early technologies inherently produce a hum and crackle when recording sound and this can present a false historical contextualization to the recording and all who recorded live onto these technologies were intrigued to hear this hum and crackle on something they had just recorded. One member of the workshop said she ‘was off home straight after this to re-listen to her Bessie Smith 78s and try and filter out that noise’.

There was an energy to these workshops which on receipt of the messages and tweets (using #HearingHistory) has continued after the event itself. Following on from these NISR funded workshops, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums set aside funding and maintained access to their archives to further promote research and impact this year (2015). In discussion with TWAM, lead academic Paul Fleet has championed taking research to the public (in the city centre rather than in museums) to engage more people who would not normally come across the idea of active / passive and inclusivity / exclusivity in recording technologies. This project has engaged the public, and will now lead to a journal article for *Popular Musicology Online*, drawing from the research undertaken.

“I have a new found respect for pressing record now I can see what is happening”

Workshop participant

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Methodological investigations in capturing the impact of museum activities on older men, living with mental illness.

Areti Galani – Media, Culture, Heritage

Background to project

Museums are increasingly positioning themselves as providers of therapeutic experiences for older people and their carers. There is a need amongst the sector to find ways to evaluate this work and to communicate its value to different stakeholders.

This project was an exploration of methods for evaluating a program of activities with older men with mental health issues previously developed by the project partners. The team sought to find unobtrusive methods that would not affect impact of the program.

The project was jointly funded by ISR and the Institute for Ageing.



What did you do?

The focus of this project was a Men's Group programme delivered by Beamish to a small group of older men with different mental health conditions. The programme incorporated conversation and meaningful activity in Orchard Cottage, pictured, in 6 weekly sessions. University staff, museum staff & an occupational therapist worked together to devise a combination of people-centred non-obtrusive evaluation methods, which provided insight into the impact the programme had on the participants. This involved a structured observational tool, which was used during sessions, lifestory narrative interviews and diaries. University staff worked with the museum staff on the analysis and interpretation of the collected materials.

What difference did it make?

The project enabled staff at Beamish Museum to look differently at their own practices and to hear the men's perceptions of the sessions. The project has reinforced the importance of their role as facilitators and the value of the sessions. The project provided a training opportunity for the museum staff & promoted discussion within the museum around evaluation & impact. The project had a positive impact on the participants themselves. They valued the opportunity to take part in the Men's Group and the chance to take part in a research project which might make a positive impact on other people's lives. Details of the project were also shared at an Allied Health Professional Trust-wide conference.

"It has been a good example to share with others at the Museum about the different ways that the Museum can be used to support health and wellbeing, rather than just 'reminiscing about the old days' and that these benefits are not exclusively for older people."

Michelle Kindleysides, Health & Wellbeing Coordinator, Beamish Museum



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<https://holdingmemories.wordpress.com/>

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Newcastle City Futures exhibition & 'Newcastle City Futures 2065' Foresight Report

Prof Mark Tewdwr-Jones, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Dr Paul Cowie, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape and Prof John Goddard, School of Geography Politics and Sociology

Newcastle City Futures was a multi-media exhibition and event series devised as a 'pop-up' urban room and created to promote an innovative city-wide approach to engaging residents, local authorities, politicians, service providers, charities and businesses about the future of Newcastle and Gateshead. Planned, delivered and curated by School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, and with some financial support from Newcastle University Institute for Social Renewal, the exhibition involved a wide range of partners including Newcastle City Council, Science City, Nexus, Newcastle Airport, Amber Film & Photography Collective, Northern Architecture, Discovery Museum, Tyne and Wear Archives, NE1 Business Improvement District, Newcastle United FC, Royal Institution of British Architects and Royal Town Planning Institute.



Over 19 days it received over 2,400 visitors, established a network of more than 22 different partners across the city and hosted 24 free public events. The exhibition was designed to make planning and urban change issues accessible to a wider audience to spark a big conversation. Innovatively, positive change through planning was made real by presenting oral histories from community members, linking personal stories to previously unseen photographs, showing historic films and artefacts from living memory, and presenting models of built, unbuilt, demolished and imagined development and city plans for Newcastle and Gateshead.

