Digital Butterflies of the Backstreets: Participatory Art and the Digital Divide

Volume 2 of 2 (Documentation)

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Abstract

Through this practice-based research I interrogate the terms community art, activism, social and digital media, as well as community and place. It is an investigation into both theoretical and practical aspects of community art practice and its connection to national and local policies on community, arts and digital media. It considers the increasing role digital technology and social media have in communities and community organisations, in particular under the guise of austerity, and how community organisations (do not) use social media and digital technology to encourage participation. It considers my position and role as an artist, curator and resident within the community that I live in and how, through becoming active and engaged with the place, I can develop a strategy for sustainable and long-term social engagement.

This practice based Ph.D. takes as a starting point the stalled housing regeneration, due to the halting of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, in the community where I live. The research builds upon my experience of working as an artist, curator and arts educator since the turn of the millennium where, under consecutive governments have seen prioritise the purpose of contemporary art and its educational use as either to effect social change (New Labour) or its economic value (current coalition government). Through the creation of a series of participatory and digital engagement events and workshops the research interrogates and considers the connections and conflict between the ‘physical’ (public space) and the digital and supposedly ‘open’ (the online). The research will be of use to those who feel an increasing and urgent need to engage with their own community as practitioners as well as community members.
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Boarded up houses, Saltwell Road, Gateshead; February 2011
Land where boarded housing was, Saltwell Road, October 2011
Kelvin Grove, Dunmuir Grove and Westminster Street, October 2011
Saltwell Road Logos
What community events would you like to see taking place in Saltwell?

What spaces and places would you like to see used more and how?

What do you want to know about the place we live?

How can we make Saltwell a better place to live, work and play?

What skills and knowledge can you bring to Saltwell?

The Saltwell Road Project (SRP) has been created for the people of Saltwell. SRP would like to know what events you would like to see happening in the area and what changes you would like to make. SRP wants to support and work with you to develop creative ideas in the community of Saltwell and make changes to create a better place to live, work and play.

If you are interested in knowing more you can contact us and find out more at:

Email: thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com
Blog: http://thesaltwellroadproject.wordpress.com/
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/SaltwellRoadProject
Twitter: @SaltwellRdProj
How would you use the space?

Posted on March 21, 2012

To the west of Saltwell Road next to the main railway line to the north is three large football pitch sized spaces where housing used to be.

This space is to be built on with new family housing in the near future.

What would you do with the space in the meantime before the housing is built? What can it be used for? Community projects? Sport or cultural events? What would you recommend?

How do you use the site now? What do you do on it? If you don’t, what stops you?

What would you like to see in the community?

We would like to hear your ideas and thoughts on how these spaces can be used temporarily, maybe a one off event or short term project. Through developing short term projects what long term ideas can be brought to the area of Saltwell for the benefit of the community? What do you feel is missing from the area and how can we, as residents, improve the place where we live?
Publicising the project locally
Map of Saltwell Community Voting box locations and dates

- Bensham Grove Community Centre
  - 27 June - 6 July 2012

- Bensham & Saltwell Community Festival
  - 24 June 2012, 12-4pm

- St Chad's Community Project
  - 8-31 August 2012

- Saltwell Road Post Office
  - 25 July - 4 August 2012

- Dominic's Cafe
  - 10 - 21 July 2012

- Saltwell Community Voting Box
**BASE Newsletter, Issue 2, Summer 2012**

**‘Coming soon – The ‘Bespoke Machine’, BASE, Issue 2, Summer 2012**

**BENSHAM and SALTWELL COMMUNITY FESTIVAL GETS GREEN LIGHT**

Everyone is welcome at this year’s Bensham and Saltwell Community Festival. There will be many attractions, including much food, face painting and much more. If we get the same weather forecast as last year’s festival, it would be wise to take precautions against strong sunshine!

**Bensham and Saltwell Community Festival**

**Premier League Reading Stars’ Project Comes to Gateshead**

Premier League Reading Stars is a project designed to attract children into reading through the love of football. Proving that reading is fun and is an activity that some of the most prominent footballers enjoy.

