



# Leapfrog *Tools for Renewal*

Leapfrog Short Project Report  
September 2017 - October 2017

leapfrog.tools



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# Introduction

The project presented in this report aimed to collaborate with communities and social enterprises in the co-designing and development of tools that facilitate community engagement for renewal projects. The resultant tool, called “Seeing differently’, has been co-designed in a close-nit collaboration between Leapfrog and the Newbold Trust – a social enterprise committed to sustainability in the beautiful North East of Scotland.

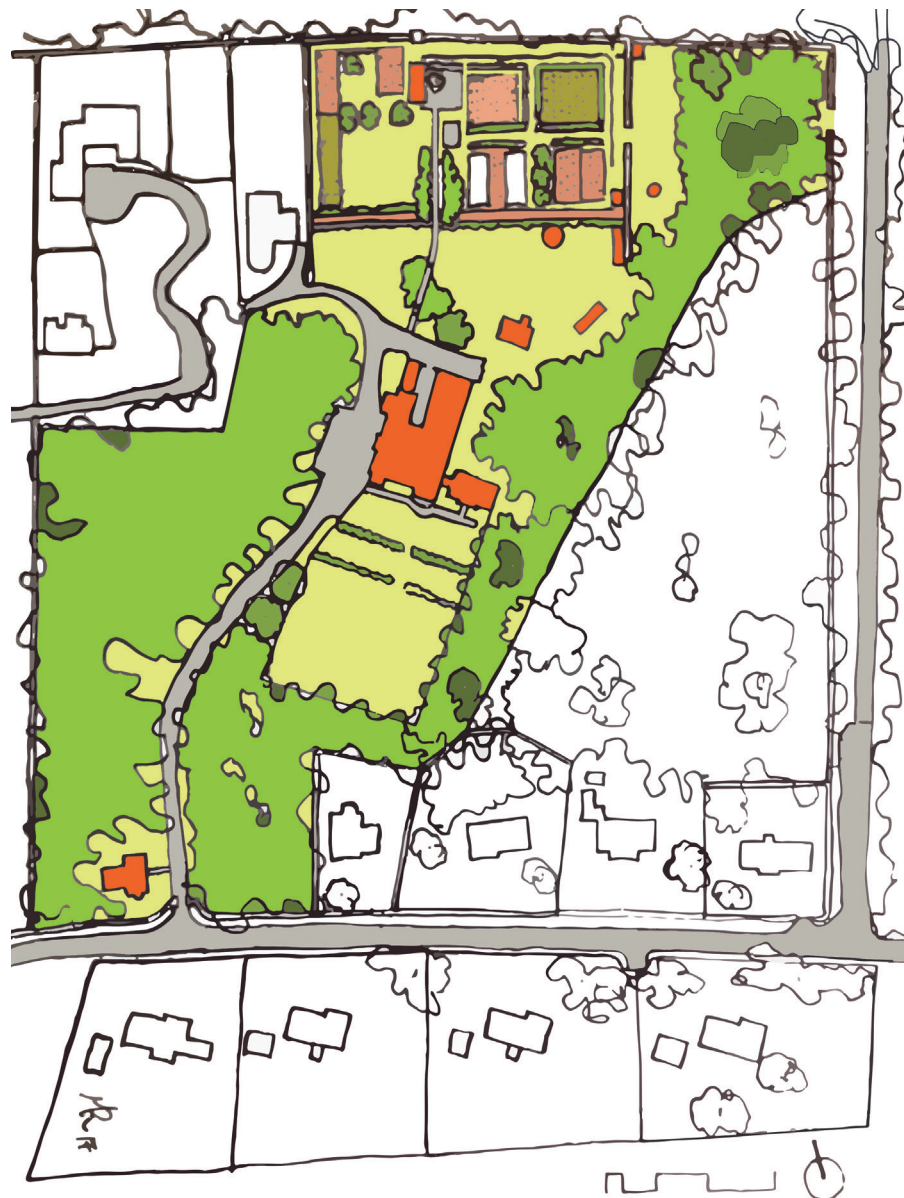
Leapfrog is a three-year research project, with collaboration between communities, public sector and academic institutions (Lancaster University and The Glasgow School of Art). Focused on transforming community engagement, the Leapfrog project aims to explore how design can become an activator of social change. This is done by involving community members, researchers and practitioners in the co-designing of tools which are then taken back into the communities to support innovative and effective community engagement. Through a series of projects collaborating with different communities and milieus, we develop tools focused on two-way communication. The tools are the tangible products and results close collaboration, input and debate on issues close to the heart of such communities. The tools are co-designed in real contexts and then disseminated to a wider audience through the Leapfrog website aiming to provide tools for another communities with different issues, who can adapt or appropriate them in surprising ways.