This was a project in itself but also formed one of seven methods within the parallel Government Office for Science (GOS) funded project 'Newcastle Urban Foresight', led by Professors Mark Tewdwr-Jones and John Goddard. Public feedback from the exhibition was particularly important when considering the time horizons used within foresight projects. It is often difficult for individuals to imagine their own lives in 50 years' time never mind what the world will look like. Taking stock of the present and looking back at past future plans helps ground people's expectations and hopefully provides a more positive and realistic set of future scenarios.

The GOS Foresight project has pursued a cross-sectorial approach to discussing Newcastle's future to 2065, as a new city-wide innovative method of engagement that goes across sectors and forges new relationships between research communities and other groups. This includes working with community and voluntary sectors – as well as businesses and public sector – on a number of existing and emerging policy areas. The enthusiasm within the city towards the Foresight project has led to strong political buy-in being achieved for futures work, where none had existed previously, even before the project has completed its analysis.

The 'Newcastle City Futures 2065' report is available on the University website.

The Newcastle City Futures exhibition and GOS Foresight project has led directly to the setting up of the Newcastle 2020 initiative, led by the city council and comprising senior executives from public sector organisations in the Newcastle city region, to identify public sector threats and opportunities over the next seven years. A Newcastle 2020 Operational Steering Group has been established that focuses on four broad sectors for the city: ageing and health; employment and skills; infrastructure; and digital technologies. The Foresight project is both facilitating the cross-sectoral discussions and supporting dialogue through intelligence and data, with the full support of both Newcastle and Northumbria Universities.

Furthermore, a joint city council/university 'City Futures Development Group' has been created to embed the Foresight project results back into Newcastle University and the city council. The intention is to forge a single point of contact between the academy and the local authority, but also to provide advice, intelligence and support, and to respond to policy and funding opportunities that require a partnership approach. Membership of the Futures Group is drawn from the universities, city council, and other sectors across the region. This allows a stronger relationship to be developed between science and social science (within the university), and between academic research and policy evidence and decision making intelligence within the city council. In this way the concentration of expertise at Newcastle University in urban and regional change, planning, public participation and social science analysis, is being put to use to shape the future prosperity of Newcastle.



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<http://www.newcastlecityfutures.org/NCF2065.html>

Salmon Fishing on the Tweed

Dr Helen Jarvis - School of Geography, Politics and Sociology

This project strengthens the impact of AHRC studentship collaboration with Cittaslow Berwick-upon-Tweed. It delivers a discrete new project of citizen-led story-telling and dissemination for the Berwick 900 Festival, understanding salmon fishing as the embodiment of a slow philosophy towards natural resources, heritage and local livelihoods. This project has been engaging residents of Berwick in a process of recording their untold stories and diverse multi-sensory knowledge of fishing on the Tweed through 'pop-up' engagement events intended to invite public dialogue. Social renewal lies at the heart of a 3-stage process of co-production, focussed on efforts to save the last Berwick fishery.



Two small-scale events were held in traditional fishing communities, in collaboration with local history experts representing Our Families (a Berwick Records Office, Heritage Lottery funded project for Berwick 900). Many of the local residents who participated brought with them news cuttings and documents recording historic family connections to the netting industry. Publicity in the Berwick Advertiser and via posters and social media prompted further stories from further afield. Preliminary themes from these events shaped large-scale public engagement in July; one day at a food festival on the Quayside (c.150 visitors) and three days in Berwick Town Hall (c.900 visitors); followed by an exhibition through August at the Watchtower Gallery. The research team are processing themes from dozens of stories collected so far (and through continuing collaboration with civic organisations) and reflecting on the lessons to be learned from different approaches to community engagement and story-telling. The research has already captured the imagination of a non-academic audience and it continues to feed into and respond to local public debate on the topic.

The initial stages of the research made extensive use of social media and local press and radio outlets to draw attention to the project and our preliminary observations. For instance, short feature articles have been published in the Berwick Advertiser (5th June 2015); The Southern Reporter (5th June 2015); The Chronicle (3rd August 2015) and on BBC Radio Borders (tbc), in addition to images and text posted on the Berwick 900 and Berwick Arts and Crafts web-site and Facebook pages.

