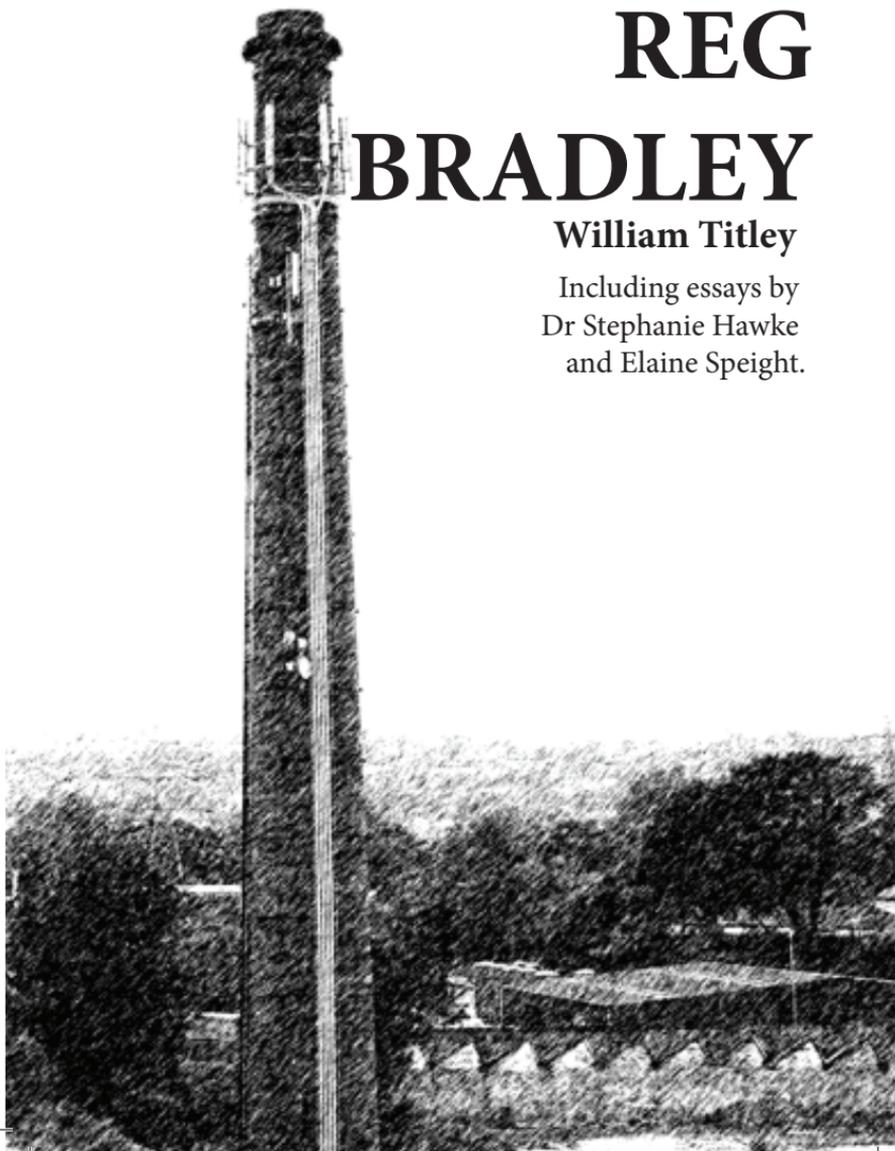


REG BRADLEY

William Titley

Including essays by
Dr Stephanie Hawke
and Elaine Speight.





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Introduction: William Titley

In 2008, I became the Lead Artist in residence for Pendle Borough Council in Bradley, Nelson. The Bradley Ward which sits in a designated deprived area of East Lancashire was part of the Housing Market Renewal programme. Many houses were already flattened and many streets were already boarded up, awaiting demolition.

I kept an online blog of my activities from 2008 to 2011 with the ultimate aim of engaging the community in aspects of consultation relating to the regeneration process. I have loved every minute of my engagement with the community and learned so much about the regeneration process. My practice has lured me onto dusty demolition sites salvaging timber and into sombre council chambers puzzling over the mechanics of legislation.

The book presents the entire blog and documents a blend of objective and subjective interpretations of each event as and when it happened.

As you will see in the entries, some things worked better than others and some things were just fun to do. Sometimes we painted while being consulted and sometimes we chatted to consultants on the phone while being video recorded.

The book is a celebration of the creative endeavour of all the participants involved and their achievements and also offers the opportunity to look critically at the methodology involved in socially engaged practice: allowing creative practitioners and commissioners to glean their own findings from the blog entries.

Whilst this project could not have happened without the enthusiasm and commitment of the community in Bradley and all the creative teams involved, special thanks must go to Judith Watmough (Pendle Borough Council) for her patience, persistence and understanding.

Also, not forgetting someone who was instrumental in initiating this project in 2008 and who is not represented in the blog and deserves thanks is Claire Tymon, formerly of Regenerate Pennine Lancs.

Note: Although I have included all of the blog entries, some data may have been omitted or amended to fit in with the format of the book.

Face to Face First: 12.11.08

After several meetings about my involvement (as an artist) in the public consultancy process, things are now settling down. With questions being developed for shopkeepers and young people about an area in Nelson, Lancashire: an area identified for major regeneration work over the coming months. We have to balance the questions towards information needed for the consultants and myself whilst allowing for conversational development by participants. In other words the list has to be an open one, to allow for changes: new questions or suggestions from the community.

We are planning to visit as many shops as possible next week and are using a creative approach involving digital video technology. Each documented interview will contribute to an interactive website for the Leeds Road area of Nelson.

This afternoon, I visited six shops who all agreed to be interviewed next Tues. A couple of them are clearly disappointed about consultancy strategies in the past and how they are often full of false promises. I have suggested they use this opportunity as a sounding board for their concerns and also as an opportunity to promote their business on the World Wide Web.



Its been a while coming... what with all the meetings and confusion, but at least I now feel like the project has really started.

Raining and cold: 17.11.08

I went to Nelson to collect more names from the shopkeepers on Leeds Road. We now have 10 who are keen to be video interviewed with most commenting on the lack of parking facilities for their customers. I circled a few times before finding a space on a side street. I also noted that all are independent traders, with some relatively new business ventures including a family who have converted the front of their house into business premises, to continue a career, spanning three generations.

Video shop: 18.11.08

Today I went along Leeds Road, from the Swapshop at the top of Reedyford Road as far as the last block of shops at the town centre end. I was accompanied by Kate from the consultancy firm Ecotec. We managed to video interview about 15 shop-keepers in conversation with Kate on their business phones in their shops, (Kate was outside on her mobile).



We started each interview with the opportunity to introduce themselves, their shop and what it has to

offer. We asked several questions about trading conditions: access, history, future plans etc. Each interview lasts about 5-6 mins and will be presented on the web in the new year, alongside the other data collected from the youth group: exploring youth space around Bradley.

Almost everyone demonstrated concern at the lack of parking facilities for their customers.

Others demonstrated dismay at the idea of 'another council initiative' and felt that little would be done about their concerns or issues. All of them showed signs of commitment to making their business work and were enthusiastic to take part in promoting their shop on a website.

Identifying a youth group 24.11.08

Met with Lynne, a community development worker to help identify a youth group to work on the Interactive Landscape stage of the project. She showed me around her base on Railway Street, I was introduced to Michael, Anand and Rob, who I've met before. She is already engaged with a group of young people in the Bradley area who have been attending Local Residents Association meetings in the area. It sounds like they are prime candidates for developing



into young ambassadors for the area and have shown an interest in taking part in this project. Initial engagement will consist of an introductory mapping workshop. We are hoping to have access to the school for this stage, which would be a great asset to the project.

Getting a workshop venue: 25.11.08

Lynne informs me that Mr O'sullivan, the headmaster from the local school has agreed to let us use the school for our mapping workshops. That is fantastic news and demonstrates how local people are supporting the project. We also have been granted access to the computer suite if we need it. That is a tremendous boost for the group and definitely something which will inform the future development of the project.

Spatial Stories: 2.12.08

Tonight we held a mapping workshop at the school. We were joined by six young men (11 to 17yrs). We were expecting four girls but they didnt show, maybe due to the 6 inches of snow outside. There were lots of boys playing on the streets enjoying the snowballs and snowmen. During the workshop, I got them to think about mapping out their territory from the school to Leeds Road, Scotland Road and



Barkerhouse Road.

In two groups, they attempted to remember as many objects as possible to include in their maps: shops, houses, roads, waste land, youth club, rivers etc. The two maps represent their immediate sense of place and are an indication of how well they know their area: where to get good fresh Samosa's, routes from the school to their homes etc. We agreed to meet on Sunday to explore their area on foot and using a camera to log the routes we take. The photos will form the basis of the Interactive Landscape presentation and will direct the groups future workshop themes e.g. we may need historical data regarding certain places (Old swimming baths). Overall, I am happy with the workshop, they were well behaved and they enjoyed learning about regeneration issues whilst developing their own sense of place by sharing their knowledge of the area.

Catch up with Kate: 6.12.08

Have arranged to meet with Kate (consultant from Leeds) before we take the young people on the Interactive Landscape walk/s. Due to Sunday train schedule, she will arrive quite early. I will try to get there around 11.30 to give us an hour to catch-up and prepare for the session.



Gathering Data: 7.12.08

The young people were already gathering to join us on the photographic journey around their patch. We set off on our journey from school to the youth club, then the site for the park and back to school again. What a brilliant turnout on such a bitter cold afternoon: seven young people. Some of the young people spoke about what they would like from an ideal youth centre, somewhere to play safely, sports facilities and games room.

As we walked, we bumped into several adult members of the community who gave us their opinions regarding the positive and negative aspects of living in Bradley. This engaging opportunity was made possible by the proactive presence of the youth workers: together with the young people they are a direct link with the community. The young people explained how they can sometimes get into trouble for playing cricket in car parks like the one shown here.

Crossing Leeds Road to access the current youth centre is clearly a major obstacle for the young people and needs careful consideration in any future development of the area.

They sometimes play football and cricket on a nearby factory car



park due to lack of such facilities at the centre.

A site is being prepared for the development of a childrens play area and a MUGA for the young people. Most of the young people feel it has been a long time in its current state.

I met with Mr O, the head of the school today to confirm use of computers for tomorrow evenings session with the young people. We can use the library, its got four computers with internet access, although they may be a little slow, according to the librarian. Six lads attended but were late due to school commitments. We did manage to lay down some ground rules, which they drew up in their note books, provided by the Bradley Primary School.

The rules consisted mainly of respect for others, active listening and being polite to others. This is part of the preparation for the trip to Urbis at the end of Dec.

Completing the maps: 10.12.08

We also managed to develop the maps alittle, informed by Sundays walk: adding extra features and colouring them in. The session overan by half an hour due to the late start. The computers were indeed very slow, as predicted by Lorraine the librarian, so it meant we didnt



spend a lot of time on them. The historical research will have to take place in the new year sessions. We will get the group to reflect on what they have learnt so far in the next session, which will be on the bus to Manchester, should be interesting exercise.

Trip to Manchester: 30.12.08

We travelled on the X43 from Nelson to Manchester. Our first stop was a visit to the Urbis, ooh it was a bitter cold day. A total of 6 boys, 2 girls and 5 adults made the journey. There were 2 exhibitions, one of hidden places around Manchester (a Photography exhibition) and one about political graphic posters from the 60's. We went on Manchesters big wheel, which is situated at the side of a huge glass building that used to be the largest Marks & Spencers in the world.

Then we went on a short tour, looking at buildings which are part of Manchesters regenerational past. On the tour, Ivan explained how the red postbox survived the 1996 bomb in Manchester and still stands in exactly the same place as it always has, it was installed during the reign of Queen Victoria. He explained how the blast had lifted the domed

roof in The Royal Exchange from its foundations and started a major



regeneration project which produced the theatre inside. The design connects the old stone building with contemporary materials. The journey home was used to reflect on the day. Ali used a wordsearch to remind him of the things we had done. Drawing and writing on the bus is tricky but Ali made it look easy. He remembered everything that had happened: from how high the domed roof had jumped to the name of the architect who built The Hilton Tower.

Video shop interviews: 6.01.09

The video recordings of the shops as they are today will provide an important creative output with a record celebrating the shops as they are in Nov/Dec 2008 and providing a baseline for future updates as the regeneration process brings change to Nelson. Below are some of the questions we asked the shopkeepers:

What's your name and what do you sell?

How long have you had your shop on Leeds Road?

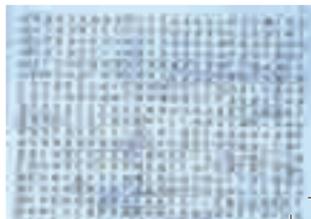
How have things changed since you have been here?