The Newbold Trust is located in a seven-acre property containing a large Victorian house in the outskirts of Forres, a small town in the North of Scotland, on the Moray coast, approximately 25 miles east of Inverness. Currently, the trust uses the Victorian house as a guesthouse and its physical assets to host a large variety of workshops oriented towards nurturing positive change, such as meditation, yoga or permaculture.

At the beginning of this year, the trust initiated a transformative process shifting away from an organic and unstructured community to a social enterprise. This internal shift involved renewal of both its physical assets, and its identity as a social enterprise. The community reflected on their role within the local community and the insight was that, although they have been in Forres for the last 35 years, the community felt isolated from community life in Forres and the Moray area. The Newbold Trust, described to the Leapfrog team the need to initiate a long-term community engagement process with the communities living and operating in the area. Additionally, they were willing to explore in which ways the renewal of their physical assets could become an activator of positive change within the wider communities. To do this, they wanted to involve local communities in the renewal of their facilities, as well as in the re-

shaping of their identity. Therefore, central to this project was: how can social enterprise practitioners and community members co-design and develop tools to support a community engagement process for a renewal project?

Following scoping conversations to co-develop the proposal, we devised a strategic plan. After a series of workshops, where walking became the vehicle to engage with several communities, the tool was conceived to capture the insights of the participants of a deliberative walk. This report outlines the series of workshops and the outcomes of the project at each stage. It also describes the final tool co-designed with our partner. This tool and others are free to download from our project website [leapfrog.tools](http://leapfrog.tools)



# Planning a Deliberative Walk

The idea of using a deliberative walk as a method of community participation emerged at the beginning of the project. During the first visit, spontaneously the community members and the Leapfrog team toured the property for hours to better understand the context. At the end of the session, we understood that walking was a key aspect of the renewal process because it was necessary to move around the property to be able to imagine future scenarios and future uses. The community realised that they were currently using garden walks as a way to engage with their volunteers and visitors. Thus, we planned a deliberative walk for the participants to explore the physical assets aimed for renewal. This has been inspired by the Ehrström's works (2016), who has developed "a participatory process in which the participants, by deliberating in small groups and joining facilitated walks, tackle a complex policy issue that has highly intertwined social and physical dimensions" (Ehrström, 2016: 6). Another influence on this activity can be found back in the 1990s in the Stalker/ Osservatorio Nomade and in the book Walkscapes (Careri, 2001). The facilitated walk aimed to create the space for collective reflection about issues where social and physical dimensions converged. By discussing in small groups, the objective of the co-design process ended up focusing on co-designing a tool that can capture the participants' reflections and insights during the walk. The walk helped us to see things differently.



# Catalysis workshop: a deliberative walk

The first co-design workshop drew participants from Newbold Trust, Findhorn Foundation and Forres local community members to participate in a deliberative walk around the Newbold House property.

Walking in this first workshop became the vehicle to engage with participants setting an informal and relaxing atmosphere. This enabled the participants to experience first hand the physical assets, which support the social and educational services that Newbold Trust is currently delivering.

The walk helped the participants to contextualise themselves within the future aims of this social enterprise. The Trust aims to achieve this by involving local communities in the renewal of their facilities, as well as in the re-shaping of the Newbold Trust identity. The walk helped us to learn in different ways, activating visual and kinaesthetic learning processes. It also broke down the hierarchies that sometimes can be found in traditional environmental conditions such as rounded tables indoors.

After about one hour of deliberative walk facilitated by a small team consisting of members of Newbold Trust and Leapfrog, we gathered around a big blank canvas where we could map out our first impressions and thoughts. This created a space of confluence for different perspectives to come together in a joint and collective action-plan. These insights informed our next co-design workshop, hosted at the Glasgow School of Art Creative Campus, in Altyre Estates, Forres.







# Co-design workshop 1

The first co-design workshop was hosted at the Glasgow School of Art Creative Campus, in Altyre Estates, Forres. Together we spent the day developing a series of activities aimed at sparking ideas about tools that can be used in a deliberative walk. The aim of this workshop was to collectively reflect upon the walking experience during the previous workshop and hence, being able, as a collective, to brainstorm ideas where walking became the main way to engage with communities. Then, we together explored the co-creation of tools/activities that can help to capture the informal conversations and to imagine the prospect identities and uses of the different spaces outside and inside the property.

