Well-Making

Co-building pathways for empathy

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Introduction: the project and activity

This one day interactive workshop at the Wellcome Collection in London 2017 explored new research on inclusive design and empathy with a particular focus on how maker spaces might be better understood as 'well-making spaces': spaces of empathy that promote health and wellbeing. The event included a keynote by Professor Lizbeth Goodman, Chair of Creative Technology Innovation at University College Dublin, founder/director of the SMARTlab and MAGIC (Multimedia and Games Innovation Centre) about her international research and current European Horizon 2020 project. Other participants included, among others: Simon Duncan (Boing Boing: Resilience Research and Practice), Dr Anni Raw (School of Applied Social Sciences, University of Durham), Mah Rana (Artist and research student University College London), Jayne Howard (Director Arts Well) and Karl Royale (Head of Enterprise and Commercial Development University of Wolverhampton), Ben Salter (Course Leader Interior Design Norwich University of the Arts), a diverse interdisciplinary group of designers and design researchers, arts and crafts practitioners, social scientists, arts for health organisations, community partners, and health researchers.

A central interest is how design research methods such as prototyping might be employed with and by communities to co-imagine and speculatively design well-making spaces, material and otherwise, that promote awareness and thinking about the value of making activities and spaces, and how they benefit the health and wellbeing of communities. The event included presentations, discussion, and group prototyping of potential well-making spaces, tools, and approaches that might respond to/emerge from community scenarios and venues including hospitals, online portals, community spaces, educational environments, health settings, existing maker spaces, and domestic settings.
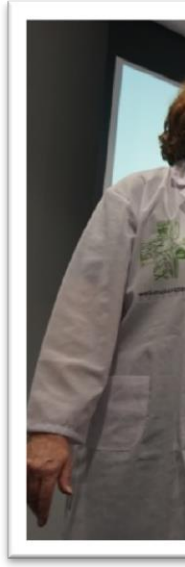
Fiona Hackney and Nick Gant introduce the Well-Making workshop

Context:

Making*ing*, by which we mean the process of making with all its attendant social, sensory, spatial, and skill's-based activities, is central to our conceptualisation and interrogation of Well-Making and the Well-Maker-Space as fluid and unbounded yet shaped and driven by users, processes, interactions, and events. CARE, the AHRC-funded project that initiated this research (https://cocreatingcare.wordpress.com/maker-centric-2016/) , responded to a Connected Communities highlight call to interrogate the value of arts methodologies for community co-production. It aimed to explore and assess the potential of amateur creativity and domestic textile processes as a reflexive methodology to build community assets, resilience, and agency. One important outcome was the degree to which connecting through a shared process of purposeful making helped participants resolve differences, empathize, build confidence and achieve a stronger sense of self, satisfaction, and well-being (Hackney & Figueiredo 2018). Another was that this is not achieved without a degree of struggle and that a clear framework for 'crafty', social design interventions that are meaningful to, and ideally co-produced with and by participants, was required for them to become critical, reflexive makers involved in what we termed the 'untidy', risky, creativity that operates when, for instance, creative interventions make familiar activities strange (Hackney & Maughan 2016a; Hackney *et al* 2016b).

In order to further develop, test, disseminate, and evaluate the wider value and potential impact of this risky, reflexive, critical making for co-producing well-being, CARE PI Hackney teamed up with design researcher and Principal Lecturer University of Brighton, Nick Gant who leads Community21, a social design enterprise that collaborates with community facing organisations to co-define research questions and co-produce practical tools to support well-being (https://community21.org/). Gant worked with Professor Angie Hart on the Connected Communities Designing Resilience project (PIs Erygit-Madwazmuse and Hart) https://community21.org/news/12391_designing_resilience_june_2016) and, along with Hackney, was involved in the AHRC-funded Protopublics Social Design Sprint Workshop 2015, which aimed to prototype design methodologies for community engagement, and proved a catalyst for our thinking about design research, making, and health.

Shared interests in social health and the power of critical making processes (hand and digital) and spaces to build agency, assets, and resilience have led to a series of meetings/discussions with university groups and partners in Brighton and an event at EU Design Days, Brussels, September 2016 (https://www.eudesigndays.eu/events/well-making-and-making-well-building-new-approaches-inclusivity-through-co-creative-social). Well-Making builds on a combination of Gant's interest in maker spaces/places and wellbeing and Hackney's work on craft process and health. This includes Gant's design and practice-based research: Community21's work with Young Digital Citizenship, the Place-Maker-Space, Making Futures, Plymouth, undertaken with Katie Hill, (http://makingfutures.plymouthart.ac.uk/media/51150/nick-gant.pdf), and the AHRC Project Designing Resilience. Well-Making also builds on Hackney's AHRC-funded research about the value of collaborative crafts processes: the activist project Craftivist Garden #wellMAKING (http://projects.falmouth.ac.uk/craftivistgarden), Beyond the Toolkit: Understanding & Evaluating Crafts Praxis for Health and Wellbeing (http://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research-case-studies/beyond-the-toolkit), and her work as DOI for Sarah Desmarais's Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) 'Use Your Hands for Happiness': Crafts practice as a means of building community assets, health and well-being' (original title) in partnership with Arts for Health Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. (http://www.artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk/news/use-your-hands-for-happiness).