Any shops or buildings no longer around that you miss?

Any characters who ran them?

What is good about having a shop on Leeds Road?

What do you think are the main



issues or problems with having a shop on Leeds Road?

Where would you prefer to have a shop in Nelson and why?

What sorts of people use your shop?

Are they local or do they travel to your shop?

Are there any characters?

How accessible is your shop to the public e.g. is parking available?

What's your busiest time/quietest time?

Any there any impacts on opening hours?

Why do you think that some of the units have been converted back into houses?

What are your plans for the future and why?

Are you aware of the area being regenerated?

How do you think this will affect your business?

What improvements could we make to the area which would help your business?

How would you like to see the shops on Leeds Road developed?

Would you be happy to be involved in future projects?

My first planning meeting: 13.01.09

Met at Marsden Old Hall for a meeting with

planners, landscape designers etc to update them on my activities with Bradley residents. I explained



the Video Shop project and Mapping with the young people and directed them to my blog for more information.

It was interesting to see how plans for the park area were coming along and how people around the table have opportunities to input on any final plans. It's still a long journey as they then have to be redrawn and submitted for planning permission. This cycle of drawing, evaluating and redrawing can go on for ages before finally developing into a successful submission.

I enjoyed the meeting, especially the wonderful visuals they used to represent the future of Bradley. Hopefully, they will be able to draw something up for community consultation pretty soon.

Looking at the plans, I had an idea for an art installation involving the sports wall in the park. The wall is made from a strong tight-mesh system and could be trimmed like a hedge along its highest horizontal edge. The trim could resemble the skyline of terraced houses complete with mill chimney. This could be developed further by including the young people in the design. What you can do to the top edge of the fence depends on health and safety.



The only negative aspect of the meeting was the schedule: the design needs to be 'signed, sealed and delivered' by the end of March and so doesn't really allow for any thoughtful creative input and time for negotiation regarding the final design.

Sites in transition: 16.01.09

Met with a group of partners at the hub site (Youth Centre). We went on a walk and talk about the sites planned to be developed in the near future. Riverside Mill with the chimney still standing (planned for housing development), this site is a real opportunity to develop and preserve local heritage whilst promoting the chimney as a significant piece of meaningful public art or industrial monument: developing a sense of place and identity.

Groundwork: 21.01.09

Met with members of groundwork who are assessing the possibilities of improving three backstreets in the Bradley area.

After showing them some samples of my work, I talked with them about ways of engaging the community in their processes of gathering

information and active design strategies. Hopefully we will be able to involve the young people in



researching and presenting any information or artworks. Watch this space...

Evaluation Meeting: 27.01.09

Had a meeting to evaluate the project so far: at Elevate Offices in Accrington. It was an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project as a whole, examining roles in relation to the brief. It was clear that work needed to be done to address communication problems between parties. For example, it would be very useful for me to know exactly what other peoples briefs contain, this would then inform any creative plans for community involvement in the design of any public realm strategies.

Taking it forward: 9.02.09

Had a meeting today with Lynne and Rob from Community Development. Talked about an opportunity to involve the young people in the 'Backstreets' project with Groundwork. The young people can use EVAs to examine a backstreet and investigate ways to improve the immediate environment. E.V.A. is short for Environmental Visual Audit and is often used to identify elements of a place in need of repair, replacement or to indicate further action to enhance the environment. The E.V.A.s are a great way for the young people to look critically and constructively at



the streets where they live. It is also an effective way to develop any ideas they have concerning the regeneration of their neighbourhood.

Backstreet Walkabout: 16.02.09

Had a walk-about around Bradley with the group of young people. The aim was to reflect on the Urbis trip but 3 out of the 5 members didnt make the trip so we talked about E.V.A.s and Groundworks plan to lead the workshop this Friday. We then visited three backstreets in preparation for Fridays workshop.

It was also an opportunity to test out a new gadget for mapping our walks: a tiny GPS receiver which can be synchronised with my camera. After each walk, we should be able to upload both the images and GPS data to view the route and pictures on GoogleEarth. The walk itself went well, with the two girls logging notes each time someone took a photo.

The three boys set a good pace around the area from the school (start) to Charles St. then to Poplar St and finally to Hey St. It is hoped that Fridays workshop with Groundwork will engage the residents of these backstreets in imagining a brighter environment.



Workshop with Groundwork: 20.02.09

Attended workshop lead by Groundwork exploring ways to improve the condition of local backstreets. After introducing the idea at last weeks workshop, we invited the young people for lunch at the school before practising interview techniques. We then headed off to Charles st, Bankhouse Road and Poplar St. before returning back to base for some reflection.

After the first street we split into two groups: Poplar St. and Bankhouse Rd. I calibrated the GPS tracker to display the photos on Google Earth, here is the link to test it out.

<http://www.a-trip.com/tracks/view/14601>

As with all new technology, there are some minor teething problems but I think it is definitely a tool which we can use effectively in the future. You should be able to view the map slideshow by operating the controls in the left hand panel.

Ancient Sundial at Riverside Mills: 23.02.09

I attended the 'Market Demand Assessment' meeting for the Riverside Mills site in Bradley. Incidentally, GoogleEarth shows the mill as still standing: there's an art project in there somewhere? The meeting was about identifying any local interest in the site,



whether for commercial or domestic use. There were people representing the council, the community, the owners of the site and elevate.

I was designated responsible for collecting community feedback information regarding any interest. My role at this stage is as creative consultant and I would like to develop a small intervention which engages with the site and the community.

Initial thoughts include: the development of a list of questions to stimulate dialogue to coincide with a guided tour of the site, I will invite members of the community to join me as we walk and talk about its future use. The walk can be presented as a Google Earth tour... maybe?

Residents Assoc Meeting: 6.03.09

Last night's Residents Association Meeting at the school was interesting. Final plans for the park were presented by the council and what looked like an entire football team (community) had turned up to disagree with them. The footballers were not happy that the park did not cater for adults to play football.

I attended to hear what the response was to Martin's (owner of site) suggestions for Riverside Mills. He put ideas to the



community about what could be done in terms of development: self-build schemes, modern Vs traditional house designs etc.

In the end both topics came together with people agreeing that maybe the Riverside Mills site could accommodate an all weather pitch whilst the park can go ahead and cater for younger children. I heard someone say that it would have been useful had the football team voiced their opinion or attended meetings sooner rather than so close to 'Council Spend' deadline.

I was sad to hear that some of the people present wanted to demolish the monumental landmark that is the Riverside Mills chimney. I believe that 'to see it as an eyesore', is not to see it all and is certainly not grounds for demolition.

Have we not learned anything from the past mistakes of British Government when (in the 1930s) they decided to demolition rather than repair many of the countries run down areas, losing vital architectural character and affecting the social fabric of Lancashire's town and villages.

Do we really not care about our own heritage in Far East Lanca-



shire? Why do we see huge feats of engineering achievement as blots on our landscape? It's all too easy to destroy, forget and dismiss history when we are focused on short term prospects, such as acquiring new houses or new sports fields.

These short term developments are profoundly enhanced only when engaged with acknowledging a sense of place, in this case The Cultural & Industrial Heritage of Far East Lancashire.

We see the chimney from all over Nelson, in all directions, offering Bradley a sense of place and identifying a cultural heritage spanning the World History of Cotton, from Far East Lancashire to Far East Asia.

Millions of pounds are still being spent on trying to create a sense of place in locations up and down the country, often building huge monuments to local heritage, strengthening identities and local economies.

In Bradley, we have a unique opportunity to recognise and preserve a priceless part of East Lancashire's Cultural Heritage and it would be a terrible shame if we, as a county, as a local authority and as a dynamic and caring community were to simply



dismiss it as an eyesore without considering it's positive effects on future generations.

Trip up Pendle: 23.03.09

Planning to take the young people up Pendle Hill on 6th April. This will help them to think about Bradley from a different perspective and will be discussed over lunch on the top looking back at Bradley: weather permitting.

Walk Leader Comments: 6.04.09

As walk leader it is personally satisfying to read and hear the comments of the personnel on a walk that you and others have planned. How long and how far are usually the most popular comments once you have set off but it is satisfying when you get everyone back, tired but safely knowing they have respected the countryside and taken with them their litter and own personal experiences.

Bradley Boundary Bicycle Tour: 28.05.09

Been ages since we last did anything on the project, very frustrating having to wait to get projects passed before engagement with community. Things should start moving shortly, once I get the go ahead from the steering group. Today we took a group of young people on a bicycle tour of the Bradley Ward boundary.



We tried to get as close as possible to the actual boundary line but it is difficult on the bikes. We will attempt to do a more specific tour on foot, which will also offer more opportunities for photographs. This exercise will inform the map development, which will be used to measure how much information has been taken on board by the young participants. The tour was logged using GPS technology and the route, including photos can be viewed here on Google maps:

<http://www.a-trip.com/tracks/view/21707>

Youth Presentation: 3.06.09

Only three turned up but it was very productive. Hussmann and Faisal reflected on the learning experience so far on the project: from initial meetings to the recent cycle tour. We have scheduled another meeting next week to make plans for a Powerpoint presentation by the young people to show the Residents Association what they have been up to.

Some activity: 17.06.09

Had meeting today to identify possible forms of evaluative measurement data to be collected

throughout the project. I think it went ok, with what seemed like some good pointers for presenting



key developments in the creative engagement process: community wellbeing, new skills/knowledge etc.

Arranged another meeting with Judith (project manager) to move/develop ideas forward next monday. Also meeting with members of youth group (probably just one or two of them) who are preparing a presentation for the residents association meeting.

After feeling like nothing has been happening for quite some time, I think things may start to pick up again and we can finally get down to some interesting cultural activity.

The Bradley Boundary: 30.06.09

Last night at the Residents Assoc. meeting, young Hussman presented a slideshow about his experience of working with me and Lynne, highlighting key points along the way: learning new words, working with new people, going on trips etc. He managed to combat his nerves enough to get through the slides before receiving a round of applause from the other residents. I put the idea to the residents about having a treasure hunt style walk around the Bradley Boundary in August and we got some names for volunteers to help with setting clues/directions etc.



Today, Lynne and I went around the route to assess any risks and to stimulate ideas for clues. The whole walk is approximately 7 miles and should take about 3 hours at a leisurely pace. It takes in sites around the town centre shops, industrial sites, the canal, a park, Barrowford, The Nelson & Colne boundary, The College, the railway line, the M65, Leeds Road and many local businesses around the town.

I tracked our walk using GPS technology and you can view the route via Google Earth Maps here: <http://www.a-trip.com/tracks/view/25006>

Navigating Boundaries: 1.07.09

The following directions are for the Bradley Ward Boundary.

Starting at the new Hey Street Play Area. Cross Leeds Road at the Pelican Crossing and turn right up Chapel Street: stay on the pavement on the right hand side. Carry on until you get to the Railway Crossing: this is a dangerous area to cross the road so please take care. Once safely across, continue passed Wavelengths and cross the road to Playland. Keeping Playland on your right, go around the corner and under the Arndale Footbridge. Carry on until you see the new Nelson Interchange on your left, to your right



should be The Place De Criel: a pedestrian corridor leading towards the Marsden Building Society, The Lord Nelson Public House and Market Square, on Manchester Road. Turn right and head towards Scotland Road, look down Market Street and notice Pendle Hill on your left as it sits on top of the library building. Notice shops, old and new as you walk down Scotland Road.

Turn left at Kebabish, passing The Silverman Hall on your right and take care crossing the road towards Morrisons supermarket, passing the mosque on your right. Pass to the right of Morrisons and over the bridge to The Conduit. Follow The Conduit around to Milton Street and turn right to Car Road.

Watch your speed as you go under the M65 towards Victoria Park. Enter the park at the sign for Barrowford Town Centre. Take a rest on the bridge as you listen to the busy motorway traffic. Over the bridge, you must turn right at the lake and leave the park to turn right again. Take the first public footpath on your right and follow through to a gate, where you can see what's on the other side of the river. Carry on towards a Kissing Gate and passed the three ancient trees on your left to another Kissing Gate. Turning right



passed some small business units on your left, you will see a footpath and a small water measuring station on your right. Follow the path to Calder Vale, stay on the left hand side of the street next to the shoe shop. Turn left at the shop for about six doors and find a safe place to cross.

Make your way around onto Gisburn Road, this is the main road through Barrowford. Keeping going left and cross the road at the pelican crossing. Still going left, you will come to Wilton Street. Going up Wilton Street and over the little bridge, stay on the tarmac road leading under the M65, you should be able to see the river on your right. Stay on the tarmac, passed the trees on your right (Cycle Park) and over a bridge. You are now at Swindon Playing Fields and across the fields, you can see a nearby town on a hill, slightly to your left. Stay on the tarmac as it bears left and then turn right up the cycleway path and over the steep canal bridge.