Gateshead Central Library has formed a squad with Brightline Avenue Primary School; the group meet weekly and have made fantastic progress and had great fun! Each Premier League Club nominates a player to be a Reading Star.

St James’ United’s Reading Star is den.

**Central Library Garden – Grow with Us!**

Do you enjoy gardening? Have you some free time? Can you help?

The Friends of Gateshead Central Library have received an award from the Councillors of the Saltwell Ward to help develop and maintain a community garden at the rear of the Central Library.

The grant will enable the Friends to arrange a series of gardening talks and events to encourage local residents to grow their own fruit, vegetables and flowers.

**NEWCASTLE**

Some very good friendships with the areas and the users who have attended, are so many different stories of success I have been observed during my experience. One concerned a young man recovering from a stroke (learning how to regain the use of his left leg of his body). He is now able to walk again, thanks to the specially designed equipment, and is able to ride a bike.

The Burn Activity Centre is committed to adding its already amazing fleet of cycle hire services to help raise funds. We have organised one mile cycle ride which we hope you can participate in, over the course week, starting Monday 11th of June.

The Burn Activity Centre was inspired by the wonderful people who attend the drop in sessions. I would like to recommend this to anyone who might be interested or who are looking to volunteer.

**COMING SOON – THE ‘BESPOKE MACHINE’**

Coming soon to Saltwell. Look out for ‘Bespoke’, the digital voting system that will be placed in prominent locations in the area through Summer 2012. ‘Bespoke’ will provide residents with a ‘voice’ in local matters where you can ask questions of the community and get answers back. If you want to ask a question or just want more information please contact Ben on 07910 694714 or thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com

**Play Day Returns**

Play Day – featuring free games and activities for children and young people of all ages – will return to Saltwell Park on Wednesday, 1st August.

LITR, 21 Liddell Terrace, Bensham, GATESHEAD, Tyne and Wear. NE8 1YN
Saltwell Road Post Office, 25 July – 4 August 2012
St Chads Community Project, 8 - 31 August 2012
Saltwell Community Voting Box results poster

What event would you most like to see taking place in Saltwell?

- Regular film showings: 24%
- Music, film and regular gigs: 26%
- Community art projects in public spaces: 21%
- Place for local people to meet and discuss local issues: 18%
- Local website for the community to talk to each other: 11%

What should happen on the grass areas until the new housing is built?

- Weekly or monthly food & craft market: 34%
- Music, film and art events: 32%
- Allotments for local people: 7%
- Sports area for young people: 6%
- Nothing, just tidy it up: 20%

What online support would you like to see available for families?

- A chat room for families to talk and support each other: 53%
- Text system for local support and information: 20%
- Social media (e.g. Facebook) to find out about local events: 13%
- Use of smartphone apps to find out about local events: 7%
- Support in the creation of a web page for families: 7%

What would you like to see in your local area for young families?

- More ‘how to cook cheaply’ support and advice: 21%
- New outdoor play and activity space: 17%
- Low-cost day trips away: 10%
- An online ‘what’s on in your local area’ advice: 28%
- More arts & crafts activities: 24%

What would **YOU** like to see happen in Bensham & Saltwell?

Tel: 07910 654714, Email: thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com
Blog: http://thesaltwellroadproject.wordpress.com/
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/SaltwellRoadProject
Twitter: @SaltwellRdProj
Saltwell Community Voting Box

Through summer 2012 the Saltwell Community Voting Box was located in various places around Saltwell. Locations included Benham Grove Community Centre, Dominica’s Café, Saltwell Road Post Office and St Chad’s Community Project. Initiated by the Saltwell Road Project (SRP), the box was placed in each location for a few weeks at a time with a new question put on it every few days. The questions came from the community itself, so people could ask other community members and find out their thoughts on subjects that they felt were relevant to the community. Questions included:

1. What event would you most like to see taking place in Saltwell?
2. What should happen on the grass areas until the new housing is built?
3. What would you like to see in your local area for young families?
4. What online support would you like to see available locally for young families?