This time participants drawn from Newbold Trust, Findhorn Foundation and local communities came together for a fully creative day. We began with lunch and an opportunity to analyse the data collected during the first deliberative walk. To do this we produced a series of postcards featuring pictures of the walk and the insights gathered from the original participants' as they walked. The Leapfrog team had organised the insights into what we saw as short-term, medium-term and long-term aspirations. As a method of engaging, the group with the insights and to shape their thinking about what was valuable to them in terms of renewal, we asked them to re-arrange the postcards into their own order of importance. Using string hanging from side to side of the room, we began to hang the postcards organising them according to their collective criteria, shaping a timeline of interventions based on the values of the group. This helped the group to consider what 'type' exchange they look for in engagement and the methods they might need to use to gather, interpret and act on information gathered during the exchange. When we finished, we reflect on the activity and on the resulted timeline. We realised that some medium-term and long-term interventions were located at the beginning of the thread, whereas some short-term interventions were at the end. This unveiled a key insight: the need to prioritising the ideas. Indeed, certain interventions seemed to be more valuable for them as they embraced their collective values, for instance, the development of an eco-village for staff members.

For our second activity we wanted to put participants into the shoes of the people that they will ultimately engage with during their deliberative walk. So, we set them off on a walk of discovery around the campus grounds. After the task we gathered to share experiences of discovering the Creative Campus and begin to think about where in the walk there was an opportunity to intervene and what that intervention might be. One of the most interesting points raised was the importance of somehow tailoring and planning the route of the walk into the purpose of the engagement. As one of the participants mentioned:

***'In general the experience was that the flow of the walk needs to be tied into how someone who does not know about this place may interact with it (...) and how they feel.'***

Following the discussion we began to generate some initial ideas for how we might engage people on a walk, exchange and capture information. Working in small groups, we co-developed three potential routes within Newbold House: the first concept explored how to embed the tools within the space; the second concept explored the consequences of having a free tour without facilitation; and the third idea explored how the tools might be able to capture the walkers' feelings engaging with the several spaces. Yet, the workshop finished without a clear idea-generation tool for capturing the walkers' observations and hence closing the cycle of engagement. So, we discussed the concepts and decided to focus on a walk tied into the renewal purpose: envisioning the renewal assets of Newbold House. We also decided to organise another rapid brainstorming session for the following day to focus on co-designing a tool to capture the informal conversations during the walk.





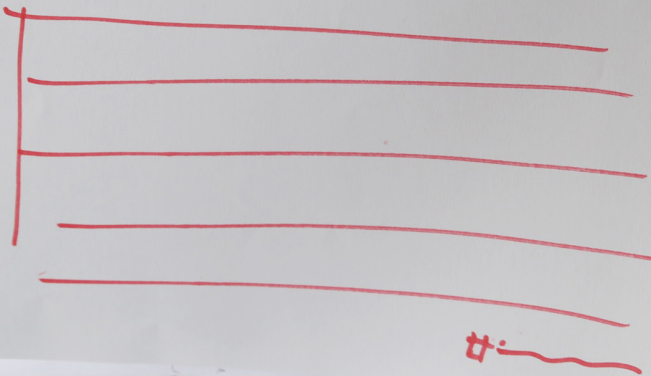
# Rapid brainstorming session

On the following day, a small group of participants (volunteers, researchers and staff members) gathered together for a rapid brainstorming session at Newbold House. This workshop aimed to crystallise the concept-ideas developed in the previous co-design workshop. It also responded to the request from Newbold community who was about to receive a group of Erasmus students for a week workshop. Newbold members thought that it would be a good opportunity to test the walk as a way to engage with the students. Here we came up with a tool for capturing the walkers' observations closing the cycle of engagement initiated by the walk.

So we worked hard to collectively design the first prototype during the week in order to test it with the students. The concept generated consisted of two folding postcards, taking the shape of traditional postcards, which could be divided. The first postcard meant to be for the participants to keep it as a memory of the walk. On the front we agreed to add a picture of the Victorian house, a symbol of the past and present. On the back we designed a logo with the guiding principles of Newbold Trust. The logo meant to guide the facilitator when providing information during the walk. The second postcard was devised to invite the participants to write/draw their observations. The front contained a picture of a specific space of the property where the community wanted to gather the students' thoughts. On the back we left a blank space, as in traditional postcards, for the students would express their thoughts with the sentence: "Dear Newbold House". In this session we also planned and tailored the route based on the time and in the purpose of it.



Dear Newhold house,



Future  
What do you think?