Follow the canal until the you see metal girders supporting the canal banks. This is near the Aquaduct and marks the Bradley Boundary. Turn around and head back to the first footpath sign, which will be on your left hand side. Go up the track and turn left onto Regent Street. Find a safe place to cross



and turn left when you get to Junction Street, passing industrial units. Turn right on Leeds Road and notice you are in Colne, heading towards Nelson, you can see the new Pendle Vale College on your left.

Pass the shops, cross at the Pelican Crossing and turn right. Find a safeplace to cross Walton Lane, away from the roundabouts. Pass in front of the Hour Glass building and head along Bradley Hall Road. You will see industrial units and houses along this long road, there are also several different faith buildings too. Walk to the end of this road until you see the site of the new Youth Centre and be careful to find a suitable place to cross, well away from the roundabouts. Make your way back to Hey Street Park.

The route is about 7 miles long and should take between 2 and 3.5 hrs depending on abilities. Pushchairs could get round with some help clearing the kissing gates.

Setting the clues for the walk:14.07.09

Today I walked around the Bradley Ward Boundary again with Lynne and a member of the community to develop clues for the treasure hunt in August. Beth was the only one (out of four) who turned up and she really enjoyed herself, discovering new areas of



Nelson that she'd never been to before. The weather stayed nice for the few hours we were walking and we had time for a cup of tea in Barrowford. The GPS showed up 4.8 miles this time, which is probably closer to the true distance than the last outing. The walk photos and route can be viewed on google maps here:

<http://www.a-trip.com/tracks/view/26322>

You can view the walk as a slide show or stop the slideshow and view individual locations. It shows a variety of terrain and some very lovely spots around the Bradley Ward. The Treasure Hunt is planned for this Sat from 11am, starting from the new Hey St. Park. Everyone welcome to join in the celebrations for the new park and for a chance to win big prizes in the treasure hunt. Other activities include: street dance, sports, food and music. Treasure hunt entries start from 11am until 1pm to allow people to make it back for the presentation of prizes.

The Day of The Treasure Hunt: 15.08.09

The weather forecast was rain, clearing in the afternoon with some sunny spells. As the teams started rolling in we took shelter in the big marquee as the

DJ set boomed out across Hey Street Park. Many of the young people were not fazed by the rain



and really enjoyed the rain. Then we all enjoyed a meal together in the Marquee as another heavy shower battered the canvas. The Mayor of Pendle took a look at the new facilities on the park. There was a theatre group who showed the children how to make music using drum sticks on metal objects in the park. Around 200 people turned up with 45 members of the community taking part in The Bradley Boundary Walk (the treasure hunt). Most of them commented that they didn't realise how big the Bradley Ward is and found some places that they would be visiting again, like Swindon Playing Fields, Victoria Park and the riverside walk behind Nelson & Colne College.

The 149 pix that were taken by the treasure hunters using disposable camera's are now available to view online. The quality of the inexpensive disposable camera's has a real nostalgic effect on the pictures and some of them look almost painterly.

And so it begins... 11.09.09

At last we've got the proposal passed by the Steering Group Committe for me to deliver weekly art work-shops at the school in Bradley. Just need to plan when it can start... hopfully in Oct.



Art Workshops: 27.11.09

Workshops are scheduled to start next Thursday 3rd Dec at the school. There are two sessions: 1 - 3pm with the Parent / Teacher group SPAR and 6.30 - 8.30 with a group of local residents. The afternoon session is overbooked with a couple on the waiting list but there are still a couple of places left for the evening session. I aim to start with a basic introduction to drawing through practice based exercises using photos and objects from the local area. Each session will inform the next one through negotiation with participants. I will interview the participants during the first drawing session and upload the footage to this blog, hopefully with some examples of their first drawings.

Gallery One: 5.12.09

To say that some were concerned about not having drawn since childhood, I think the work is a promising statement of things to come. Some comments include: 'Great Pictures. I think that they really capture the area and give a sense of its history' and '... the pictures are lovely, very sensitively done and accomplished too. It's capturing things at the point of change which is actually very important if



you think about it in historical terms'. Another comment about the work said 'This is a fantastic

portrait of the community's vision for regeneration: correctly interpreting it as a period of predominantly social change, created through the redesigning of local neighbourhoods for the future.'

Branding Workshop:17.01.10

We were joined at the session by a group of students from Salford University who are doing a project about developing a brand for Bradley. It is mainly for generating ideas about what makes Bradley what it is today and perhaps looking to the future development of the area in a positive and constructive light. The students: Toon (Holland), Simon (UK), Semi (South Korea) and Jason (USA) had time for a snack at a famous sweet shop in Nelson Town Centre. In the session, we developed a mind-map about all things Bradley and the Community. We all contributed words relating to the area and how people use the space. The mind-map helps to generate ideas about what makes Bradley a place to work and play. After highlighting a few significant words, we designed postcards to visualize our impressions of Bradley.

Life in Pictures: 22.01.10

Yesterdays session involved exploring the idea of a picture telling a story. The discussion evolved from Jan (a new member) explaining her



enthusiasm for making tapestries. We talked about how they often depict a significant period in history and decided that some of us would try to remember a time in our own lives and attempt to capture it on paper. Tommy came close to dipping his brush in his tea. Samina brought in some homework: a drawing of Bradley Primary School. She has been slowly working on it since December, and has managed to complete it while juggling all her other chores. Irene hasn't used watercolour before, however, she has captured this local street scene with a distant view of Pendle using a limited palette and nice transparent washes. Nigel remembered his time as a soldier many years ago. Tommy decided to tell us about different periods in his life. Making his first snowman, starting school, his love for working on the allotment, life as a soldier and in the saddle as race horse jockey.

Childhood Homes: 29.01.10

This weeks session involved visualising our first memories of our childhood homes. We created images using pencil to show the front elevation and a footprint plan of the interior; upstairs and downstairs. Farzana remembers having two letterboxes with

different addresses for her corner-shop on Arthur St. in Brierfield... or was it Chapel St?



Khalida discovered that she lived just around the corner (on Giles St.) from Tina when they were both children. Tina lived on Caleb St and chatted for ages with Khalida about all the other people they could remember. Tina also remembered the time her family moved out of the family home to make way for demolition when she was young. However, the house escaped demolition that time but is due to be demolished sometime in 2010.

Some of the aspiring participants have taken up my invite to produce a postcard on the theme of 'This is England'. Their work will be shown alongside established artists from around the country at the Centre of Contemporary Art in Preston and again here in Bradley before it is despatched to Pakistan. It will then be exhibited at Beaconhouse University in Lahore before being archived and re-exhibited annually with future collections of work by other artists.

Kalsum thought of England as a place of beautiful countryside and named her creation 'Pendle through the Mirror'. Nigel created a postcard of Burnley Football ground, he called it 'Night Match at Turf Moor'. Jan got people thinking of food and created an image called 'Fish, Chips and Mushy Peas'. Sidra was



thinking in a similar way with her 'Coke & Kebab' painting.

Blind Drawing the Future: 12.02.10

In the evening session, Nigel talked about his recent exploration into 'Blind Drawing' as a way to unlock personal creativity. We decided to give it a go by covering our hands and avoiding the temptation to peek. We stared at William with his camera as our right hand tried to capture his image without us looking at the paper.

The 'Blind Drawing' exercise helped us to loosen up and create our visions for the future regarding the land on the site of Riverside Mills. Sidra hopes to build a large house for her family right in the middle of the site. Nigel has considered how the chimney can be used as a museum for the textile heritage of the site. I like the idea of 'chimney shaped bollards'. Jan is hoping for a good balance between natural landscaping and affordable housing. Kalsum is thinking of a park for the children, a bandstand and a sympathetic enhancement of the river area. Sophia has used the chimney as a central architectural element to build an entire new community in a circular arrangement.



Wild Cats and Feral Parrots: 19.02.10

Yesterday we talked about different forms of Public Art and browsed through some examples from my trip to Germany a couple of years ago. From monumental works to subtle social interventions, we discussed our own preferences and even talked about recent installments in Nelson: the new War Memorial outside the library.

It was also an opportunity to introduce the group to another artist who will be working in Bradley this year. Kerry Morrison has a natural interest in brown field sites and is making plans to engage with a piece of land in Bradley called Lockwoods Yard, which is located close to the old baths. Most of us got carried away chatting about the local wild and plant life that we didn't put pen to paper all night, quite happy to drink tea and nibble cookies.

However, Nigel brought his own acrylics and produced an interesting image of The Angel of The North visiting the capital in protest of the current economical climate. Jan told us about a litter of feral cats living in foliage behind the old baths and a flock of feral parrots who have also managed to survive the harsh winter.



Watercolour Primary Drawing: 28.02.10

Three of us experimented with watercolour, attempting to capture the fluid and unpredictable nature of the medium whilst depicting a bowl of fruit. Nigel managed to resist the temptation to play around with his paint once it was on the paper with his successful painting: 'Surrealist Fruit Landscape'. Sophies' first time with watercolour proved successful with a natural ability and delicate brush strokes.

I invited some of the primary school children to take part and they made some drawings from their imagination. Amarah drew a selection of flowers. Aminah, (whose mum enjoys coming to the sessions) remembered the school building.

Talking Design Judges: 4.03.10

Today, we reflected on our discussions about Public Art from a previous session and how including local communities in the design and construction of art can help to make more meaningful spaces. We talked about identifying opportunities for our group to engage in the designing and improvement process for local 'Grotspots', which are small pockets of disused land in need of some TLC. We came up

with key words to consider when making public art in Bradley, words like heritage, community, textiles,



sensitive and vandal proof all helped towards an idea of a meaningful piece of work. The discussion inspired Farzana and Tina to make plans for improving Farzana's garden. Samina and Khalida showed us some examples of their homework and I gave them some star shaped stickers to put on the front of their homework books. The press arrived and we spent most of the afternoon session happily posing for the photographer in anticipation of this weekends community fun day at St. Phillips Church.

In the evening, we judged the childrens colouring competition for the community fun day. And Sophia presented her fantastic model for a public space, based on an idea she had at the last workshop.

Exhibiting Our Work: 8.03.10

The Bradley Community Fun Day was well attended with Nigel and Sophia explaining our work to visitors. A wide selection of drawings from all our workshops was on display, including a selection of work by the children of Bradley Primary School. Samina enjoyed searching for her drawings of the Bradley area. Another display involving participants from the workshops was the 'Lancashire to Lahore' project and was an exchange of postcard artworks between Britain and Pakistan and provided an international



flavour to the art on display. The exhibition showed the work of professional artists alongside amateur and student works from Britain including members of the Bradley community. The exhibition is due to be on display at The Centre for Contemporary Art in Preston on 10,11 and 12th March before being posted to Lahore for another exhibition and subsequent archiving.

Making Places: 13.03.10

Tina managed to complete her homework: a brilliant drawing from Dover Street looking towards the Riverside Mill site. Farzana, Samina and Irene taught me some Punjabi and Urdu phrases, which I noted phonetically in my little school book.

We talked about several 'Grotspots' around the area. We also discussed the small triangular shaped land at Hilldrop, which is close to the proposed new Youth and Community Centre. We made notes of key points to consider when developing ideas around public space, especially art and design aspects. We thought about how creative use of lighting can enhance the experience of space. We agreed that art can be used to develop centres of activity in the public realm. We considered the users of the space and how it could be utilised to serve their



immediate needs. Careful and sensitive arrangement of furniture can encourage social interaction. Finished designs included spotlights in the floor... and lots of vegetation to help relax the users of the space.

Artistic Demolition Processes: 14:03.10

I showed the group one of my drawings and told them about my plans to explore how art can often physically engage with regeneration processes. It was a pencil drawing of a long terraced row of houses.

The group decided that they would like to make their own images to put through the experimental process, which I had told them about. So they set to work making paintings and installing them inside a local terraced house which was due to be demolished the day after. So I hung them on the walls of the empty home and waited for the transformation to take place. The works are completed by the random act of falling masonry. The three watercolours which were included in the demolition process along with my drawing will now be on show in London.

Alternating Fire Hazard: 20.03.10

I demonstrated how to achieve alternation and gradation when shading our drawings. Sophia told us about a recent traumatic experience out-



side her back garden, where a fire broke out on disused land at the back of Regents Place. The incident had clearly shaken her and she painted a map of the area and how it is becoming a 'grot-spot' and a fire hazard.

Layering Landscape Cakes Recipe: 26.03.10

Late afternoon we went to experience the plot of land which is due to be enhanced inline with current regeneration on the site of the old youth club at Hilldrop. Sophie likes the idea of lights in the ground, with new landscaping. It is larger than we expected and is in a very busy part of Leeds Road. We noticed drivers dropping off and picking up passengers too close to the roundabout outside the mosque.