The primary output of the project was a 'souvenir' publication intended for a general audience, not least the wide range of civic organisations and fishing family communities and individuals who contributed to the project. Furthermore, findings are emerging that will contribute new knowledge on 'intangible' 'slow' cultural ecologies and the methodology involved will provide useful insights for future community engagement strategies.



The Illustrated Soldier

Dr Helen Limon, School of English Language, Literature and Linguistics, Mr Colin Hutchinson (Forward-Assist) Ms Debbie Beeks (Seven Stories National Centre for Children's Books)

The books we read and share are an important part of the way we understand who we are. Stories shape our view of ourselves and each other. Books and the stories they contain are part of the creative and cultural capital of a society, a community, a family, and an individual reader. By engaging in dialogue with ex-service personnel about portrayals of the military in books for the very young, Dr Limon created a space for people who have been greatly impacted by their participation in conflict to participate in debates about military life and the place of service personnel in community and society.



Working in collaboration with Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books, and the service veterans charity Forward-Assist, groups of service veterans and Dr Limon from Newcastle University discussed the portrayal of military personal and military conflict in a selection of picture books for children. A series of three workshops took place to gather the veterans' responses to stories and images that use the military as characters in illustrated fiction. Building upon this, a new activity called 'book-hacking' was undertaken, and a short animation was created using the illustrated titles to illuminate the veterans' reactions to the work. The 'book hack' was a liberating and enabling methodology, and a very energising way of working with the veterans. The approach of the 'book-hack' could be effectively used by other researchers when working with a diverse range of communities.

The most significant impact has been with the veterans support charity, Forward-Assist. Forward-Assist understands and works within a myriad of activities that help/hinder ex-service personal to 'thrive'. Forward-Assist had not engaged with representations of the military in children's fiction as a research and support tool before, and had not used animation to represent research outputs to a wider audience. They are pleased with the creative output of the project and with the emerging relationship between themselves, Newcastle University, Avondale House, and Seven Stories. With an estimated 125 000 to 208 000 service veterans living in the North East all of whom have a range of different experiences and with many of whom being supported by a range of statutory and non-statutory organisations, it is important to find out how veterans see themselves reflected in this significant example of contemporary culture and to listen to what their view of these portrayals in children's fiction tell us (and them) about their life as military personnel and their transition back to civilian life.

The Engagement team at Seven Stories were involved in all of the workshops, and have reflected listening to veteran's observations about how their profession and military experiences are portrayed in these books has changed the way, the Engagement team works with other groups using these and other titles. As a result of the project, Seven Stories has engaged with a different audience none of whom had ever visited the centre before despite many of them being fathers. All the veterans have been given 'golden ticket' passes to Seven Stories for the summer holidays and Seven Stories hopes that they will become regular visitors. To continue the reach of this project, the animation will be distributed to other agencies and organisations concerned with the support of service veterans, and Forward Assist will be co-delivering joint papers and presentations at academic and practice based conferences.

This project gave us a chance to understand if and how this example of popular, mainstream culture might help individuals to 'thrive' or indeed to form barriers to them 'thriving'. Dr Helen Limon



<http://www.thebookseller.com/blogs/illustrated-soldier-and-book-hack-316530>



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Who Do We Think We Are?

Exploring Identity, Place and Belonging in North East England

Dr Rhiannon Mason, Dr Areti Galani, Dr Katherine Lloyd, (Media, Culture and Heritage, School of Arts and Culture) and Kylea Little (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums)

This project is in partnership with Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and 'Destination Tyneside', Discovery Museum, a new display about migration in Tyneside. It investigates the dialogic potential of museums to address issues of migration, identity and belonging in North East. The 'dialogic museum' refers to the idea that museums are shifting from being didactic towards being spaces where co-production of meaning and learning is recognised and encouraged. Specifically, the project explores what drives visitors' identification (or lack of identification) with displays that aim to reframe North East identity in 'inclusive' terms.



This research has worked with different audience groups and is evaluating how individuals' background (such as age, ethnicity, length of time - or family connections - in North East, 1st/2nd generation migration experience) affects individuals' responses to the themes addressed in Destination Tyneside. Building on existing research around museums and migration in the European context undertaken by Mason, Whitehead, Eckersley and Lloyd, as well as museological research into the use of museums/heritage as dialogic spaces (including work by Lloyd and Galani), this project works with both visitors and non-visitors (identified via the museum's outreach team) to examine the question 'who do we think we are?'. The project also aims to help the museum understand the impact of the displays in Destination Tyneside on visitor attitudes.