More recently, Gant, Hackney and Hill ran a two-day workshop at the 2017 Making Futures conference in Plymouth (www.plymouthart.ac.uk/latest/calendar/making-futures-2017) which included peer-reviewed papers and collective prototyping to explore the concept of the Well-Maker Space. This provided a model for the prototyping method, designed by Gant, who produced the Well-Maker tool-kit pictured below, which was further developed at the Wellcome Well-Making event.
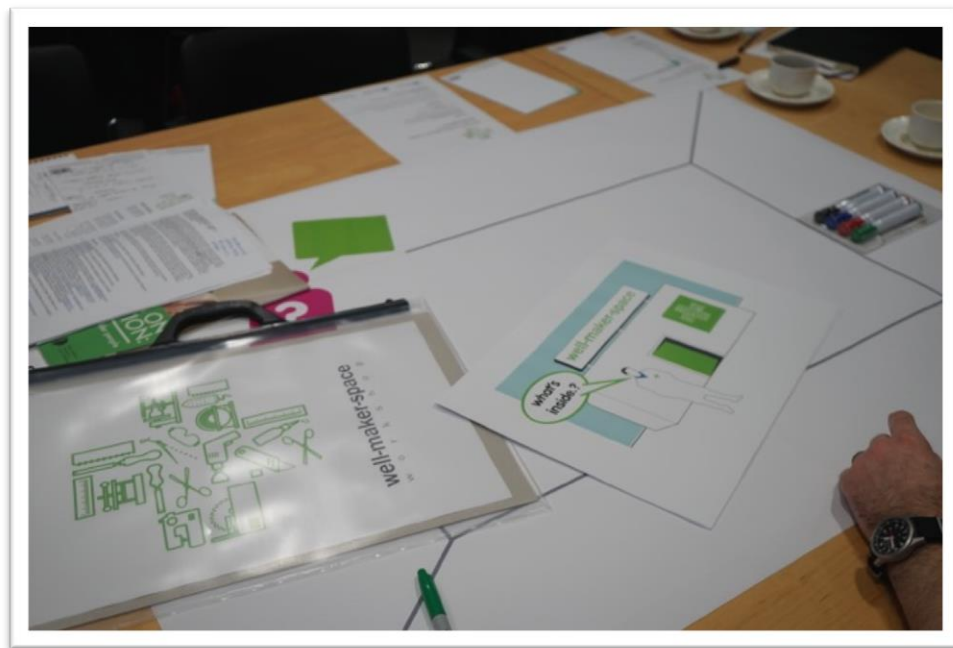
Well-Making project materials for prototyping workshop

Project team:

Fiona Hackney: The well-being value of collective making has been a recurrent theme of research to date, not only as a means of mindful distraction and absorption but also because the process has forged a safe 'holding space' in which dissonant voices, feelings, experiences, knowledge, beliefs and agencies can be expressed and worked through (Hackney et al 2016b). The affective and sometimes disruptive value of crafting together has emerged in various ways in different projects, shaped by the specificities of those involved, the conditions, and contexts of participation, which range from, for instance a pilot project

with Arts for Health Cornwall working with residents in an assisted housing scheme (Future Thinking for Social Living 2015 http://ft4sl.tumblr.com/) and, more recently, a sewing project with Mah Rana and her mother who has early stage Alzheimer's (see Rana and Hackney 2018). During Craftivist Garden #wellMAKING often very private experiences of poor health and stories of struggle with hospitals, care homes, health and social services emerged, were shared with the group and agentised in the Wellmaking Manifesto (http://projects.falmouth.ac.uk/craftivistgarden/wellmaking-manifesto-booklet/). Within the context of healthcare services making, envisaged as a set of embodied, interactive activities undertaken by people to promote creative agency, takes on new risky connotations that can disturb, even threaten assumptions about ideal passive 'patients' and hierarchical power structures (Pajaczkowska 2017). A central research question is how, when, where, and why making might become Well-Making for different groups and individuals, and how this relates to specific needs, challenges, aspirations, imperatives, practices, processes, conditions, and contexts of practice? Our ongoing work suggests that this has something to do with how through iterative acts of doing, being, and becoming, making opens a space for surprising and unexpected things to happen, sitting as it does at the centre of intersections/tensions between hand and brain, the intellect and the sensory, material and idea, memory and imagination, experience and knowledge, risk and safety, unconscious and conscious, self and other, space and place.

Nick Gant's practice-based-research at the University of Brighton and research-based-practice (Community21) has been exploring the role of making and maker spaces in a range of nuanced community settings. These include collaborative creative communities established between the UK and remote communities in South Africa and Indonesia enabled through internet enabled technology, maker workshops in a community pub on a social housing estate, and 'making culture' by establishing a maker space in a museum in a culturally impoverished town. The Well-Maker-Space development method employed at the Wellcome workshop emerged from the prototyping event at Making Futures 2017, itself a further iteration of The Place-Maker-Space workshop (Making Futures 2015), which engaged specifically with *place*. This event and related papers helped to shape the theoretical and physical creation of a prototype space that was installed on a development site in Brighton as a 'living lab' space for research and public engagement. Following the

success of this process we revisited this methodology as a means to enrich a constructive, research through design approach to support diverse research perspectives feeding into the speculative design specification of a Maker Space as a means to build, then deploy and further interrogate the insights through practical application and analysis. In this case it is hoped that the Well-Maker-Space specification developed through the workshop and this paper will support the creation of a community resource within a care home in East Sussex in 2018. The results of this will be published in the forthcoming special issue (*Journal of Applied Arts for* Health) and elsewhere.