The space is currently grassed with flower beds and a small supporting wall. Perhaps some sort of signage artwork would be suitable, given there are four roads at this busy junction. We visited a 'grot-spot' which has undergone a recent enhancement phase. The white wall of the house does seem rather sterile in contrast to the local stone houses and Nigel thought a mural of Pendle Hill or other artwork

would further improve the site. We considered the use of stainless steel to protect the young trees and how



we could perhaps use it in any designs for the Hill-drop site. Sophia started throwing ideas about building a huge telescope on the site and I mentioned a piece of work at Burnley Bus Station, which uses a novel way to engage people in the work. So off we went to investigate. Nigel was impressed by the innovative use of sculpture and photography. Inside are photographs from around Burnley and the people who live there.

Flat-scapes and Tall sheds: 3.04.10

Today we walked around the area to check out how the demolition is going. Close-by, we could see the tall chimney on the Riverside Mill site. It has writing around the top, hidden by the mobile transmitters reading 'BRADLEY SHED'. At the back of Caths Cafe there is a large space beginning to open up, it doesn't take long to demolish streets, levelling them with top-soil. There is still a local problem involving fly-tipping in the area.

Secret places for future spaces: 10.04.10

We went for a long walk around Bradley. We inspected the site of the recently demolished Lockwoods Yard where artist Kerry Morrison plans to work with members of the community to help transform the site. There was signs of nature already taking hold in



some places. We decided to checkout the 'goit'. Nature has managed to cope with years of fly-tipping to establish itself in this tranquil but inaccessible riverside area of Bradley. Plans by Pendle Council to clean up the site will make it more accessible for public use in the future. I took over 150 snaps of different windows in the area to explore the idea about capturing a sense of Bradley through the structural elements of architecture.

Through the...err rectangular window: 25.04.10
I printed out about 10 of the window pictures and the group worked on developing a drawing over the next couple of sessions. Farzana managed to work quickly to complete her lovely sketch of a busy window sill. Nigel experimented with some black oil pastels. Sophie cropped a print even smaller to close-in on the detail on some net curtains to create an interesting design.

Start Stomping: 4.05.10

This is a fantastic opportunity to work with the artist Kerry Morrison, who visited the group some weeks ago. This will be a lot of fun and a chance to meet some other artists, discuss future projects in your area and take an active role in the environmental development of new spaces in Bradley, don't forget



your wellies.

Some Still in Progress: 6.05.10

Today was all talk about politics and the future of art projects in the face of a bleak nationwide economical recovery. I'm sure the situation will remain the same regardless who wins the election, although rumours are rife that it may end up being a hung parliament. Our chat soon focused on what we might do at our final session in a couple of weeks.

The favourite suggestion is that we each bring along something to eat and share it with the rest of the group: a 'Jacobs Join'. Samina has offered to bring some Samosa's and I think I will bring some chocolates.

We decided to experiment with pastels again and I was attracted to this photograph because of the contrast of blue sky and sunlit houses with the dark recesses of the empty homes, the inclusion of the blue skip lurking in the foreground corner completes the story of this street.

Stomping Performance for Bradley: 16.05.10

The stomping event organised by artist Kerry Morrison was a huge success, with lots of people turning



up to take part in planting clover seeds on the site of Lockwoods Yard. Kerry also invited two contemporary artists from Salford to do a performance which involved interviewing people with a typewriter. They asked local folk about the site of Lockwoods Yard. Nigel and Sophie told them about the local businesses that have inhabited the site over the years. The artists then did a performance on the actual site before local residents took part in the scattering (and Stomping) of the Clover seeds.

Lori read out a letter relating to the local regeneration of the area and Mori typed it up. Lori then collected the new typed-up letter and read that out aloud while Mori attempted to type up what he could hear. Each time it was transcribed, it got shorter and more abstract as Mori struggled to capture the whole of the communication from Lori. Sometimes omitting whole words and mostly missing letters which made the translation from Lori more nonsensical as it diminished in length. All the various texts were then made into a book for people to keep.

Samosa Pakora Cake: 27.05.10



It was the last session today and we decided to use it as an excuse to eat samosa's, pakora's and ...CAKE!

We also spent some time collecting all our work together to take home. It was also a good opportunity for the ladies from the afternoon group to meet people from the evening group and chat over a snack. Everyone brought some food and discussed what they will do on thursdays, now that the sessions have stopped. I informed them of an opportunity to work with other local people and the youth club in the planning and designing of the land at the site of the new youth/community centre at Hilldrop.

Nigel, Sophie, Tina and Samina are interested in taking part and any developments will be logged on this blog. Sophie made a painting for her niece who is getting married shortly and it seems like a good image to end the workshops and demonstrates how far she travelled in terms of developing her artistic talents and Nigel says... 'she did it all on her own'.

Activity at New Youth Centre: 23.07.10

We are starting to move forward with the idea of involving members of the community in the final design of the piece of land at the entrance of the new Youth Centre on Leeds Road. There is a safety fence around the site of the building plot but the land we are hoping to help develop is accessible to the public. Attending the session were a number of



young people, residents, youth workers, Lynne (Neighbourhood Management), Judith (PBC) and an artist (me). The young people had already been thinking about the site and had come up with a short list of important points to help with any ideas about the site. We visited the site to get a feel for its size and also to experience it first hand. Although the grass had been cut, nature had almost taken over with a variety of wild flowers dominating the centre of the space.

We walked around the perimeter. A group of young people enquired about what we were doing. Nigel pointed out the proximity of traffic (amount of fast cars, noise etc) and how that would affect the future use of the space. The area seemed much larger than we thought. We returned to base to generate ideas that people might have regarding the development of the site. Writing them down and pinpointing the ones that we thought could be developed further into practical plans.

Next week, we will aim to develop the main ideas into short presentations using drawing and model making using whatever materials are available.

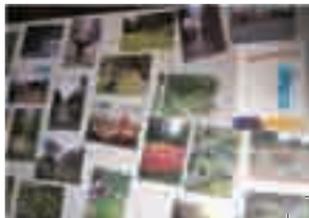


Developing Ideas for the site: 29.07.10

The young people were faced with a 'Dragons Den' style presentation of their ideas. This was an exercise to stimulate ideas and get the young people to consider the site in a fictional sense. Lynne, Judith and I judged their ideas as well as their presentation skills and it was very difficult to find a winner. Team C won by half of a point which demonstrates how close it was between the three teams.

Before splitting into groups Sophie and Nigel presented their models, which they had made at home to demonstrate their ideas about the space. Sophie had included lots of things discussed at last weeks session. But the main theme was a huge telescope for star gazing surrounded by local geographical and astronomical information. The space would be a reminder to users about where they are... not just in Nelson but in the whole of the universe. Nigel used recycled materials to create a wonderful model with a 'Ship' theme.

It was inspired by the shape of the site having the appearance of the front of a ship. The raised decking is edged with contained flower beds and some of the path stones are transparent resin, which references Hendon Brook, which passes directly under the



site. The groups worked in teams to discuss how they could develop their ideas and work out the best way to communicate them to the panel. 'Team A' presented the idea of a 3D sculpture of the local postcode BB9 complete with a water feature and coloured lights. 'Team B' adopted a more figurative approach, with a circle of people representing the community being cast in metal and 8ft tall so people could walk in and out of the circle. They took turns to tell the panel about the sculpture. 'Team C' pitched an ambitious idea which included the use of huge magnets to create a moving sculpture. It included figurative fencing around the site, a huge glowing/rotating globe and was presented with confidence.

Space Shapers: 6.08.10

Steph from MidPennine Arts in Burnley arrived to do a workshop called 'SpaceShapers'. We visited the construction site of the new youth centre on Leeds Road where they are starting to dig out the footings for the new building. We focused on the small pocket of land near the mini-roundabout, using some tools and question cards to stimulate discussion about the site. Looking for signs of wildlife...



photo opportunities... misuse of the site by dog owners... listening for noise pollution mainly from

traffic... users of the current space and considered how accessible it is to other pedestrians... and whether it is well looked after? It is an ideal space for advertising as it is passed by lots of vehicles each day. There are some interesting weeds which have taken over the old Rose Bed. Back indoors we voted with our feet on whether we thought it was easy to access, safe in the day or night time and whether it was clean and well looked after.

Steph logged our results and will use them to inform the next session. We discussed possible dates for a day trip to see some public art: 'Another Place' at Crosby Beach and 'Turning the Place over' in Liverpool. We need to start getting some names for the design training residency in September. Katy and Wasim (Youth workers) will be in charge of taking names.

Spaceshapers part two: 12.08.10

Steph from MidPennine Arts in Burnley came back and ran part two of the 'Spaceshaper' workshop. First the group thought about what activities the space might be good for: relaxing and thinking, playing, meeting friends and others things. The size of the space and the fact that it's next to a busy main road limited some of the things it might be good for.



Then each member of the group wrote a postcard to a friend along the theme of ‘wish you were here...’ or ‘wish you weren’t here....’ Most of the postcards were on the theme of ‘wish you weren’t here...’ reflecting the poor state of the space at the moment. We then looked at some pictures of different spaces. We categorised them depending upon whether we thought they were a good space or a bad space. Pictures of bad spaces were untidy and looked boring.

The pictures we classed as good spaces were tidy and well kept, colourful and had some kind of activity or interest on them. Next, we thought about how important the space is for a range of different people; young, old, disabled, mum with baby, skateboarder, etc.

At the moment the space isn’t very important for many people as there isn’t much to do there and it isn’t very nice. However, we all agreed it has some potential. Steph then input our views into the ‘ramblegrams’ on the Spaceshaper website.

Finally we all thought about what we could do to make the site better. Well done to all our Space-shapers who received a certificate for their effort and achievement.



In Search of Public Art... and stuff: 23.08.10

We set off on the minibus from Nelson to arrive at Crosby Beach over on the west coast around noon. It was chance for the young people see 'Another Place' by Anthony Gormley. It was the first time they had been to Crosby. The tide was out and some of the figures were fixed in puddles as they gazed out to sea.

We couldn't resist the temptation to dress one up in a collection of our own clothes, hat, spectacles, pump bag and hoodie. The elements have taken their toll on the metal figures, which are immersed in the salt-water of the incoming tides and exposed to nature in other ways when the tide is out.

Some of the figures nearest the sea are covered in crustaceans. Nature is indeed taking a hold of them and transforming them into mummified suits of metal as they meditate on the distant horizon. We also went to see Richard Wilson's 'Turning the Place Over' on Moorfields, across from the train station. Then we were back on the bus and off further into the city to give the young people some free time to explore the new Liverpool One shopping centre. It was an opportunity to investigate the materials used for the hard landscaping in the city. They have used water features to encourage users to linger in the



square. We agreed to meet at The Big Wheel as it's easy to see from most parts of the city. That part of the waterfront has also been regenerated with a huge arena and some heavy hard landscaping.

Tea & Biscuits: 27.08.10

Chantelle and Jo stuck the pictures from the Liverpool trip onto the wall and we discussed them... over a brew and some biscuits. We all agreed that the installation of art, either on the beach or altering the face of a building changes the experience of a place and makes us look at it differently. Nigel has added the final features to his wooden model of a design for the site at Hilldrop.

The overall design had a boat theme and he has added a shelter at one end of the space. Well done Nigel, some great ideas using different materials to create a gardening space with seats to admire your hard work. We also talked about attracting other young people to go on the residency in Sept (24/25 and 26 th) and mentioned the presentation to the Bradley Residents Association in a couple of weeks. That will be an opportunity for the young people to explain what, why and how they are working

towards developing the site in front of their new youth club.



Exploring Consultation: 6.09.10

Steph delivered a workshop about key issues to consider when carrying out community consultation. From face to face interviews to secret ballots. We talked about the best ways to approach consulting other people about the development of the land at the side of the new Youth Centre. We thought about the different methods and how hot they would be in terms of direct interaction with members of the public.

Then we positioned them onto a thermometer according to their level of direct engagement with posters and emails etc. being at the bottom and door knocking and street interviews at the top. Then we discussed the effectiveness of our favourite approaches and stuck them onto a target with different comfort zones in each of the rings: very comfortable in the centre and working outwards towards a state of panic at the thought of carrying out that method.

A street clipboard survey seemed to make most people nervous and things like a wishing tree or ballot box process were well placed in the comfortable zone. We identified a couple of preferred methods and parked them in the 'Ideas Car Park'. Then we made posters to reflect on the workshop activity. The workshop was in preparation for next weeks



session: we are presenting our project to the Bradley Residents Association to inform them of our progress and also to start the consultation by asking them if they have any preferences on how the site should be developed.

