UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

This paper reviews the character and achievements of three cycles of a particular university-community engagement programme,   which was run at the University of Brighton in the years 2010   2012 inclusive.

                   was operated by CUPP (the Community University Partnership Programme), the community engagement unit of the University. CUPP has been in place since 2003 and has since then developed and overseen a very wide range of types of community engagement, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.   was developed as a variant of tried and tested models and introduced in 2010 in order to give particular emphasis to working with the

thirty non-university attendees) and a health education training session (

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The structure of the student involvement in msfmunity with

which included student research as par

Just under half the projects, however, produced no academic research output. The reasons for this are varied.

Three projects (and   had limited involvement from university staff and were all led by community members. In two cases the end of project reports were (untypically) written entirely by community partners and in another no end of project report was submitted. This suggests that there was probably no accumulation of data by university participants which could have formed the basis for academic publication.

One project (3 5   5 7 3 4 3   9 9   ]   4 9   3   5   4   8 7 6   [9 5

Brighton then is a university very much physically intertwined with a range of diverse residential and commercial communities. On every campus practical issues of getting on with the neighbours on big issues and small ones are therefore the stuff of daily life. The   programme was developed for a university with that particular characteristic.

In practice the individual projects treated the idea of physical proximity in one of two ways.

For fifteen (78%) of the projects the activity either centred on or included very specific physical locations as their main places of intervention.

The   and   projects focused on a small number of streets in areas within a mile of one of the Moulsecoomb campus, while
considered the viability of a community farm on land to the north east of that campus. The
is less than a mile from the Grand Parade campus as is Patching Lodge where   was based, while   focused on a commemorative event at the Royal Pavilion Gardens, about a hundred metres away.

The Falmer campus is directly bordered by both the AMEX stadium (and the Falmer Academy school, the location of the Bridge Community Centre
and 2s chool, the I-5(a)5(l)-3(lFo)6(b)5(d4t Or28ro)T BT 1Rea-3(B 373l63 1 186. 183.74 10 around three miles from the new campus.

was unusual in working across two urban areas, partnering with Stroke Clubs in Hastings and Brighton and Hove (two), while   was sited at a Hastings care home.

In three other cases the projects brought members of the community into the university itself, to university- sited vegetable and flower gardens (to events at the Grand Parade campus (and to a football festival and symposium on the Eastbourne campus (

The remaining projects took a wider geographic remit.   /   5   6

funded project ? and what other legacies of the project are there which create community benefit and/or positive university/community relationships.

In reviewing these nineteen projects, there seem to be five categories of answer to these questions: continuation or continuing direct impact of the project activity itself; continuing impact of the

ceased) of the project activity; indirect legacies of the project relationship; and dormant relationships, capable of revival.

Firstly there are six cases where the work of the project continues to have a very direct positive value for the community partners. These include: , where the original project activity has been replicated in 2013-4 and 2014-15 and is planned to continue in 2015-16 resulting in continuing benefit to the well-being of the residents of Patching Lodge: , where the two gardening groups and related activity have continued uninterrupted since 2010; and   where the new form of design brief for final year 3- D degree students has continued to be adopted by about 50% of the students in 2013-14 and 2014-15 resulting in the creation of designs and objects of value to a wide range of local organisations.

                               created a different kind of benefit as the work of the project highlighted that if the proposed interventions in the energy management of the building were implemented savings in the region of £2,728 and £3,409 per year would be achievable. Subsequent

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result of the   project Age Concern implemented a d

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From the university perspective there is one further aspect of project legacy which can be identified.

Of the nineteen completed projects thirteen (68%) showed a benefit for the future design/delivery

funding.

This benefit can be divided into two main kinds: the replication of active student involvement in subsequent years; and the use of the knowledge gained from the projects as course content for a wider student body.