Katie Jane Hill is a lifelong maker and, as her work in design research and social design has developed, making has become a key tool for engaging people in research and design. Located in Leeds Katie has worked across a range of educational and third sector organisations finding opportunities to apply design research to social and environmental issues: supporting social enterprises focussed on recycling and sustainable consumption; community gardening and food growing; supporting innovation in new researcher communities; and designing engagement tools for community development. A core interest has been the development of design practice to address complex social and environmental problems that starts to exist outside traditional boundaries of the design industry and identifies new roles for design and designers. As such the Well-Making and the Well-Maker-Space becomes an example of expanding the potential for designers to re-design their role in society. Change is needed in many aspects of current structures and practices to move towards a more equitable and responsible society. Designers have the capability to enable change, but first need to design change in design practice in order to contribute to the much-needed changes in the wider world. Working with sustainable fashion designer Lizzie Harrison, Katie submitted a workshop proposal to Making Futures 2015 using methods developed through the AHRC-funded 'Making as Enquiry': a co-design and co-production research project (Hill et al. 2014). Nick invited Katie and Lizzie to facilitate making activities and create a collaborative collage record of the workshop (Hill and Harrison, 2016). The idea of using the conference track as a prototyping space to generate material rather than just reflect on past research thus developed, something that has informed subsequent events, including this Well-Making workshop. Katie has and continues to work on projects about making and co-production with Fiona, including a new AHRC project exploring collaborative

making as a means to change consumer behaviour and promote sustainable clothing practices.

Participants get hands on with the Crafty Corner Sewing Workshop run by Mah Rana and Katie Hill

## Method & Methodology: Making as Design Research, a Tool for Co-Generating insight

The Well-Making and Well-Maker-Space initiatives respond to growing popular interest in creative making as well as a perceived need amongst policy makers to evidence makings' well-being value. It does this through risky (playful) practice by building and testing prototypes to help us consider the complex set of interactions, experiences, feelings, sensations, achievements, challenges, frustrations, thought processes, ideas, among other things, that we experience when we make (things) together, and the potential health benefits of these activities. Well-making draws on theory and methods from crafts thinking, design, and arts for health research and before discussing the workshop in more detail this section outlines some of the underpinning approaches and ideas.

Design research, or as Stappers *et al* (2018: 171-2) term it 'research through design', is a relatively new area of phenomenon driven studies in which knowledge is generated through a design action, 'drawing in support knowledge from different disciplines, and reflecting on both the design action and an evaluation of the design result in practice'. With its commitment to achieving real world improvement and change, design research is challenging, exploratory, and depends on processes of 'ideation, creativity, reflection, making, trying, and association' rather than linear logical argument. Prototypes build on hands-on exploration and the application of knowledge and connect to possible applications. Crucially, a research prototype is not a finished product but rather is unfinished and open for experimentation, 'a tool for generating insight' (Stappers et al 2018: 167) into phenomena, in this case how the spaces, practices and processes of making/fabrication might engender health and wellbeing.

Making, like research and design, is an iterative process that can increase understanding or result in solutions. It nonetheless has its own disciplinary characteristics and qualities that produce distinctive forms of knowledge which, according to crafts authority Martina Margetts, are 'dangerously disregarded by policy-makers'. Margetts argues that, based on 'a sequence of repetitious acts, incrementally forming objects with meaning', the hidden embodied knowledge of making is that it challenges the sharp distinction between the 'reflective' and the 'active', the 'mental' and the 'physical' that is so 'detrimental to societal progress and well-being' (Margetts 2011: 39). Making, as such, occupies a useful central ground that can encompass research, design, reflection, action, mental, and physical *being*. Located in the experiential present, it connects with the past and future in unique ways. While research might be conceived of as concerning 'what is' questions, aiming to understand the past and present to provide knowledge that will be of use in the future, and design focuses on 'how to?' to construct a positive future (that may not yet exist) (Stappers *et al* 2018), the embodied engagement with materials, processes, and skills produces 'what is?' knowledge through the processual experience of doing through making. Involving mental and physical, reflective, and active modes of engagement, making draws on the past through embodied experience to better understand current phenomena and envisage an improved future that is potentially more creative, engaged, connected and, thereby, healthier.

As with CARE and Making as Enquiry, Well-Making envisages design research as **a co-**productive process of co-creation or co-design. Claire Pajaczkowska, a speaker at the Well-Making workshop, brought design and empathy together to address the value of co-design as an empathic process when working with care home residents in her AHRC-funded Empathy By Design project. A series of workshops involving creative making, sewing, upcycling, reminiscence, singing - the workshop as 'sound envelope' - talk, new technologies and traditional home craft processes (design is defined inclusively as: art, craft, hobbyism, workmanship, artisanship, pastimes, material culture) brought together the paradoxical 'supposedly spontaneous emotional response to suffering' implied by the term empathy, and the 'concept of instrumental and utilitarian functionality' which is widely associated with design. The project's aim was to test the practice of design as a research method, and a way of 'mitigating the institutional objectification of residents in care' (Pajaczkowska 2014: 5). An important finding was the 'gift' (Mauss 1970) of agency through choice, risk, chat, luxury, sensory experience etc. as residents became equal participants in a creative process that was 'done with' them. This operated in opposition to the orthodox care process (passivity inducing medication, body management routines etc.) that, Pajaczkowska observed, was 'done to', constructing people as 'lounge-ready residents' (2014: 5-8). The agencies of co-designed making operated empathically to help participants recover a sense of self: self-recovery through self-repair as human *beings*, something that we explored in our lunch-time sewing circle (see images above and below). As Pajaczkowska remarked

> … the action and movements of hands holding needle and thread looping back on itself in a stitch, made through the folds of cloth, is one of the oldest, most basic, most fundamental, most simple and most eloquent of forms of articulate self-reflexivity. (2014: 21)
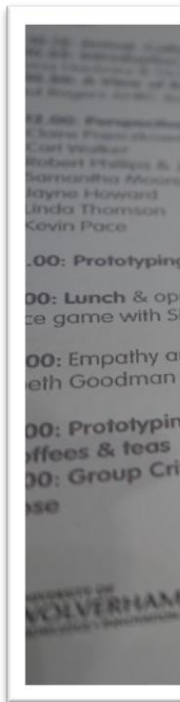
Well-Maker materials and hand-sewn badges made during the lunch-time crafts session