Young Volunteers Share Learning: 10.09.10

The young people volunteer their precious time on Monday evenings to help run youth club sessions for the younger children in Nelson. They replicated the design workshop for the children, encouraging them to use their imagination through creative drawing and discussing their ideas. There was a good spread of ideas and the young people did a great job of engaging the children in the idea of changing the space for the future. From free-standing sculpture designs to flower gardens and a Pix 'n' Mix shop. From elaborate drawings of a small park area to a solitary tree and a World Class (mini) football pitch.

Tonight's session involved attending the Bradley Residents Association meeting at the primary school. Some of the young people (Michael, Jo, Chantelle & Charlotte) had prepared speeches to explain their recent activities and future plans to consult with the wider community. Nigel, Sophie



and Brandon went along in support. They used the opportunity to start the consultation process by asking the residents what they would like to see developed on the site at the new youth centre. We asked them to write their ideas and suggestions on star shaped cards and Jo and Chantelle stuck them on a black sheet of paper.

Next week we are preparing for the weekend Design Training residential at Coldwell. We need to gather lots of information to take with us: photos, plans, drawings of our area. Looks like the group has developed some really effective ways of consulting local people on their opinions.

Revisiting our area: 16.09.10

In preparation for the forthcoming residential we need to collect some photos which represent our area. We thought about various locations and important buildings, roads, shops and hangouts. Armed with disposable camera's we split up into groups.

We also took the opportunity to ask members of the community what they would prefer on the land adjacent to the new youth centre. There are some architectural and socially significant hidden gems around Bradley, like the Short Homers WMC club



(Est. 1919) just off Regents Street. Nigel referred to it as the Pigeon Club and some gentlemen were going in to play in a competitive snooker league. A lot of homes are still boarded up in the area. The iconic Bradley Shed chimney continues to dominate the local sunset over Pendle Hill. Nigel's old house is boarded up and nature has taken over in the backyard. The old baths buildings stands close to Maria's Cash & Carry. We followed 'The Goit' past the Fire Station and on to Leeds Road, looking back at the Town Centre. We admired the new face lift on the block where Cath's Cafe is, it looks amazing! The new Hey Street Park sits behind the building which acts as a temporary youth club headquarters.

Opposite the site for the new youth centre is a small mosque. This block, which overlooks the development site has benefited from some serious face lifting. We saw traditional washing lines on cobbled backstreets extending to ingenious appropriation of security fences.

The Residential: 24.09.10

When we arrived at Coldwell Visitor Centre for the weekend, people were a little apprehensive about what to expect. The ice was broken by some self portraiture. We could draw ourselves in disguise if we



wanted to. Then we put them on the wall for all to see... and laugh at. The cook at the centre had prepared a fantastic buffet meal for our supper.

The Residential – Manchester: 25.09.10

The young people enjoyed the activities, including a trip to Manchester to see some hard landscaping and regeneration projects in New Islington. It was a bright day but a 'sneaky breeze' meant it was on the cold side. We saw some benches made out of stone which were sunk into the landscape and lights built into the walls.

Then we went to New Islington where lots of regeneration has taken place. They had fancy cast iron drain covers with new street lights which are rusty but stylish. They had a maypole that looked like a bird house. There were some good examples of new architecture next to old buildings along the canal. We saw a very modern building called the Chips building... we just need some salt and pepper now.

We had lunch at Ashton Lock gates. It was busy with people going to watch Man City. People live in the chips building and dangle their Man City scarves out of the windows on match day.

There are still some old buildings at the side of it which need sorting



out. We walked on, past the fancy chips building towards another development. It was affordable housing but different. There was a huge poster showing the overall design plan of 'NEW-IZLING-TON'. The back street was more like a ginnel and they had a bush which once looked like a dinosaur. The houses were painted nice pastel colours. The ginnel was locked for security like our gated back streets in Bradley.

We had a quick chill out when we got back from Manchester. Then we got into separate groups and made models to represent some of our ideas for the site at Nelson YC. From waterwheels and gravel footpaths to fountains and rotating postcodes. We all got a chance to explain our creations to the other groups. Then it was time for some grub.

Then each group had to construct a shelter to protect them from a bucket of water. They only had bamboo canes, masking tape, tarpaulin and string. It could be any shape and pegged down with things found in the woods.

Residential - Protecting an Egg: 26.09.10

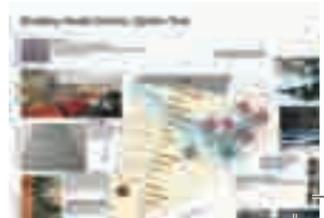
We worked in groups to design a protective carriage for an egg, which would then be dropped from



the balcony outside. Before starting we had an auction (toy money of course) where groups could bid for certain materials. We bought a carton of cotton buds and arranged them to cradle the egg inside. We thought this looked pretty and was also functional. We padded it with some bubble wrap (about £50 at the auction) and taped the lid on. We had lots of spare buds so decided to decorate the carton. This would also offer some extra protection during its 'drop-off'. We thought it looked like a birthday cake full of candles or a space satellite, so we called it 'The Space Bud'. The winning design was called 'Top Chick'. Needless to say, our beautiful Space Bud didn't survive the impact... but it looked smashing!!

Refining our ideas: 4.11.10

We are preparing an interactive model for Lancashire Day in Nelson town centre. We hope that members of the public can chose from a selection of hand-made models which represent their preferences for the space outside the new youth centre. We looked at all the ideas generated over the last twelve months using the photos from this blog. We selected things to develop further into small models using a variety of materials. We made colourful flowerbeds which can be placed anywhere on the display board, one of them is shaped like a footprint. Some of us made a tall



flag pole to display a selection of flags designed by the young people; the flags can be changed on a regular basis. We used a technical approach to create new designs for architectural seating objects. The seats would be functional but also act as contemporary sculpture. We made figurative sculpture to represent the friendship of young people in the area. Sophie made a planetary mosaic to represent her idea of a fully functional telescope.

Next week, we are expecting to meet the landscape designers and we will use that opportunity to tell them about all the wonderful activities we have been doing. We can tell them about our workshops with Steph from Space-Shapers, our trips to Manchester and Liverpool and the Design Residential with Civic from London. We have done lots of work... Now we can start to make a real impact on the final design of the space, this is a very exciting time for everyone connected to the project.

Meeting The Landscape Designer: 11.11.10

We met the landscape designer who is going to help us turn our designs into a reality. We showed her our models and used them to explain our ideas. We

all took time to explain to Debbie what we have been up to over the last few months. We told her about



our trips to Liverpool and Manchester and how they inspired us to be ambitious in our designs for Nelson. We talked about the residential with Dan & George and the workshops with Steph from Spaceshapers. Those experiences helped us to consider important aspects of our site and how we can improve its use for our community.

The next stage involves the designer drawing up some ideas for us to consider. This will move forward through a short series of similar meetings between the designer and the young people and community consultation until we reach an agreement on a final design.

Post Drawings: 19.11.10

Judith and I met with the Landscape Designer who will be drawing up the initial plans for the site. I took along some photographs to stimulate ideas about materials and we talked about the potential of the site and how we can incorporate the ideas from the young people into the fabric of the space. Debbie will now draw up a couple of design schemes for further discussion and then we can put them in front of the young people and other members of the community to make the final decision.



Presenting Design Ideas: 14.12.10

The landscape designer brought two drawings to show the group. She has created two different spaces, each with its own sense of place. The first one is relaxing with sunken lamps in the floor leading to the entrance through a small square of trees. This could have a much larger sculptural work emerging from the centre of the coppice. This drawing also makes reference to Hendon Brook, which runs under the site and is evident through the peeling back of the surface to reveal a representation of the stream, illuminated through blue glass. The peeling back of the ground would form a curved seat.

The second drawing feels funkier and much more in tune with the ideas generated by the young people with opportunities for the group to stamp their ownership on sculptural elements in the ground. It includes a string of tall illuminating poles leading to the entrance which could be interactive via motion senses built in to the vertical structures.

Perhaps we could all contribute to a text piece which describes our own personal aspirations for the future? The landscape designer described her



reasons for including the different elements and how they fit together to make a balanced functional landscape. The group will meet again later this week to discuss their thoughts and feelings and how we could take the drawings forward to completion in line with the budget, materials and timescale. There are also opportunities to mix and match some of the elements from both drawings to make a new design. Watch this space.

So what do you like... really? 16.12.10

Judith and I talked to the young people about what they liked and disliked about the initial drawings. They liked the idea of text on the floor or somewhere else in the space. Ideas for what the text could be needs careful consideration. A separate workshop would need to be run to determine what the text could be: 'aspirations for the future' would be constructive and relevant to the site. It was suggested that words could be etched into glass, stone or other material on the site. The group generally like the idea of a sculpture on the site and lights in the floor. However they need to be subtle and 'not blind you as you walk over them' like the ones near the library. This group are not that keen on the lights on the poles though the young people at Mansfield did like these. Almost everyone liked the idea of some



reference to the river and that it could be illuminated in some way. People in general like the seat which looks like the ground is curling back, though it was questioned how many people could actually sit on it. The seating area with the flowers was felt not to be a good idea for practical reasons as it is likely that people will walk on the benches and the flowers will get trashed. A couple of young people commented on liking the illuminated curly benches. Strong 'likes' that should be retained: Reference to the river (illuminated), Text on the floor, Lights, Some seating and a Sculptural element.

Off the peg or not? 13.01.11

The landscape designer came to meet the group to confirm likes/dislikes. It wasn't a good turn out and the few who were present simply repeated what had been said in the previous meeting. There is a sense of urgency from the designer, which only succeeds to apply pressure to the decision making process. That's something worth noting as we haven't had that on the project before. It could be a good thing in terms of completing on time but could also jeopardise the overall design quality in favour of 'quick fix' landscaping. I understand that it must

come with the territory to be working against the clock and deadlines etc. The trouble is, it feels



like a pushy consultation process and a long way from collaboration with the group. This approach is different to how things have been done previously on the project. Lets see how it pans out?

Closing in on final design: 20.01.11

Judith and I met with the designer before she gets down to drawing up any final plans. We talked about the choice of materials and how they would all fit into the overall scheme. If we do include any trees, we could allow the group to choose from a number of native species which could sustain local wildlife. After much debate about materials for the site we began to explore ideas and thoughts about the 'revealing bench'.

However things didn't go quite as smoothly when I mentioned the use of weathered steel on the floor. The designer was adamant that metal would not be installed on the floor in any of her designs. Oh well, at least we know who makes the decisions around these parts regarding what can... and can't be installed. Her concerns are for the health and safety of members of the public i.e. slippery surfaces.

It's getting to that stage of the project where I'm also thinking about my own objectives and



responsibilities i.e. the artists book and what I will discuss in its pages.

Some ponderings on recent activity include...

Could the presence of 'time-scale' pressure on the design process be the reason that some town centres look drab and dreary not to mention dysfunctional? Perhaps they were rushed through with very little time to develop ideas to a creative solution, all brought on by fast approaching deadlines?

After thinking about the contentious issue of metal on the floor, I remembered a photograph I took when the group went to Great Ancoats in Manchester. It was a pedestrian area busy with football supporters off to watch Man City. There were benches scattered about the pavement and at the side of the benches were huge weathered steel plates with floral designs installed in the floor. They may have been 8 or 9ft in diameter and proves that things can be done safely with metal. Time for creativity must be embedded in the initial stages of the regeneration process if urban design is to make progress. It should be accompanied by a sense of long term collaboration with the public... not swift consultation.



Presenting final materials: 25.05.11

The landscape designer came down to present samples of the materials to the young people. The footpath will peel back to create a table/bench feature and it will reveal coloured paving slabs to reference the river running under the site.

There will be lights in the floor of the new design and the lighting people brought a fancy light display to demonstrate what can be done with interactive lighting. The illumination display demonstrates how colours and moving light sequences can be activated by users of the space.

Gathering text: 9.06.11

I called in to the new youth centre to gather some ideas for the text on the sculptural bench. Its an amazing new facility and the young people love it. Mat, Charlotte and Dean posed for a quick photo in the lounge area. All the young people are generally very pleased with the project and their contribution. I didn't collect much text from them as we got distracted by all the wonderful activity rooms in their new centre. The more I think of the text on the stone bench, the more I think it will resemble a disfigured headstone in a cemetery.

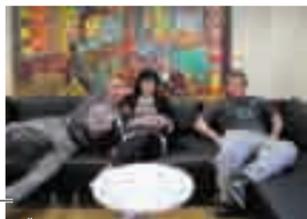
I think we should consider using



different materials for the bench i.e. dare I say it weathered steel or putting the text somewhere else or simply dropping the text idea altogether.