First in six cases (32%) the student project activity (or something closely related) was repeated in subsequent years and all but one of these is still continuing at the time of writing (2015)

has sustained its activity annually since 2010 with a total of over 110 Occupational Therapy students and around twenty Hospitality students involved over that period. has generated the inclusion (from 2013) of a new optional Community Engagement module on the pre-registration nursing degree. This is being taken by about 20% of the students and includes student practical engagement in such settings as hospices and the Salvation Army (ie the not for profit sector which has links with or impact on health and social care in the community).

has continued its annual summer football festival in all years since 2012 and a five year celebration is planned for 2016 which will again include a form of symposium. has repeated the original project activity at Patching Lodge in 2013-4 and 2014-5 and is planning to continue into the future   possibly replacing the undergraduates with Master students, while has retained the focus on localism and partnership as one option for the design brief for final year projects; about 50% of the students select this option.

In the case of   the project was repeated successfully in 2012-13 with seven undergraduates; however a change of university role for the academic leader resulted in the non-continuation of the activity beyond that year.

Secondly in twelve cases (63%) the original projects led to forms of curriculum change which have affected a much wider body of students than those actually involved in the project activity itself.

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The final evaluation report of

The university leaders of   have reported noticing that since 2012 there has been an increase in the prominence of issues of sexuality and gender identity within the sport courses (eg an increased number of dissertations dealing with such issues). They believe that this reflects both national political developments and a local increase in awareness.

The   project has contributed to the development of three new degree courses   an MA in Creative Writing (commenced 2014-15) and two new undergraduate degrees in English Literature and Creative Writing and English Language and Creative Writing with a first intake in 2016-17.

In other cases this has been a matter of developing new modules or enhancing the content of existing modules.

evolved. These are: its subject range; the complexity of the diverse roles and identities of the participants; and the patterns of origin of the projects.

The selection process for   projects did not set out to ensure any particular balance of involvement across the different schools and faculties of the university. Nevertheless the spread of academic disciplines deployed across the nineteen projects analysed here has been extremely wide.

In total academic staff and /or students from seventeen different academic disciplines or professional subjects were represented. The largest grouping here (eight), as might be anticipated, is that of the social sciences, with a predominance of applied subjects. These comprised: Human Geography; Town Planning; Environmental Studies; Hospitality; Sports Studies; Business Studies; Education; and Applied Social Sciences.   Two design disciplines were represented   Architecture and 3-D Design   and also two humanities disciplines   History and English Literature.

The greatest concentration of disciplinary involvement was in the health professions area where Occupational Therapy figured in three projects and Nursing in two. Finally three applied science disciplines were involved   Sport Science, Land-based studies and Building Surveying.

There is no obvious explanation for the breadth of this disciplinary involvement. One possibility is that there were only a limited number of academic staff across the university with an interest in this type of community engagement work and they are spread thinly across the academic schools. However what the breadth does illustrate are the wide range of interests and needs which individual academics and community groups will bring forward for consideration and the diversity of academic subjects which can then be involved in work of this kind.

The initial proposition of university-community engagement tends to be binary. It is assumed that we are concerned with two separate entities that need to be brought into relationship   entities which, by implication, have sufficient differences in nature (aims, purposes, normative assumptions, rules) so as to require a process of understanding and negotiation in order to work together.

This is an entirely reasonable starting point. However the experience of the programme suggests a rather more complex picture.

First, even just within the university, the projects delivered a number of different roles for students, relating mostly to where the student activity was placed along the spectrum from at one end being part of a compulsory course curriculum (as In   to general volunteering without any connection to any course (as in   or   Equally staff roles varied in relationship to the degrees of autonomy which students were allowed and also in relation to the balance of project leadership between university staff and community partners.

More complicated however were situations where individuals were involved simultaneously on both sides of the partnership   that is as both members of the university and members of the community being partnered with. This took two main forms.

Given the emphasis of the programme on physical proximity to the university campuses and the patterns of housing in the three coastal towns it is not surprising that in about a third of the projects university members involved were also local residents of the streets and districts which were the focus of the projects. Students were resident in the   and   districts of Brighton. Students involved in   used local organisations close to where they lived (the neighbouring pub, a knitting club which met in a local shop) as their partners.
was inspired by university staff and students already involved in community based organisations promoting local food su

brings together individuals and groups with different interests and skills but which also enables individuals to bring together their own separate roles and identities into a new unity.