Event: The Well-Making Workshop

Perspectives on Well-Making:

Fiona and Nick introduced the Well-Making and Well-Make-Space concept, its evolution over various iterative projects, and the aims of the prototyping workshop. This was followed by scene-setting presentation by Professor Paul Rodgers, AHRC Research Fellow Design, titled 'A View of the UK Design Research Landscape…', and a series of short talks providing perspectives on Well-Making from a variety of disciplines to consider questions of method, representation, design, technologies of health, context (cultural, political, research), evaluation, creative method, and social science approaches. Dr Claire Pajaczkowska began with Empathy By Design (EBD), which brought together health, policy and community arts specialists. Claire described the creative method, undertaken with Dr Julia Behseta (RCA), which foregrounded interdisciplinary and collaborative process. Her colourful slides of beautiful, bespoke, upcycled glass tiles made by participants to decorate the care home they shared were the products of a four-stage cyclical practice-led research method involving: 1) embodied encounter with materials 2) prototype testing 3) what Pajaczkowska (2014: 20) termed, a 'hermeneutic moment of interpretation' before 4) further construction.

One important insight from EBD for Well-Making was the conceptualisation of design research as hermeneutics, an interpretative method that translates 'implicit silent, or tacit, knowledge into explicit or verbal and syntactic form' to access emotional and relational intelligences (Pajaczkowska 2014: 19). This process of translation and explication through making is both central to the Well-Maker Space, which potentially occupies new spaces between existing places: the crafts workshop, fabrication lab, domestic space, community venue, care home, youth club (see prototyping workshop below), for instance, and the act of Well-Making through hand and digital fabrication. As Neil Gershenfeld observed when taking a Fab Lab to a renowned arts and crafts college in America, the 'Lab was like a medium-converter': designing was done with traditional crafts media while digital technologies mapped designs from one media to another, enabling that which is implicit in the design – the product of tacit knowledge, the workmanship or risk, and the hand – to become readily realisable, explicit, and available in new ways (Charny 2011: 62).

Dr Claire Pajaczkowska talking about her AHRC project Empathy By Design (funded under the Cultural Value scheme).

Linda Thomson's talk located Well-Making in a social prescribing context through an exploration of the AHRC-funded project Museums on Prescription, run jointly by University College London and Canterbury Christ Church University (https://culturehealthresearch.wordpress.com/museums-on-prescription/). The three year project worked with adults at risk of social isolation to evaluate the wellbeing benefits of creative methods and co-production for social prescribing in museums-based programmes and settings. Combining qualitative and quantitate evaluation methods (UCL Wellbeing Measure, WEMBS, R-UCLA) researchers tracked and measured elements such as mental wellbeing after each session, and social inclusion over the progress of the project. Findings included increased levels of creativity, engagement, social activity, improved quality of life, and willingness to return to the museum, among other things, as a result of active (as opposed to passive) engagement with creative making, object handling etc. (Davies et al 2012). The workshops were designed to produce a framework for participation; it was found that participants prompted to be creative were more resistant, whereas those given free

reign (within established limitations) were more likely to engage. The team concluded that the subjective wellbeing that results from self-directed expression and purposeful working is a distinctive benefit of creative work, which operates beyond, and in addition to, the benefits of social engagement (Johnson et al 2017). Such agentised making indicates how the museum became a Well-Maker Space for participants who used arts and crafts techniques (from painting to weaving) to engage creatively with museum artefacts, give talks, and co-produce an exhibition and resources, positioning the museum as a creative and therapeutic space, alongside its role as a place-holder for culture and heritage.

Thomson also discussed the issue of 'flow states' (Csikszentmihalyi 1975): self-reported periods of euphoric feelings when immersed in creative activities on a sliding scale between 'boredom' (when skills exceed challenges) and 'anxiety' (when challenges exceed skills). There are interesting parallels here between woodworker and crafts theorist David Pye's (2015/1968) concept of the 'workmanship of certainty'(involves the use of tools such as jigs to limit risk in making) and the 'workmanship of risk' (hand-making where the outcome depends solely on the maker's skills and abilities). Equipped with computers and digital fabrication technologies (routers, 3D printers etc.), the Maker Space might be conceived of as a space of certainty (the workmanship of certainty). When combined with 'risky' making practices (arts, crafts, writing, dance, music or visualisation skills for instance), however, it becomes the ideal space 'safe risk taking', the kinds of risk that include acquiring new skills and learning from mistakes that help address anxiety, build confidence, and a sense of achievement and fulfilment.

Dr Carl Walker, Reader in Applied Social Science, University of Brighton, argued that conventional diagnosis and treatment regimes all too often misunderstand human distress and wellbeing as a set of entities to be acquired or internalised qualities of individuals. Instead he proposes a conceptualization of wellbeing as a 'set of effects produced in specific times and places as situated and relational' (Atkinson 2013). Health and wellbeing must be seen in conjunction with wider issues such as debt (debt and wellbeing) in order, for instance, that we explore new democratic ways of generating flexibility and accountability in local policy making in terms of rents, council tax, loans, furnished tenures etc. Recognising the deteriorating infrastructures of public health is essential something that, in part, might

be achieved by creating a co-produced space to name them, make them visible and rebuild. In relation to this, and drawing on the strategies of 'statactivism', Walker works with teams of academics to create a space to connect people's beliefs, values and desires for their health services with those who commission services and shape local and national policy frameworks through the Brighton Citizens Health Services Survey (http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/bchss/about-the-survey/#.W2hradJKg2w) and has developed similar for higher education (https://smsproject.wordpress.com/about/). Walker ended with a reference to 'zone of possibilities': spaces where distress can be dispersed or stretched beyond the self and people can experience sanctuary. His work on the situated and relational nature of wellbeing and the need for applied research beyond conventional health settings has much to offer our understandings of well-making-places and well-making.