It will be a while before the sculptural bench is installed, especially as the landscaping is likely to be done first. Thats a shame as this is likely to be my last blog entry before I print the book which documents the whole project from the start of this blog in 2008 to 2011.

Further documentation will continue to be uploaded to the blogsite. The address is located at the back of this book.



Reading Between the Lines: A Story of Art and Regeneration in an East Lancashire Town.

In Bradley, time is measured by the journey of a chimney's shadow across a disappeared mill. Retired jockeys tend allotments and washing is hung out like bunting across cobbled backstreets and security fences. Women called Maria own cash and carries and Caths run cafes. People hunt treasure in the rain, draw maps from memory and cook Tattie hash, Curried fish and Millionaire's steak dinners. All the while, a redundant goit weaves its way, shuttle-like, over and under the changing neighbourhood.

These images make up part of an ongoing and episodic tale, recounted by a modern-day Scheherazade from Far East Lancashire, otherwise known as the artist William Titley. Since November 2008, Titley has documented his continued involvement with a scheme to regenerate part of the Bradley ward of Nelson, through a series of online blog entries. Ostensibly a straightforward account of his activities, a closer reading of the Bradley Regeneration Project reveals a rich and complex story, in which the hopes, frustrations, good intentions and miscommunications embodied by regeneration schemes across the country are enclosed within a

portrait of contemporary life in an East Lancashire town.

Titley's story begins with an invitation from Pendle Borough Council to help engage people in the regeneration of Bradley. Although this may seem a strange context for art it is certainly not unusual. In fact, since New Labour's endorsement of art in the early 2000s as a way to enhance "local distinctiveness", create a "sense of place" and raise the "quality of life" in an area, local authorities have been keen to involve art and artists within their own regeneration schemes. Meanwhile, a growing awareness of "socially engaged" or "relational" art practices, in which process is privileged over product, has led to the employment of artists as creative thinkers and relationship builders, rather than simply the makers of objects.

According to Titley, to be an artist is to be a "professional seer", someone who provides new perspectives on a familiar place, reveals hidden secrets and overlooked assets, and visualizes possible futures. Following his appointment in Bradley, Titley encouraged people to see their neighbourhood in new ways, to explore its surface on feet and wheels, to transcribe its tastes, to make paintings of

its past and build models for its future.

At the same time, he warned against the dangers of shortsightedness, particularly in relation to Bradley's industrial heritage, which he worried was falling victim to expediency. Discussing calls for the demolition of a monumental mill chimney, Titley asserted "to see it as an eyesore, is not to see it at all".

However, if Titley is a seer, then he is also a listener. In the mid 1990s, the art critic, Suzi Gablik described how, within certain art practices, a shift had occurred away from the "vision-centered" paradigm of Modernism, with its separation of author and viewer, towards a new model, where a desire for connectivity, empathy and shared understanding had dissolved the boundaries between artist and audience.

Within this context, collective knowledge is produced through a reciprocal process of "enlightened listening" between artist and participants, in which experiences are shared, preconceptions are challenged and learning is engendered on both sides. Forms of enlightened listening occur throughout the Bradley Regeneration Project, disrupting power dynamics and generating a detailed and unique understanding of what Bradley means to the people who live there. For example, when asked to assist with public

consultation, Titley opted for dialogue rather than data collection, by encouraging consultees to question the questioners. Furthermore, the blog reads like an ongoing story of discovery, in which the physical, social and emotional aspects of Bradley are revealed, layer by layer, through the conversations, explorations and creative inventions of Titley and his collaborators.

The production of shared knowledge in connection to a specific place could be conceived as a form of placemaking. Described by architect and planner Schneckloth and Shibley as a practice that endeavors “to give legitimacy to all forms of knowledge”, placemaking can be understood as an attempt to reveal the connections between people and a place, and create a conversational space in which knowledge may be challenged, affirmed and produced. Yet, for such knowledge to truly affect a place, through change or preservation, it must be employed rather than simply acknowledged. For Titley, this involved extending conversations to people with the power to affect Bradley’s future. The blog, in particular, encouraged people who may not encounter one another in everyday life to share their fears and aspirations for the place, be they professional or personal, with a view to influencing real

decisions about Bradley.

Unfortunately, it is in this ambition to effect change that the project becomes unstuck. Despite the blog's high "hit-rate", Titley's appeal for "constructive feedback" is seldom answered and, reading between the lines, some people seem to be confused about what the artist is doing, why he is doing it and what it has got to do with them. The general impression is that creativity is considered important, (so long as it doesn't interfere with existing modes of thinking), public engagement is essential, (if the public only wish to engage so far), and art is fantastic, (as long as it doesn't ask to be taken seriously). As the story develops, the question arises: who is listening to the listener? Artists, it seems, should be seen and not heard.

But, the story has not yet reached its end. It often takes time for the value of new ideas to become appreciated and, even at this late stage, time still remains for new conversations and understandings to occur. Moreover, like any activity that seeks to change attitudes, the true impact of the Bradley Regeneration Project may not be visible for many years, in which time, for better or worse, Bradley will probably be a very different place. Yet, as local authorities are forced to strip their activities to the bare bones of necessity, the project provides a timely opportunity to reflect on

the future of the, often tricky, relationship between art and regeneration, to think about what still needs to be learned and to consider how the production of shared knowledge, through collective practices of seeing and listening, might contribute towards the next chapter in stories such as Bradley's.

Elaine Speight

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Making Sense of Place.

The aspirations underpinning projects of local regeneration are many and varied. Revitalisation can signal the attraction of mobile capital, economic revival and increased social capital amongst a community who, swelled up with newfound pride, become civically engaged. Each local place has its own idiosyncrasies and regardless of how regeneration schemes play out in areas such as Bradley in Nelson, they do share one commonality. This commonality lies in the rhetoric which is mobilised in the promotion of such regeneration agendas, one of strengthening, or in some cases creating, a 'sense of place'. But what is sense of place and how is it constructed?

Sense of place is a notion permeating every aspect of the humanities and is a lens through which to explore for example, art, literature, history or heritage. The field of human geography in particular takes 'place' as its central concern. For geographers such as Yi Fu Tuan and Edward Relph sense of place is the investment of a space with meaning and this meaning is constructed between people, and between people and place. Environmental psychologists develop these ideas to advance a discourse of 'place identity'. Such identity might be imposed upon a place by those in authority as a form of place-making. But in contrast,

we can draw upon places when defining our individual identities; the characteristics of our place can help us account for the way in which we feel different to other individuals or groups in other places.

The notion that we can each make our own meanings is celebrated by the 'cultural turn' experienced across the humanities which embraces plurality; places have endless meanings for any number of individuals, they are 'multilocal' and 'multivocal'.

But if it is going to be possible to recognise these multifarious ways of making sense of place, then individuals and communities must be invited to describe what their place means to them, and one way to do this is through participation in consultation activities. In Bradley, this was a dialogue made possible by the engagement of artist William Titley who, through an artist's residency, was invited to work creatively with local people. Within the broad spectrum of consultation techniques that can be adopted in projects of regeneration, the residency presents the sort of arts based approach which is increasingly recognised for its effectiveness.

Processes of engagement have been modelled as a 'ladder of participation' along which activities may

travel from ‘informing’ to ‘consulting’ to ‘partnership’ then ‘delegation’. Whilst authorities increasingly aspire to the co-production of local decisions through consultation, without timely planning and intervention with genuine respect for the consultation process, the opinions gathered may hold no influence. In these circumstances, consultation attempts fall short and at best, serve only to inform participants of decisions already made.

With sound consultation however, such participation works to nurture a sense of local ownership. We as residents recognise our influence upon our changed local landscapes. We recall the dialogue in which we engaged through the consultation process. We have invested our time and efforts in the changes we see around us. Indeed, before we can feel these new spaces are truly ours, we must work into them a rich patina of meaning through our repeated interactions over time that can begin by participating in consultation activities. In this way, our new places become a ‘topology of memories’, the local landscape working to remind us of events in our own life-stories so that we feel we are ‘insiders’ with a sense of belonging.

Processes of consultation that engage communities, like William’s work in Bradley, serve to advance more rapidly this making of ‘space’ into meaningful ‘place’

for local people. They enable us to create our own place-based memories, writing the new spaces into our life-stories and producing upon our landscapes new 'eruptions of memory' .

In this way meanings are made of new spaces and individual emotional attachments are formed. This experience, intimately bound up with our ownership of local spaces and our sense of individual and collective identity, is central to the construction of a powerful sense of our place.

Dr Stephanie Hawke

International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, Newcastle University.

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5. Arnstein, S. (1969) 'Citizen Participation', *Journal of American Planning Association*, 35, (4), pp. 216-224.
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7. *ibid*



The Boundary: William Titley

Borders and boundaries are what help to make up our identity whether living in a city or in a rural town like Nelson.

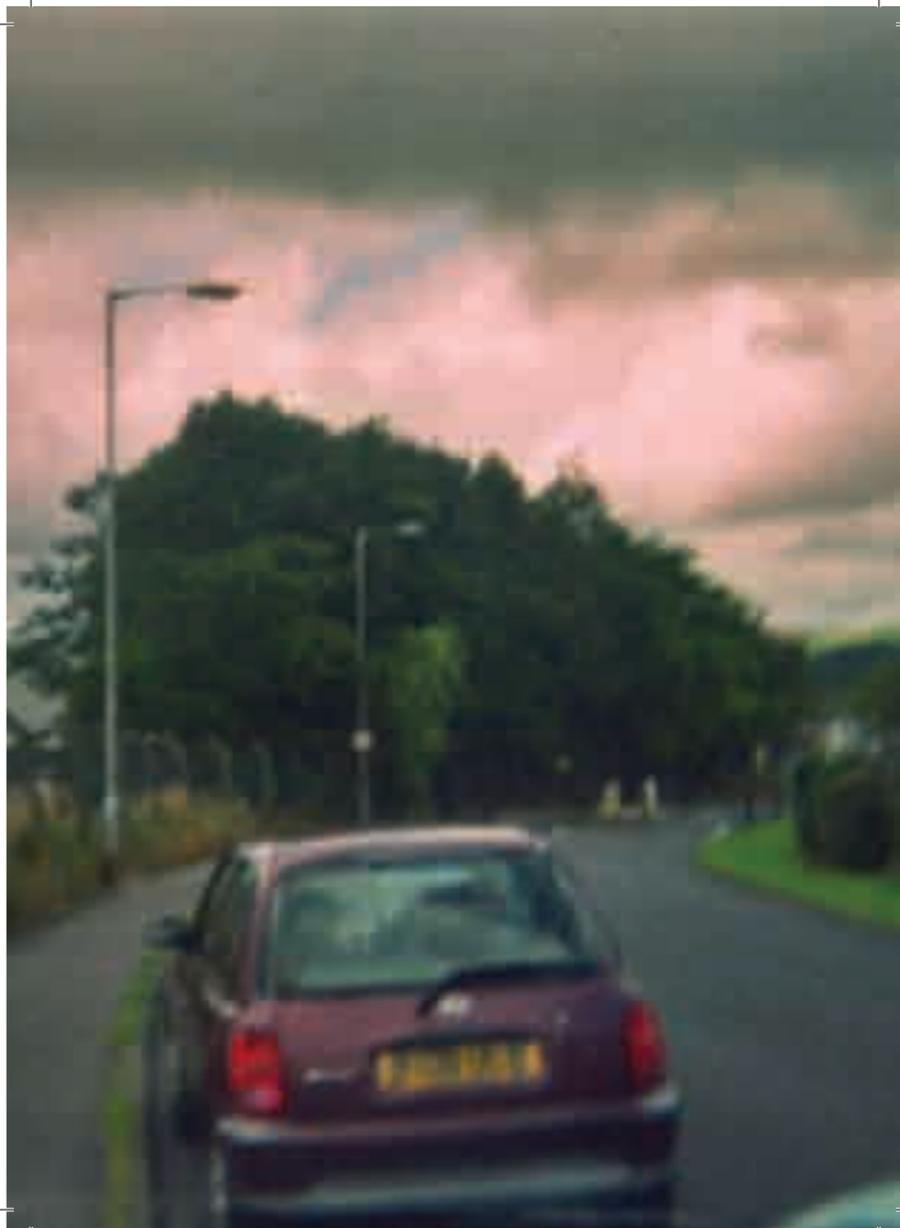
Our notion of an area changes with a growing knowledge and understanding of its properties. The character and nature of a landscape and its use by local people is influential in developing perspectives about identity and ownership. It's people and topographical details are what make it what it is, thus influencing how we ultimately experience it.

The following collection of images were taken by members of the Bradley community while they traced the official political boundaries of their place.

The mapping activity took them to parts of Bradley that they had never seen before and some parts that they didn't know existed.