A good number of local people placed their votes concerning what they would like to see in Saltwell. Possible included regular music, film and art events, regular film showings, allotments for local people, a local website for the community to talk to each other, and the use of social media to advertise local events.

What happens now? SRP wants to work with the community to make some of these events happen. SRP is already working with a local graphic designer to create an online community hub but would like you to get involved too and make some of these events happen. Maybe you have another idea you would like to suggest. Do know someone who is already doing something similar and you think would like to work with us? If so please contact SRP on the below phone or email address and lets work together to make Saltwell a great place to live.

The Saltwell Road Project (SRP) was set up by local resident Ben Jones to find out what events and changes you would like to see happening in Saltwell. SRP wants to work with residents to develop creative ideas and make changes in the local community.

If you are interested in knowing more about The Saltwell Road Project you can read more and contact Ben on 07910 654714, or email him at thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com.
The Saltwell Road Project is currently working on a number of projects in Bensham & Saltwell and we are looking for residents to get involved.

"Bensham & Saltwell Grows..." is a 6-month cooking project working with professional chef Rob Stewart where residents are developing a series of cooking demonstrations and workshops. Participants help to decide what the next workshop will be about and cook along with the chef. These workshops and demonstrations are being recorded and viewable online for residents to act as a community cooking resource for people to follow and cook along with. Each demonstration takes place once a month on a Saturday at St Chad's Community Project, 1-3pm. If you want to get involved contact Ben on the below phone number or email.

"Bensham & Saltwell Grows..." is a food-growing project that aims to work with residents, community organisations, allotments and businesses to think about how we can use the spaces around Bensham & Saltwell. Inspired by Incredible Edible in Todmorden, West Yorkshire and which grows food in underused and derelict grass areas around the town, Bensham & Saltwell Grows... wants to work with groups and individuals to develop community spaces for growing food. If you want to get involved contact Ben on the below phone number or email.

Bensham Digital Community Cooking Kit
Are you interested in showing how great a cook you are? Would you like to share your recipes or show off your cooking skills? Are you interested in presenting short live cooking demonstrations online from your own kitchen? Residents would be able to watch you cook a family favourite or a special dish from their own homes and find out how to cook it themselves. All you need is a Wi-Fi connection in your house, cooking equipment, and be enthusiastic about cooking and presenting to other people. The Saltwell Road Project will supply everything else. If you are interested get in touch with Ben on the below phone number or email.

Ben Jones
Tel: 07910 654714
Email: thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com
Blog: thesaltwellroadproject.wordpress.com/
Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/BenshamandSaltwellCooking/
Vimeo: http://vimeo.com/benshamandsaltwellcooks
Twitter: @SaltwellRdProj
‘Bensham & Saltwell Cooks…’ Livestream drawing
Example poster for ‘Bensham & Saltwell Cooks…’

BENSHAM & SALTWELL COOKS...

FREE workshop. Cook along with professional chef Rob Stewart
St Chad’s Community Project
21 Liddell Terrace Bensham, Gateshead, NE8 1YN
Saturday 3rd August
1-3pm
Find out how to make homemade pastry and what meals can be made with it

Creche provided. Please book places with St Chads

To find out more contact:

Ben: 07910 654714 or thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com
St Chad’s: 0191 4901032 or ltreception@stchadscommunityproject.org
‘Bensham & Saltwell Cooks…’ comments postcard
**Spiced butternut squash with cous-cous**

For the squash:
- 1 large squash, peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ⅛ tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- ⅛ tsp cayenne
- Salt and pepper

Method:
1) Preheat oven to 200°C.
2) Toss squash in with all the other ingredients on a baking tray.
3) Roast for around 45 minutes or until soft and starting to brown.

For the cous-cous:
- 500g cous cous
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 100g dried chopped fruit
- 2 red onions, sliced
- Rapeseed oil
- Zest and juice of a lemon
- One bunch coriander
- 1 tsp sugar

Method:
1) Put the cous cous, fruit, turmeric, cinnamon and stock cube in a bowl.
2) Boil 500g water and pour over the cous cous; cover and leave for five minutes.
3) Mix the onions with the sugar, pour over some boiled water and steep for ten minutes.
4) Drain the onions, pat dry and mix through the cous cous with the lemon zest and juice, 2 tbsp of rapeseed oil and a little salt and pepper.
5) Roughly chop the coriander and sprinkle on the top.