Dr Samantha Moore from University of Wolverhampton's talk, 'The Collaborative Cycle: Animated Documentary', lightened the mood with its focus on visual media and fun, even in the most intense, serious and seemingly inaccessible environments, in this case the science laboratory and research on septin cage assembly. Sam spoke about her work in documentary animation, including short animations The Beloved Ones (2007) (https://vimeo.com/24029766), Doubled Up (2004) (https://vimeo.com/19516862), which developed from her own emotional experience of giving birth to twins, and Success with Sweet Peas (2003). Sam's animations often have a science/health focus. Her clear-sighted intelligence, creativity, and humour result in films that are both challenging and accessible, providing a visual, emotive language that broaches the divide between the 'two cultures' of art and science. The talk examined *Loop* her documentary about the micro biological research done at Serge Mostowy's lab at Imperial College London (supported by the Wellcome Trust and Garfield Weston). Focusing on developing visual language as a means to communicate team members' experience of collaborative working, and their own individual place in that team, the film gently unpacked the tensions and politics of working in what, despite the intentions of the lead scientist, is necessarily a very hierarchical structure. Team member Stephen Buranyi's drawings of proteins bound by similar 'spheres of influence', for instance, produced forms that connected with Sam and animator Tilley Bancroft's interest in textile arts and crochet. This resulted in the creation of balls of 'plarn' (plastic and yarn)

which were filmed using sound reactive colour changing lights to evoke septin proteins (see www.smaanthamore.co.uk, eyefulofsound.blogspot.co.uk), an example of Pajaczkowska's practice as hermeneutics: an interpretative translation of 'implicit silent, or tacit, knowledge into explicit or verbal and syntactic form' (2014: 19).

The afternoon session opened with a joint presentation by Professor Lizbeth Goodman on 'Empathy and Presence for Well-Making' and Dr Alison Williams. Professor Goodman has worked at the intersection of community co-design for creativity and social inclusion, assistive technologies and empathetic education strategies, and maker culture for decades. Her talk focused on EU-funded projects, digital materialisation of 3D visualisations made by as well as for people with diverse abilities and differences. Among other things, Goodman argued that design co-production in maker spaces offer a space for well-being. Alison Williams presented her research findings about the physical space elements that actively support creativity, and by extension, well-making, enhancing well-being and quality of life (QoL). It focused three key themes: 1) The creative footprint (unique to each individual) 2) The five discrete spaces needed for different people at different stages of the creative process (and how to hack existing spaces, and design new ones) 3) Creating and maintaining an affective space to nurture and hold quality of life (QoL) and well-being. As such, her talk formed a rich basis for the subsequent prototyping activities.

Drawing on Resnick's observations in kindergarten classes, Williams employed a spatial/interaction grammar: meaning (the extent to which a space does or does not support and sustain creativity), lexis (three components: the spaces themselves, their sensory properties, and affordances that support creative behaviours), syntax (the rule set of creative behaviours – auditory, visual and kinaesthetic – that result in creative outputs), to argue that, at a meta-level, creativity results when people engage or disengage, on their own, or with other people, information, and ideas. She organised spaces into five categories, elements of which need to be present if a space is to engage (or promote engagement): 1) Den: when we need to go off on our own 2) Bazaar: when we want to seek out new stimuli – art gallery, market, film – whatever gives us ideas and provocation 3) Dwelling: when we are working as a team and need to just get on with the making 4) Neighbourhood: where groups can get together and metaphorically hang out over the

garden fence, invite folks round etc., and 5) Plaza: where we can watch the world go by, enjoy and enhance the serendipity that happens. An important consideration is that we are all different and the challenge is to create a space or series of spaces where each creative foot print is sustained, valued and respected. When that happens, the demarcations between the spaces dissolve, and there is a free flow of people in and out of the physical space – and in and out of the internal emotional, affective, cognitive space as well. The atmosphere becomes one of safety, one where quality of life is enhanced and grows, regardless of physical or financial or other restriction, resulting in nurturing, sharing, and trust.

William's final slide modelled how her Quality of Life, Parkinson's dance, art, and research interest groups worked (Williams & Wright 2016); it also modelled her own journey through making and art work to well-being – moving from the restitution narrative to the quest narrative (Houston 2015).

Prototyping:

For the prototyping Well-Making processes and spaces element of the day we divided workshop participants into four groups and assigned each group a case study challenge prompt (see below) and response kit: cards with speech bubble texts and key questions, drawing and making materials, a large sheet of paper representing the maker 'space'. The prompt scenarios were written by team members and partners and developed from a mixture of lived experience and research. For example, Group 1's challenge (the older person with restricted mobility) emerged from Sarah Desmarais's ethnographic study of using a 'crafts on prescription' approach with groups in Cornwall. Group2's challenge came

from Hackney's observations of her teenage son's experience of an eating disorder, and Group 3 and 4's prompts came from Simon Duncan's experience working with young people with partner organisation Boing Boing (young people with learning difficulties). We added two blank profiles so that groups could also contribute their own scenarios if required. There was some criticism that the prompt profiles were too generic, and one useful step in future research would be to consider how to make this profiling method more inclusive and relevant by including it in the co-production process with partners and participating groups. The following section describes the scenario challenges and the groups' prototype responses.

