

RSA

Action and Research Centre



Artwork by Chris Gylee

RSA Wiltshire: Spring 2014

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Welcome. This is the first newsletter from RSA Wiltshire. We've been asked by Wiltshire Council to be an independent learning partner. Our role is to help join up people, campuses and communities to create places that people feel good to be a part of. Here are some of the things we've been doing. We hope that these newsletters encourage you to get involved.

Paul Buddery
Director, RSA 2020 Public Services

What are community campuses?



Artwork by Joseph Holders

Campuses are a new way for communities and councils to work together. New or refurbished buildings are being planned that will bring together a range of community services under one roof, or bring them together on connected sites. Designs are community-led.

Campuses should enable local people to have more say over their services, inspire them to feel more ownership over what goes on in their areas, and support them to be more resourceful in meeting their needs. Corsham's Campus - called Springfield – will be the first to open fully towards the end of 2014, but campuses are on the way for every Community Area in Wiltshire.

Campuses as connectors



Artwork by Claire Selman

Changes to public services often go wrong because they're designed from the top down. Services sit awkwardly on top of our lives and don't relate to how we actually live and solve problems together. Wiltshire campuses are being designed from the bottom up by Community Operations Boards (COBs) – local volunteers and councillors who are in touch with the support networks that people value and want to strengthen.

Places are complicated, though, so understanding their networks is hard. It's important to talk to people and map the connections. In Corsham, the RSA was able to help the Community Operations Board with qualitative interviews and geo-tagging covering around 400 groups.

If you would like to find out more about the data or report, contact paul.buddery@rsa.org.uk

Creative Gatherings

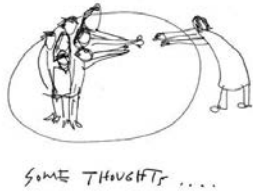


Artwork by Sarah Godshill

Creativity can be a powerful way of bringing people together to make change happen. Wiltshire has a wealth of people who work within the cultural sector, but they haven't had networks to link strongly them with the campus programme. Creative Gatherings are now starting to provide that link. From across Wiltshire, people from established arts organisations, museums, community based projects and online projects have come together to explore how arts practitioners can be more civically active with and through Campuses.

For more information and future meeting dates, please see the [Facebook site](#) or contact natalie.remington.design@gmail.com

Common Knowledge



Artwork by Sarah Godshill

Community Operations Boards (COBs) are engaging with their communities to help local people shape campuses and services. It can be challenging. There isn't an expert formula for engagement that works everywhere. Places are different. People need time to build trust and networks, changing habits and expectations with creative approaches. This is what COBs have been doing, and a group of them are now coming together to reflect on highs and lows, and create a website for ideas and experiences that all the COBs, wherever they are in the process, will be able to tap into.

If you want to know more about the reflections of the Common Knowledge group, please contact atif.shafique@rsa.org.uk

In Common – festivals as civic spaces



Artwork by Chris Gylee

Wiltshire is home to some of the UK's biggest and quirkiest festivals. Often they're integral to local people's sense of place. What can they teach and share with Campuses so that people have more opportunities to come together, have a say and make a contribution to their local community? In partnership with the Womad Foundation and others, the RSA will be beginning an action research project over the summer to see how civic decision-making and festivals could be joined up in practice.

If you're interested and want to know more, contact Jocelyn@artsandsociety.co.uk

Pass it On – an arts commission



Even the best official statistics – and **Wiltshire has very good ones** – can only say so much about what it's like to live or work in a place and feel part of it. The Pass it On project will capture some of this lived experience. Wiltshire has a thriving community of walkers and walking groups that help people to meet, keep fit and explore the countryside. Pass it On will join it up with service providers, artists and residents to walk and 'map' the places that mean most to local people, creating a shared understanding of how places work and how campuses can help them work better in the future.

For details, please contact the artist/producer Dominic Campbell at dmnccmpbll@gmail.com

From co-location to co-design



Councils and other public services are keen to use buildings efficiently to make services accessible and affordable. Putting services under the same roof as co-located 'one-stop shops' often makes good sense. But in the long run, better community life and reduced pressure on public services will depend on people feeling in control of their lives and connected with other people.

Control and connection should therefore be part and parcel of designing – co-designing - new services and buildings. In March, the RSA ran a workshop with people from Wiltshire and elsewhere in the UK – from Wales to Kent - reviewing learning from the

campus programme, and considering what helps and hinders genuine co-design.

For details of the discussions and the scoping paper produced to support it, please contact atif.shafique@rsa.org.uk

Showing the journey



Campuses are attempting something new - bringing the Council, its public sector partners and communities together to shape services and share accountability for them – so it's hard to have a detailed route map. The journey that can sometimes seem confusing for those involved, and off-putting for those outside it. A group of COB representatives are therefore working with a specialist in visual production and animation to explain what the COB planning journey is really like and open it up to more people.

For details about the project, please contact atif.shafique@rsa.org.uk

Connecting the RSA Fellowship & campuses



The RSA Fellowship is a network of people from a wide range of backgrounds, united by a desire to build a better society. They are inspired by innovative ideas and have a commitment to social progress. There are 27,000 RSA Fellows in more than 80 countries. Within the West of England there are 1,000 Fellows. We've set up a Skills Bank for Fellows who are interested in supporting the campus programme.

If you're a fellow and would like to be added to the Skills Bank, please contact lou.matter@rsa.org.uk

If you're from a campus and would like to access the Skills Bank, please contact paul.buddery@rsa.org.uk

If you're a fellow and would simply like to talk through what's happening in the programme and where you might be able to help, contact paul.buddery@rsa.org.uk

Campus headlines



Each newsletter will feature a brief update from one or two of the campuses, written by the chairs of the volunteer groups (COBs) leading their development. In this newsletter we hear from **Melksham**, chaired by Roy While.

Biggest achievements over the last six months: We ran an extensive roadshow in the Melksham Community Area, and worked in small project teams with user representatives to firm up requirements for the space. In December our Area Board 'signed off' the project and the planning application has been submitted.

Coming up in the next six months: We're currently having a

short break, which will be followed by the tender process and – hopefully – a start on construction of the first phase. We want to develop an art strategy for the campus.

RSA Wiltshire contacts

Paul Buddery, Director, RSA 2020 Public Services
paul.buddery@rsa.org.uk 020 7451 6871

Atif Shafique, Research Assistant, RSA 2020 Public Services
atif.shafique@rsa.org.uk 020 7451 6936

Jocelyn Cunningham, Director Arts and Society, Associate & Consultant RSA
Jocelyn@artsandsociety.co.uk

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Also [#creativegatheringswiltshire](#) and [#passitonwiltshire](#)

To find out more about the artwork used in this newsletter, contact jocelyn@artsandsociety.co.uk

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