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**Dahl**

- 1 tbsp oil
- 100g diced onion
- 1 clove finely chopped garlic
- 1 tbsp finely chopped ginger
- 200g red lentils
- ⅔ ltr veg stock
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- 1 tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1 cardamom pod
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tsp salt

Method:
1) Soften the onion, garlic and ginger over a gentle heat.
2) Add the spices and cook for a further minute.
3) Add the lentils and tomato puree followed by the veg stock.
4) Bring to the boil then allow to simmer until the lentils are soft.
5) Season to taste and correct the consistency.

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**Baba Ganoush**

- 2 aubergines, peeled and chopped
- Rapeseed oil
- ⅛ tsp turmeric
- ⅛ tsp coriander
- ⅛ red onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Fresh coriander

Method:
1) Heat some oil in a pan then add the aubergine, onion and the spices.
2) Cook until softened then add the garlic and cook for a couple more minutes.
3) Blend to form a chunky dip and serve with some chopped coriander on top.

All ingredients were bought locally. To find out where go to the ‘Saltwell Road Project’ website or use the ‘QR code’ to the right to get online using your mobile phone.
Bensham & Saltwell Cooks... pastry

Saturday, 3 August, 2013 - 14:00 to 16:00

Bensham & Saltwell

Cooks...

Facebook group

The next Bensham & Saltwell Cooks event takes place Saturday 3rd August, 1-3pm at St Chad's Community Project. This workshop is making home made pastry from scratch. Bring your own ingredients if you want too. (found on the link below) If you can't make the date you can follow us on Twitter (@SaltwellRdPro) for updates during the workshop and watch videos of previous workshops on the blog.

http://thesaltwellroadproject.wordpress.com/2013/07/29/bensham-saltwell-cooks-pastry/

Short crust pastry
Ingredients:
- 250g plain flour
- 125g butter (cold)
- 1 tsp salt

Method:
1. Mix the flour and butter together in a bowl with your fingers.
2. Add enough cold water to bind the mix.

Rough puff pastry
Ingredients:
- 250g plain flour
- 25g salt
- 225g butter

Method:
1. Mix the flour and water in a bowl. Add the butter into lumps and rub roughly into the flour.
2. Add the salt and mix well.
3. Roll out the mixture to a thin sheet and roll up.
4. Roll up and repeat 3 times before using.

Bensham & Saltwell Cooks... pastry
The next Bensham & Saltwell Cooks... event takes place on Saturday 3 August, 1-3pm at St Chad's Community Project where we will be making pastry from scratch and a number of dishes to use it with...

THESALTWELLROADPROJECT.WORDPRESS.COM

Like · Comment · Share

Rachael Robson likes this. · Seen by 6

Write a comment...
‘Bensham & Saltwell Cooks…’ Workshop
‘Bensham & Saltwell Cooks…’ filled in postcards
Bensham & Saltwell Cooks...
unfamiliar vegetables, spices and pulses

Bensham & Saltwell Cooks... unfamiliar vegetables, spices and pulses from Ben Jones on Vimeo.

Spiced butternut squash with cass-cass

For the spicy:
1. Mince garlic, ginger and put into chilli
2. Heat some oil
3. Add curry
4. Add spices
5. Add onions

Method
1. Boil the squash
2. Add salt and pepper
3. Add the spices
4. Add the garlic
5. Serve hot
Screenshot from Saltwell Road project Twitter
Local Makers event, Shipley Gallery, 23 March 2013

St Chads Community Project drop in, 20 February 2013
Screenshot of ‘Bensham & Saltwell Grows…’ land map
‘Bensham & Saltwell Grows…’ postcard

Bensham Community Allotments
Windmill Hills Centre, Chester Place, Bensham, NE8 1QB
the former nursery school premises on the Windmill Hills School site
Saturday 7th September 2013, 1-4pm