As with most successful university-community engagement activity the   projects did not emerge out of thin air but were mostly built on already existing relationships or activity.

In seven cases this was essentially a matter of an existing university-based activity being extended or developed into a new context.   built on current Occupational Therapy
                              y   o   )
bring community partners into the university.   in Brighton also developed from
                              y   o   able Development Co-ordination Unit and
Environmental Action Network.   used the experience of the long standing international Football for Peace community engagement project to develop a new community intervention.   took already developed practice in the teaching of creative writing and sought to place it in a community context.   extended an existing partnership between the university and Albion in the Community into a broader community setting and   re-positioned a current design brief for students to require local community engagement. Finally
about issues of identity and loneliness in LGBT older people.

In a further six cases the nature of the projects was driven more directly by community partners and by their perception of community need.   was generated from an initial
                       y   =   t already existing in Brighton. The
                Society became aware of the project opportunity from CUPP publicity and approached a member of the University who was a member of the city Community Voluntary Sector Forum to create the required partnership. The   project idea was developed by a member of Food Matters , a local non-profit organisation, who approached a member of the university with whom she had previously been involved in a similar project to make a joint proposal.
                     was initially proposed by a representative of Bingo and Beyond who had been informed of the opportunity at a CUPP community meeting. Finally (as already noted above) In two cases,   and   the community proposer was also a member of university staff.

Other cases were less clear-cut as to origins. The proposal for
                was strongly led by the community partner but its origins can be traced back to an approach from CUPP to seek his involvement. The   proposal was strongly led by a university colleague but was formed out of her perception of community need from the perspective of also being a local resident.   built on existing links between university staff and the community proposer but also deliberately added a new university research partner to broaden the scope of the project.   was somewhat different in taking an already fully formed community project and adding university capacity to increase its effectiveness.

While it is hard to draw any clear- cut conclusions from this diverse picture there are a few observations which may be made. <u>On the whole</u> those projects which derived from existing

4. In developing the experience of neighbourliness the nature of the immediate surrounding locality should be carefully considered.

5. Post-project relationship management with community partners (whether by project participants or by a specialist unit) should be built into the project plan.

6. The great potential for long term curriculum benefit should be recognised and built into projects from the outset.

7. The recognition that a very wide range of academic and professional subjects are suitable for community engagement activity should be widely communicated.

8. The diverse roles and identities of individuals likely to be part of such projects should be recognised as a great strength and benefit of this area of activity.

9. The continuing need to build, sustain and refresh both internal and external networks of potential participants and partners should be kept in mind.

10. Any such programme of activity should expect and encourage continual invention and enterprise. While summaries of existing best practice will always be of great help they should not be used to deter the support of creative experiment and innovation.

    For no matter how much we can learn from experience University-community engagement is, for the foreseeable future, always likely to involve risk taking, imagination and long term strategic vision.

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aimed to address practical issues in history-making, in commemoration, and in local cultural politics as these arose in the design and delivery of a specific commemorative event connected with the Indian Gateway in Brighton Pavilion Gardens

aimed to develop green spaces on the Eastbourne campus for ongoing seasonal food cultivation, leisure gardening and recreational purposes   to be used in partnership by local residents, community groups and members of the University.

sought to increase awareness of the benefits of and involvement with local food production, preparation and consumption among staff and students and neighbouring communities in Brighton.

aimed to develop a plan to improve the organisation and availability of information to underpin better community engagement in local planning and regeneration in Hastings and Rother. (http://www.communityplanning.net/Hastings/)

planned to deepen community cohesion in the Roundhill area of Brighton and

their views and needs and then sharing this information and resulting plans for action.

planned to bring together students and elderly residents of
a Brighton retirement village to share stories and then enable the adaptation of the material into
poetry and drama.

planned to find ways to enable reduction of the carbon footprint of
the Hanover Community Centre building.