In the field of museum studies much visitor research relies solely on post-visit surveys within the gallery space. Little is therefore known of what visitors think about a particular issue, such as migration, before they visit. It is therefore difficult to assess what the impact of the museum visit has been on people's attitudes to a given topic. The project's methodology has been developed to address this blind-spot and in order to allow us to gain a better sense of visitors' 'entrance narratives' i.e. the ideas and experiences that shape their response to museum displays. The methodology developed has proven to be extremely useful for gaining a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and how these relate to the gallery. Both the participants and the curator have been very enthusiastic about the research experience. Short vox-pops have been filmed with all participants and these will be made available to the museum for its collection. Additionally, we have now confirmed with the curator that one short composite film will be included in the 'My Tyneside' AV installation in Destination Tyneside on a permanent basis. There are plans to disseminate this work through academic publications and conferences, and to build upon it in future projects. By working with the historic material within Destination Tyneside, participants had the opportunity to examine the changes within contemporary communities and to situate these within both their personal histories and wider historical context. Through testing the extent to which dialogism, empathy and attitudinal change are possible in a public museum, a key output of the project is a better understanding of the way in which the Discovery Museum and the wider heritage sector can achieve their own social justice aims by tackling issues of migration, identity and citizenship through public participation.

X Roads Platform: digital storytelling and community-led filmmaking workshop

Dr Tina Gharavi, School of English Literature, Language & Linguistics, Advisory Group: Dr. Ian Loader, Criminology, Oxford University Professor Barry Sanders, Pitzer College, Diana Patton, Newcastle University, Rowena Goldman, BBC, Emma Stone, Joseph Rowntree. Technology Providers: WeVideo. Community Engagement Partners: Bridge + Tunnel Voices, NACRO (Newcastle office). Lead Arts Organisation: Bridge + Tunnel Production

This is a practice-based research project combining digital storytelling and community-led filmmaking workshops. The pilot-phase community project involved a series of 10 self-contained workshops where PI Tina Gharavi worked with a focus groups of ten young people, aged 15-19, at risk-of-offending or who have experienced the prisons system. Focus-group participants were identified by project partner NACRO, national crime reduction charity and media charity Bridge + Tunnel Voices.



Utilising a prototype of an interactive digital storytelling platform, the project explored how young people respond to and engage with filmic material of a social issue focus, which was accessible through the platform. A series of media production training sessions were held to ensure the technological tool was accessible by all group members. Participants were encouraged to produce original content inspired by the material shown to them, as the project aimed to capture the creative agency demonstrated by participants as well as the act of empowerment and democratic participation through creative expression.

“The Change the Story project has enabled NACRO to provide it’s learners with an opportunity to express their story in a way that they can relate and that is relevant to their peers. Young people feel empowered by the opportunity and feel it is giving them a voice. Thank you!” - Chris Homans (Youth Manager, NACRO)

The community engagement work, funded by Newcastle University Institute for Social Renewal was completed with great success as it managed to accomplish key three objectives: a) train young learners who are restricted by formal education in filmmaking production, allowing them to produce short films and engage in discussions and film screenings; b) test and provide a teaching model that empowers beneficiaries by allowing them to share their stories through filmmaking and feel empowered and proud of their own achievements; c) exemplify the power of film and digital tools in communicating unheard and often neglected social issues and demonstrate its power in raising awareness and allowing social excluded groups to voice their opinions.

This project allowed Dr Tina Gharavi to work with a hard-to-reach community group and to test and evaluate the role of digital technologies and creative production, in facilitating participation and accomplishing self-empowerment. All project participants exemplified significant changes in mental and social well-being, recognised their talents, exemplified ownership of their work, and worked both as part of a team but also on their own initiative. Furthermore, this project has succeeded in involving young people in leadership, decision-making and social digital storytelling, allowing them to defend their opinions. It has also explored the impact of digital storytelling and the way it can serve as an arena for young individual to express, often publicly dismissed stories about themselves and their lives.

“My entire life has gained meaning now... it gave me a future to go for”

Tony, 17, project participant



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