Celebrate community allotments including:
- Watch and eat food cooked by a professional chef from ingredients picked from The 4C’s allotment
- Planter building. Bring along a container and learn how to turn it into a planter
- Get your community project details on the Bensham community digital map
- Swap or donate vegetables, seeds and growing ideas
- Find out how you can volunteer at local community allotments and pick your own food that you help grow
- Family activities including African Drumming

Please contact The 4C’s or The Saltwell Road Project to book a place. Families very welcome.
Please book by Friday 6th September
The 4C’s ‘the4Cne@gmail.com’ or 079 0338 9207
SRP ‘thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com’ or 07910 654714

‘Bensham & Saltwell Grows…’ comments postcard

BENSHAM & SALTWELL GROWS...
‘Bensham & Saltwell Grows…’ workshops (photos: The4Cs)
Building Bridges (Community Food Project)
Windmill Hills Centre, Chester Place, Bensham, NE8 3QZ
the former nursery school on the Windmill Hills School site

You are invited to a series of FREE cooking and growing events and workshops for Bensham people at the Windmill Hills Centre.

Saturday 30 November 11am - 1pm
Willow sculpting and other creative ways to grow with The 4Cs

Saturday 7 December 10am - 12 noon
‘How to cook a stress free Christmas dinner’ followed by a cooking Q&A with professional chef Rob Stewart

Saturday 14 December 11am - 1pm
Planting evergreens and composting session ready for spring with The 4Cs

Funded by Gateshead Council Local Community Fund

Come along to find out how to get involved in future cooking and growing events at Windmill Hills and around Bensham. All events family friendly. Young people and children are very welcome. You can contact The Saltwell Road Project at ‘thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com’ or 07910 654714

If you want to get involved with the Building Bridges cooking and growing project around Bensham please write your contact details below and bring to one of the events or drop off at the Windmill Hills Centre

Address: ________________________________

________________________

Phone: ________________________________

Email: ________________________________

If you want to get in touch you can email us at, ‘thesaltwellroadproject@gmail.com’ or ring us on 07910 654714

BUILDING BRIDGES (Community Food Project)

Funded by Gateshead Council Local Community Fund
Building Bridges workshops
Reduction
‘Reduction’, Paul Buchanan and Ben Jones, June 2012
‘A Place To Be, A Place To Grow’
‘A Place To Be, A Place To Grow’ posters

arts and crafts workshops, wildlife and wild growing, community garden, farmers market, DIY and practical skills licence to sell goods, children’s provision and interactive area, bee keeping, resting spaces throughout, MUGA pitch, think spots, social groups for events, pick your own days, raised beds all over, drop in and open days, regular community days, youth work, arts and crafts exhibitions, training, creating business opportunities, healthy eating, gardening, cooking, baking clubs, letting spaces for festivals, green spaces all year round, sport and play area, local businesses involved, volunteer opportunities, LETS Local Economic Trading Scheme, income generating scheme, recycling, local schools involved with healthy eating, growing and cooking, support schools to manage their gardens all year round, shed for garden and social cup of tea, growing herbs and vegetables, children’s play area with natural environment theme, bread oven with bread baking workshops, wild area with pond and flowers, community allotments, learning community - business community charity organisation managing the space, learning site affiliated with local colleges, creating a world garden, so local community can work together, orchard, foraging, quiet space with seats, benches and covered area, windmill, raised beds, polytunnel, access from Coatsworth Road to connect to local businesses and the community, secure creche, pizza oven, social area.

THE WINDMILL HILLS CENTRE

my space my place equal access to all throughout acceptance, volunteers represent community, a social space opening up, inviting a safe place all can contribute new opportunities represents the community for the public, accessible for all, changing local community, all welcome, community involved fully.

THE WINDMILL HILLS CENTRE

walk through and get involved, a green area for air quality, local community to work together, custodians not users, sense of belonging, intergenerational, multicultural aspects and cohesion, good access to transport links, more open spaces to be used for the community, be the change you would like to see.

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