Group 1: Older person with restricted mobility who is isolated at home after the local social club closed due to funding cuts

Profile: I am in my eighties and have trouble with my legs. I can get about with a walking frame and have a mobility vehicle to get to the shops, but it's exhausting. Despite tiring easily I am very social, and love to have a cup of tea and a chat with others. I also like keeping busy and am a great knitter. I've done it all my life. It's easy and relaxing, keeps my fingers mobile and I can make little gifts for friends and family. I made a jumper for my granddaughter last week - she looked lovely in it. A few weeks ago the social club that I go to every Wednesday closed. Council cuts they said…what do we pay our taxes for! It's not so easy to keep in touch now, and I feel lonely and bored at home alone all day

Challenge: How can I keep in touch with my friends and neighbours when we have no club to go to, and how might I use my resources and skills to help me do this, despite my lack of mobility?

Prototype & Reflection:

The prototype explored the development of facilities and mechanisms to 'shift' the scale and 'knit' different scalar platforms of making that enable communities of interest and relationship to interrelate and interact in a 'seamless' fashion. The role of technology alongside analogue making processes can amplify the value and power of 'local', knots in a inter-connected network or threads in a 'social fabric'.

Augmented-reality enabled fabrics can support social exchanges between disparate or dislocated communities through smart technology – where the actual, material texture and pattern could be recognised across the platform and trigger historic, archived content and / or new interactions with participants.

Fiona and Nick display Group 1's prototype for discussion

Group 2: Young person excluded from school due to poor mental health

Profile: I became anorexic two years ago and am now 15. I spent a year in and out of hospitals ending with 6 months in a specialist Eating Disorder unit hundreds of miles from my home. I am a boy and feel especially embarrassed about my situation, which none of my peers or even teachers seem to understand. I tried to get back to school but the voice in my head telling me I have to exercise all the time was too strong. Sitting in class was agony and I started to self-harm and had suicidal thoughts. I am doing my GCSEs at home online, but am extremely isolated from my friends.

Challenge: I like films, card games and online gaming, anything that is distracting and drowns out the anorexic voice in my head. I would love to find a way to get together with my friends again, even for a short time, and find a way for them to understand just a little how I am feeling. Most of all I want to be normal.

Carl Walker, Mary Darking and Robert Phillips present their prototype Well-Making space

Prototype & Reflection:

Group 2's prototyping discussion focused on how to redesign/reimagine the youth club for 21st century young people to respond to the pressures they are having to deal with in daily life, including pressure from school curricula, social pressures from social media around appearance, self-image, status etc. The youth club as place of gathering (finding friends, peer groups), relaxation/escape but also a way of being present, trying things out and getting involved and challenging oneself, but without pressure. The questions they asked included: what kind of activities should these spaces include/enable? How to build spaces that are sustainable (socially and otherwise)? How to use anti-spaces/dead spaces in cities, in touch areas for instance? How to deal with gender bias? How might we learn from existing clubs (boxing clubs etc. with their mechanics and skills sets) to adapt to and shape well-making agendas?

One important consideration was the question of ownership, the group were aware that in order for a well-maker space be useful/meaningful the users were the experts and had to drive design. A central question therefore is how to use co-production to 'start a conversation' about well-making spaces and activities, and about young people's needs to feel good, fulfilled, satisfied, connected, happy, challenged in good ways, stimulated, creative, build sense of self and achievement etc., and what kind of spaces and activities are required to enable this. Conversely what would help provide a space/place/process of trust in which to safely explore/share problems they are struggling with: anxiety, depression, self-esteem, self-harming etc. Much of this is to do with building a space for connecting a community of like-minded young people. The group conceptualised the Well-Maker space as a 'holding space' which is neither school and nor home, but might serve as a means to reference/critique/reimagine both; a safe space in which the questions of well-making (getting, keeping and interrogating wellness) might be explored through as an iterative processes of playful collective prototyping through making.

Well-Making and the Well-Making space began to be envisaged in terms of a self-help group (a repair café for the self) – a space for connecting that enables participants to build on their own experiences/expertise and build confidence by helping others. This was seen as a

means to 'push back' on the patriarchal/hierarchical nature of 'health culture' and the education system, and instead build on models of community mental health advocacy groups, youth groups, and processes of social prescribing. The group started to think about 'serious play' and community resources such as maker libraries, loaning tools and resources, digital and otherwise so that well-maker spaces become resource banks of different affordances built by different groups and users to share: skills, artefacts, appliances, models, methods, artefacts, stories, journeys, activities, that respond to and communicate particular experiences and conditions, building an empathetic environment and community in common.

The group acknowledged the importance of finding pillars in the community/existing infrastructures of good practice for sharing skills and resources such as Solihull Bike Fixer, Library of Things, Hoxton (https://www.libraryofthings.co.uk), The People's Fridge (https://www.peoplesfridge.com). Discussion then moved to the need for experienced and qualified people to staff/facilitate such spaces – a form of Well-Maker youth leader, and appropriate codes of conduct and safe guarding, the use of vouchers, volunteers, resourcing (time banks) etc.

Group 3: Recently bereaved young person

> **Profile:** Young person who has recently experienced the death of a close relative or friend who is now prone to fits of anger and sadness

> **Challenge:** How can I find a way to grieve and cope with my feelings of loss and rage without hurting those around me?