They used disposable film cameras to record their journey within and around their border.









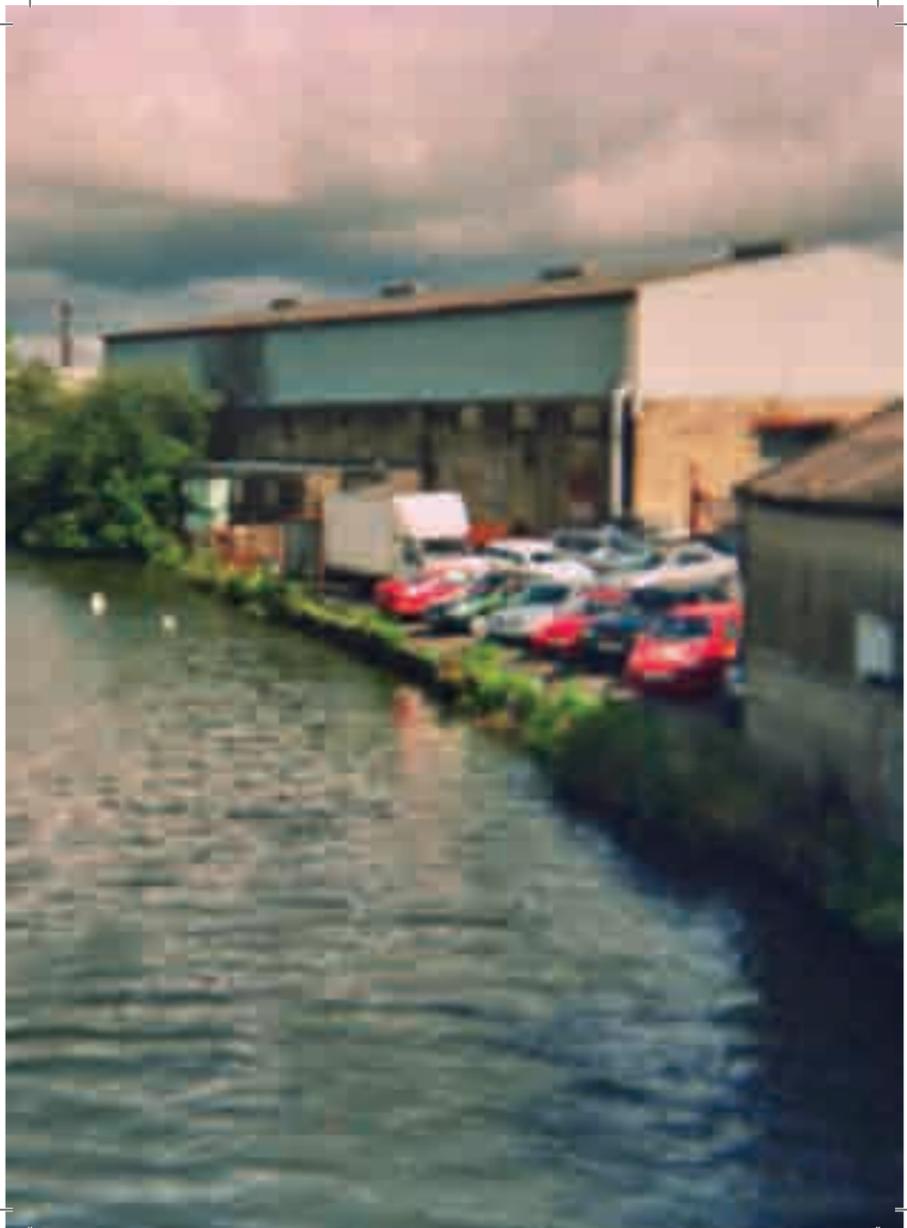








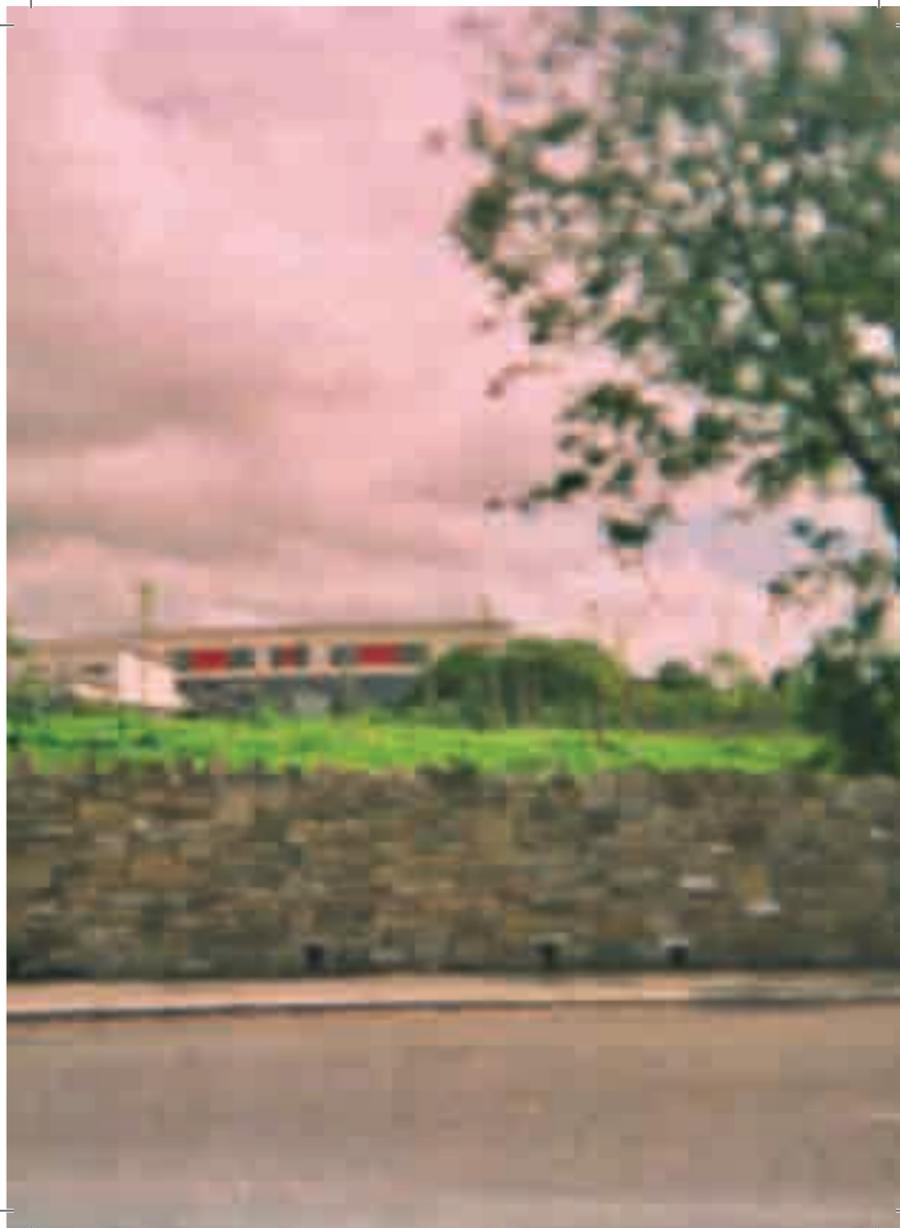




















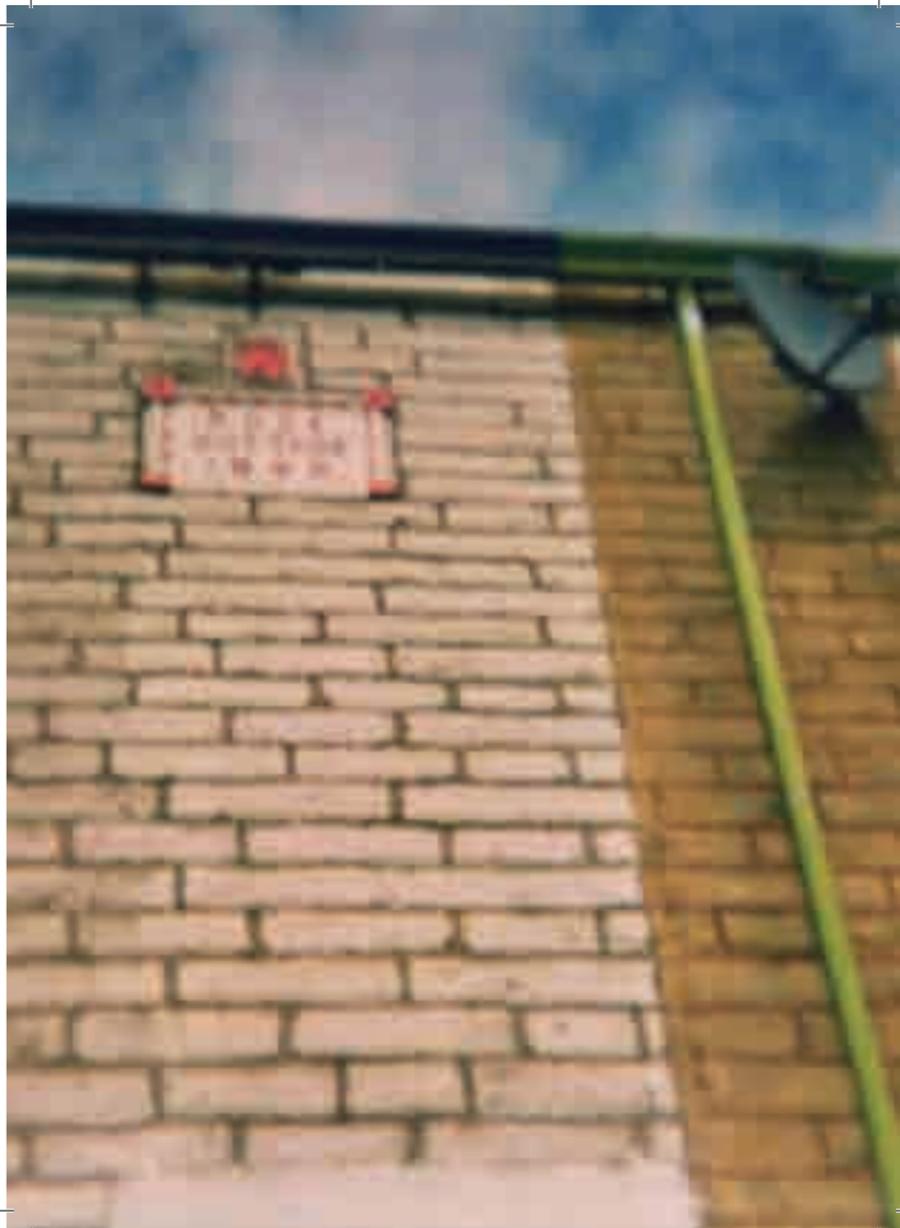
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Canal
Pendle Vale College