Ben Salter and Samantha Moore with Goup 3's 'Big Ass Table' Well-Maker space

Prototype & Reflection:

Responding to this challenge, Samantha Moore and her colleagues drew on her experience of working with animation for health and wellbeing, and animating memories. The space is organised in differentiated areas to accommodate and enable the expression of emotions including anger and frustration (a sound proof booth for crockery smashing!), creativity (the arts and crafts workbench), writing (desk), sociability (the conversation corner), physical activity (the dance floor), nature (trees), and a bed for dreaming and tapping into the unconscious, a kitchen for cooking. These areas might be interconnected (the process of dreaming connecting with the practice of writing and visualising dreams in the writing and art areas), they also connect with, and can be seen as creative and playful re-imaginings of therapies: dance therapy, dream therapy, art and writing therapies, nature as therapy etc. The 'smashing crockery cornet' for instance could be seen as a 'Well-Breaking' space! Space would also be organised to accommodate community time and individual time, so that users can spend time along or with others just as easily and as needed. Each space is open to being developed in different ways, with different textural and lighting elements to enable moods to be established, explored, altered, reworked in safety; safe spaces for difference to be express (through food for instance), or grief to be acknowledged and expressed. The 'Big

Ass Table' is a central unifying element and hub enabling connections and conversations between the different activities and people in the room through talking, eating, making, arguing etc.

Anni Raw commented on the need for facilitation if the space were to work safely and effectively. The skill set required could be challenging and difficult to achieve including someone with empathy, health, craft and creative knowledge and skills. Others also applauded the value of a space where permission is given for the expression of grief, and anger is allowed to be expressed (safely) and noted the attractiveness of the playful elements in the space, which are in themselves healing. One of the benefits of this space perhaps is that it is both private and public: a home from home, a home for all where often very private feelings of grief, isolation, anger and frustration might be shared by being given public expression and acknowledgement in a safe environment of trust often associated with more intimate, private spaces and relationships.

Group 4: Young asylum seeker

> **Profile:** I am a young person who has fled their country and sought asylum due to conflict in their home country, who is having trouble getting used to a new culture
>
> **Challenge:** How can I find a way to develop my skills – I was an engineer back in my home country – and communicate with others as my knowledge of English is very limited?

Group 4: Making and Mapping as Prototyping: Denise, Anni, Robin, Simon and Alison

Prototype & Reflection:

Group 4's prototyping journey started with a discussion about gender assumptions surrounding the fact that the young person was an engineer and might thereby be assumed to be male. They elected their persona female something which they felt framed the prototyping process and discussion in very particular ways. Their thinking was explicitly human-centred with the 'human' at the heart. Words associations: Hear, Heart, Art, Hearth developed.

Getting bogged down in talk the group decided to make at random to get ideas moving, feeling that the messy process of making represented the refugee journey as risky, full of chance, difficult, uncontrollable. They started look at basic needs – 'great toilets', 'a kitchen to break bread' - to shape areas, and think about how values, frameworks and structures shape how we live and integrate/cultural integration. Asking questions such as 'sharing is values driven. How do we share, to whose benefit, with which consequence and to what end?

Safety is a key and factor for this individual, and consideration of what is understood as 'safe' and how this is inflected by the dimensions of a person's past and present situation/self and how together these shape future lives and identities started to organise the group's thinking. The matter of what is left behind in order to become part of different group is a silent and shaping presence in what they came to term building 'an ecology of hope'. Four rooms emerged that responded to narratives of migration: a restitution narrative, a felt narrative, a felt dream, a quest narrative. Consisting of hearth, den, kitchen etc. these spaces were structured by an open framework with porous open boundaries in stark contrast to the shutting down and closing off of boundaries that shape the refugee experience.

The group asked the question 'What is making?' aligning material making with social issues and the value of maker spaces as marginal spaces occupying a position outside the mainstream in a way that art schools to some extent once did.

All that is needed, Alison reflected, is intelligent kindness to establish the values, trust and moral courage necessary. Having the courage to make mistakes is central, something that can't happen in traditional health provision. Discussion moved on to the difficulties of moving forward and making things happen against a political backdrop where less funds are available, the need for advocacy, and the right for everyone to take part in a social dialogue for change.

Conclusion & future activities:

The session ended with a review of apposite issues, opportunities, and research questions, and ideas for future collaboration. The themes and questions below are by no means conclusive, but are rather indicative of the issues raised during workshop discussion and

prototyping. Our intention is that the Well-making workshop will be the first of a number of events, initiatives, and publications that we are planning with participants, including two journal special issues, an RCUK research funding bid, and involvement in the ARHC's Design Research for Change initiative (https://www.designresearchforchange.co.uk/about/)

Some of the **issues** identified are:

- The gap between the 'two cultures' of art and science and how to put the art into STEM (STEAM). The role of design/craft in this.
- The drop in and reduction of resources for health and how to protest/envisage better responses whilst coping with and adapting to change.
- Ethics: when do we stop being researchers and intervene/do something. Where is our human agency/humanity in all of this?
- The barriers to creating appropriate space, skills and expertise, co-production
- Cultural perceptions of mental health and well-being, and bias in terms of gender, race, religion, and ethnicity.

Some of the **opportunities** identified are:

- Harnessing the possibilities of technology in the home, increased opportunities to connect and collaborate and make things together - homes for instance could be designed with, or modified/adapted to be, a network of connected maker-spaces in which network participants can support one another by using their skills and abilities
- Storytelling – the growth of interest in storytelling in all spheres of life provides opportunities to shift narrative and engage people in change. Well-making brings new opportunities for material storytelling, to tell and share stories through material and visual forms.
- Interdisciplinary research: well-making offers opportunities to use qualitative and quantitative methods together to flesh out understanding.
- The focus on space, and spatial practices in relation to material making, offers opportunities to evolve new models of iterative design thinking in relation to health.
- The users are the experts in knowing their conditions/capacities/challenges. Creativity in its broadest sense is a great way of unlocking agency. We need to design well-maker spaces/systems with recognise this.