Pendle Vale College
Canal

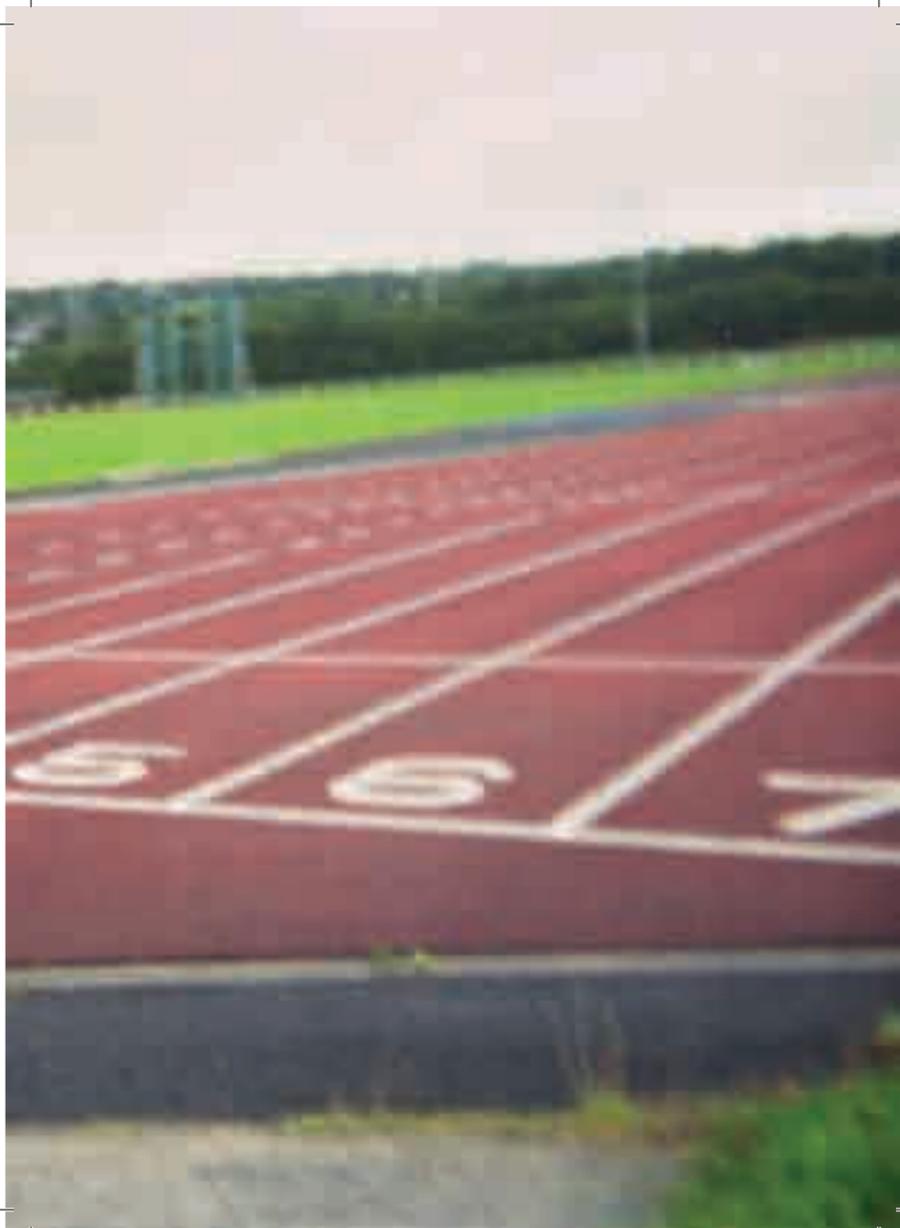


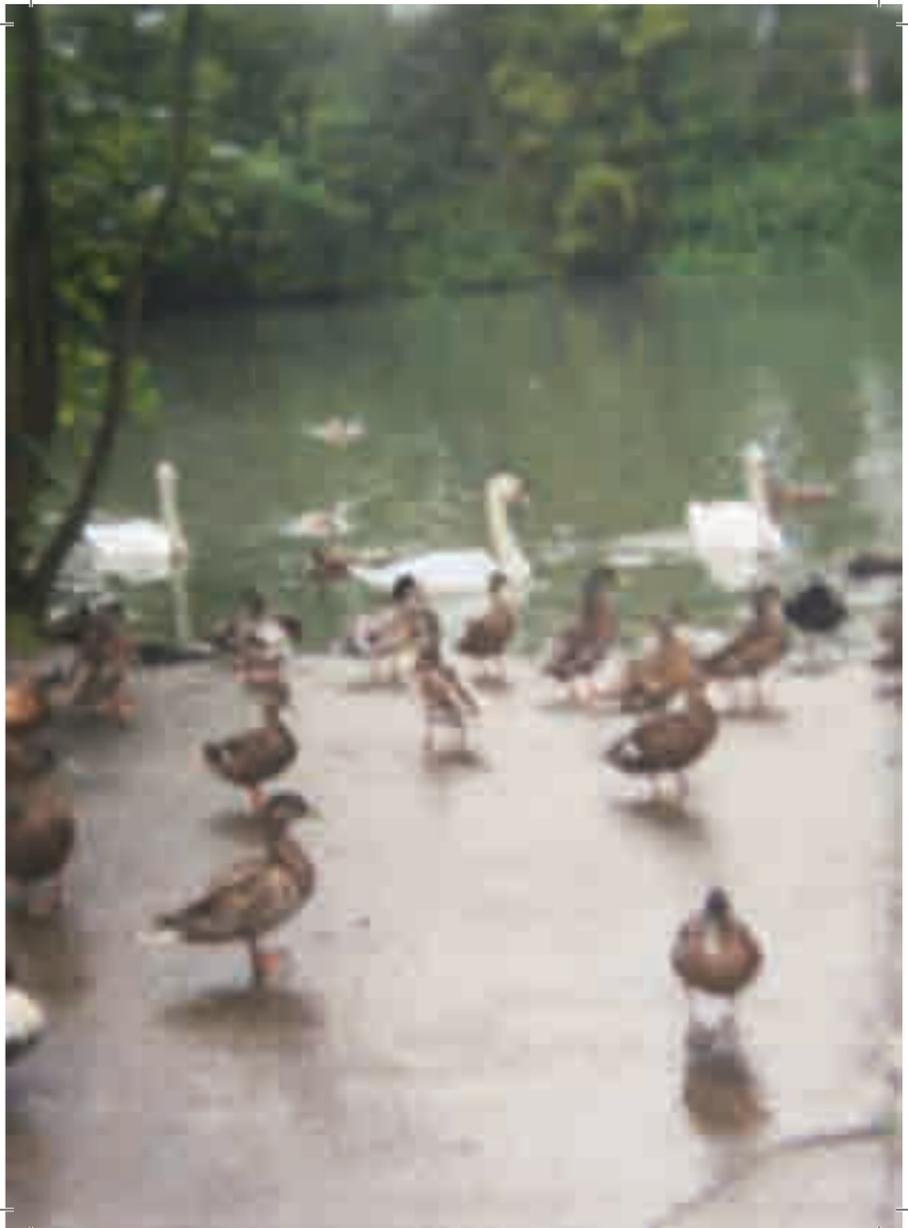




GALDEN VALE



















MiddleRise
P A V I N G

























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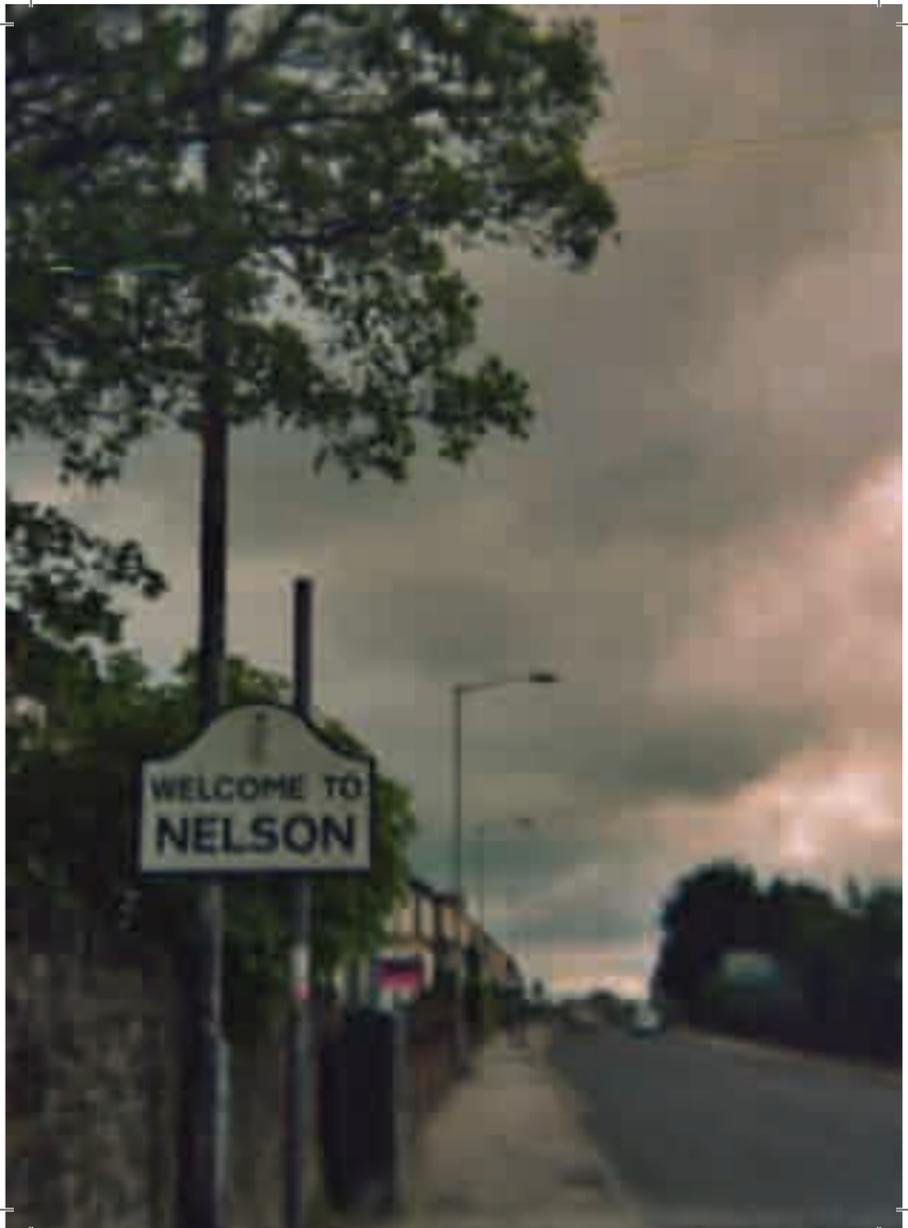
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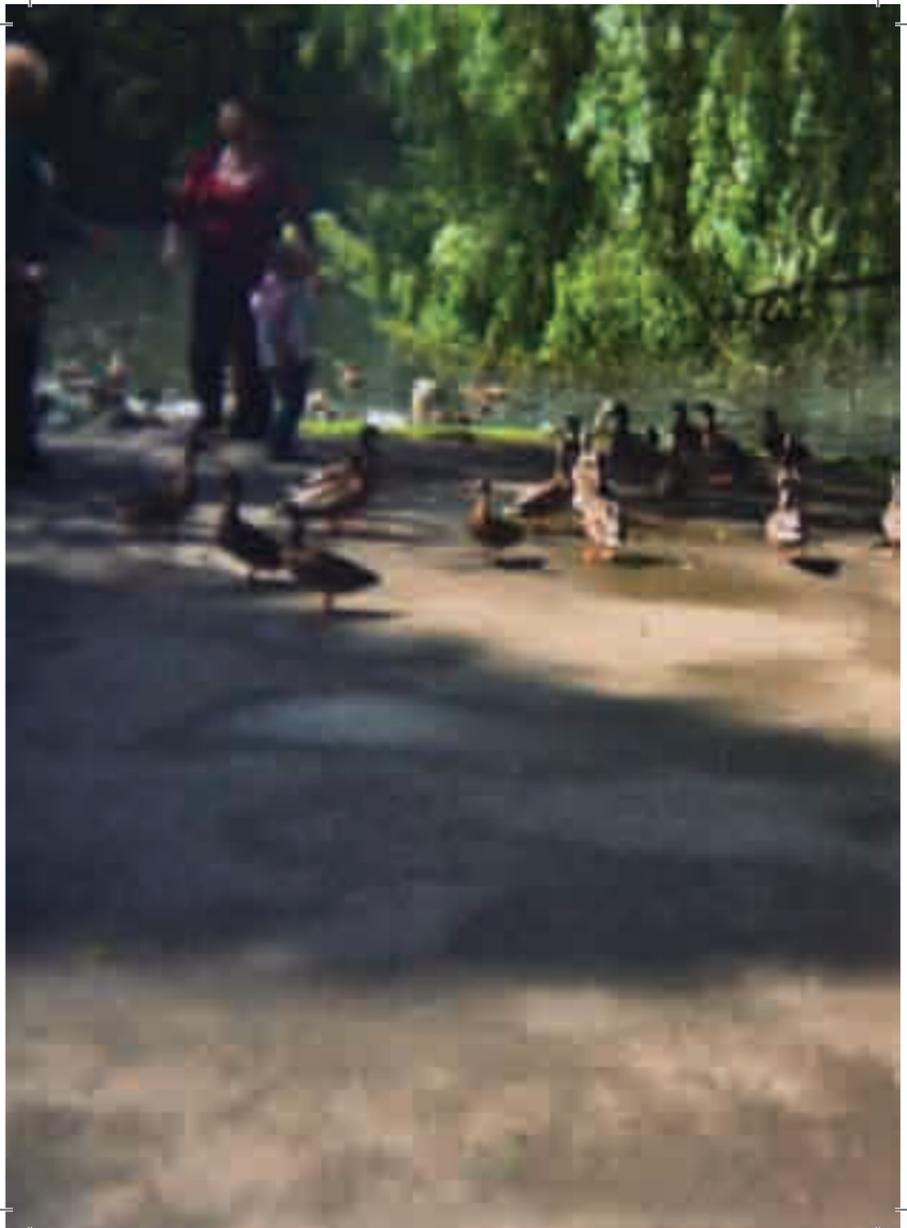














SAT

Last Collection Time
today to Friday

4.00pm





SALE

25% OFF

































































CAUTION !
MAX. HEADROOM
13' 3"

<http://bradleyregen.blogspot.com>

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Regenerate
Pennine Lancashire