Research Questions:

What are the main frameworks for 'well-making' in terms of design research/craft thinking and health theory and practice?

To what extent might these frameworks inform and/or disrupt or destabilise one another, and how might this move thinking forward in terms of identifying 'tools' for well-making (intellectual and material)?

How might design/craft thinking present a distinct approach to addressing health issues beyond arts practice more generally?

To what extent does well-making as a concept and a practice require new more sophisticated ethical protocols/layers of protocol?

How does well-making as a practice and a process undertaken by participants relate to/define the well-making space and vice versa?

What kind of spaces are we talking about in terms of range, scope, scale, public/private, community, equipment, and how would they be supported?

How does well-making relate to/intersect with professional networks in health (CAMHS, GP surgeries), craft and design: craft studios, Fab labs, and maker spaces?

What would co-production look like in a well-making space/setting? To what extent and how is a well-making space designed to support co-production? What are the priorities?

What power relations are embedded in well-making and how do address/remain alert to them?

How does safeguarding get worked out in social prescribing and how might this relate to well-making?

Who facilitates? What skills should they have? And how do we co-design a well-making process?

Participant testimonials

Dr Anni Raw, Newcastle University Institute for Creative Arts Practice

The working day on 'well-making' organised by Fiona Hackney and team in December was interesting and productive, drawing out links across the domains of design, health, arts/craft practices and social engagement, including activism. This was such a broad and unusual mix, and the day enabled me to revisit my own research (in the field of arts and health, with a focus on socially-engaged and collaborative arts practices) with a different range of influences. In particular I made contact with Dr Alison Williams through a shared curiosity about the role of spatial thinking and spatial practices in well-making. We are co-authoring an article on this now, which is a positive outcome for me.

Simon Duncan, Boingboing

Completing the prototyping exercise was a liberating experience. By utilising the case studies in an unpressurised environment, we were each able to freely share the knowledge afforded to us by both our academic disciplines and lived experience, in order to try to

create an idealised space for well-making for the individuals in our various case studies. As such, we were able to do some deep thinking about the various concerns such as safety, hygiene and cultural values that can be addressed through co-productive design of space. As a result of the whole session, I've thought in more depth about how spatial design can impact how a training session is received when I co-train and how I can work to optimise the space for productivity and networking. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day, particularly in such testing times of multiple divisions, it's wonderful to know that there are people who are working to spaces of well-making and healing.

Dr Alison Williams, consulting to University of Edinburgh

The concept of 'well-making' resonates with my ongoing work with Roehampton University and People Dancing on quality of life as enhanced by dance for People with Parkinson's (PWP). We are examining not only the content of the dance but also the physical and affective spaces that best support it. The work done by Linda Thomson on QoL measures was particularly relevant, and I will be pursuing this further with her.

In terms of my engage/disengage model of creative behaviours, the day afforded me a bazaar, where I connected with new people and ideas and information, a safe dwelling while working at the table with new and old colleagues, a neighbourhood while we were sharing our table results and discussing in plenary, and a plaza over the breaks. I could have used one or two short den spaces/times. Perhaps being encouraged to seek out/create one?

Altogether a stimulating and worthwhile day – thank you.

Mah Rana, artist and PhD Candidate, University College London

I am currently working on a PhD proposal investigating the lived experiences of dementia-caregiver dyads who craft together in domestic home environments, therefore I regard the benefits of attending the Well-making event held at the Wellcome Trust as long reaching. As someone who is at the beginning of their PhD, attending the event gave me the opportunity to evaluate my research practice within a broader wellbeing/well-making context, and to understand and explore how my work can contribute to this expanding research territory. The Well-making event facilitated an invaluable opportunity to share with and learn from others, through conversations and making. As a result I made some important connections with other researchers, which I have already began to nurture and develop since the event.

Participant list

Prof Lizbeth Goodman, Inclusive Design UCD Dublin and Director SMARTlab:

Prof Paul Rodgers, AHRC Design Fellow & Prof Design Imagination Lancaster University:

Dr Carl Walker, Reader Applied Social Science, University of Brighton:

Dr Mary Darking, Senior Lecturer Social Policy & Innovation School of Applied Social Science University of Brighton:

Dr Robert Phillips, Senior Tutor Design Products Royal College of Art

James Tooze, Senior Tutor Design Products Royal College of Art

Karl Royale, Head of Enterprise & Commercial Development

Jayne Howard, Director Arts Well

Dr Samantha Moore, Senior Lecturer Animation, University of Wolverhampton:

Kevin Pace, HeadStart Head of Service

Ben Salter, Course Leader Interior Design, University of Wolverhampton:

Dr Denise Doyle, Senior Lecturer Digital Media, University of Wolverhampton:

Robin Gutteridge, Consultant in Health and Wellbeing, University of Wolverhampton:

Prof Claire Pajaczkowska, Senior Research Tutor Fashion & Textiles, Royal College of Art:

Dr Linda Thomson, Senior Research Associate & Project Manager Museums on Prescription, University College London

Mah Rana, Artist & PhD Researcher, University College London

Simon Duncan, Boing Boing: Resilience Research & Practice

Dr Anni Raw, Research Associate School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University:

Dr Alison Williams, consulting to the University of Edinburgh

Celine Llewellyn-Jones, researcher and disability rights advocate

Sapna Ramnani, researcher and film maker

Dr Taey Kim, researcher on diaspora and identity/cultural agency

Dr Vensa Milanovic, researcher and dance for health expert

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