Pragmatic  
Who are  
behind



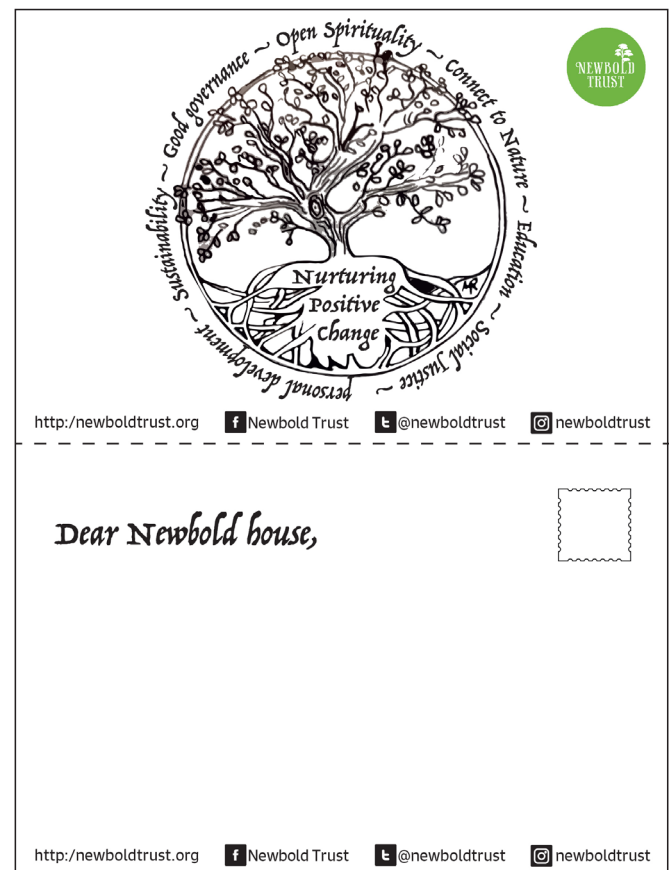
# Test 1: doing and learning

Between the brainstorm session and the second co-design workshop a member of Newbold community had facilitated the walk with a group of Erasmus students and collected the observations written on the postcards. He brought them to our next co-design workshop and we used them to start a reflective conversation about the shape of the tool, its usability and in what ways we could improve it.

First iteration of the tool used with the Erasmus group of students at Newbold House.



Front



Back



## Co-design workshop 2: iterations on the tool

In the second co-design workshop we started by reflecting on the test with the students. We found that the tool gave structure to the facilitator and the students. The tool empowered its users and simultaneously restricted certain actions producing more focusing and efficacy (Calvo, 2017). As one of the participants said:

***“It was very powerful using this because the tool gave us structure and the individuality came from me about how I did the tour. But it gave me structure and allowed me a degree of freedom but with some guidelines. It gave me much more confidence doing this”.***

The insight was that the tool had the ability to guide those who use it and also influenced the way in which people approached the walk.

After this, we divided into small groups of three/four people and we spent the rest of the workshop co-designing new iterations of the tool enhancing its functions and uses. As a result, we came up with the second iteration of the tool, which came in two forms:

1. Short Version: two folding postcards – following the structure of the first iteration – thinking about the type of pictures and incorporating boxes for social media.
2. Long Version: four folding postcards. The first two postcards followed the same idea: the first one as a memory; and the second one to capture participants' observations. The third one sought to capture reflection-on-action – once the participants were back to their homes they could send their reflections by post. Finally, the fourth one was devised as an invitation where the participants could invite their friends to participate in another walk.

During that week we further developed these two ideas to test them during the Harvest Festival, an important engagement event for Newbold Trust.

Second iterations of the tool used at the Harvest Festival in Newbold House.

Long version

 <p><b>Newbold Trust</b>          &amp;          Invite you to walking with us to envision our future</p>  <p>Front</p>	 <p><a href="http://newboldtrust.org">http://newboldtrust.org</a>  Newbold Trust  @newboldtrust  newboldtrust</p> <p>Reflections during the walk,</p> <p>Get in touch:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <hr/> <p>Dear Newbold house,</p> <p>Walking with us INVITATION No.</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Venue: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Time: _____</p>  <p>Register here:</p>  <p>email: <a href="mailto:office@newboldtrust.org">office@newboldtrust.org</a>          Tel: 0044 (0) 1309 672 659</p> <p><a href="http://newboldtrust.org">http://newboldtrust.org</a>  Newbold Trust  @newboldtrust  newboldtrust</p> <p>Back</p>
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Short version

 <p><a href="http://newboldtrust.org">http://newboldtrust.org</a>  Newbold Trust  @newboldtrust  newboldtrust</p> <p>Dear Newbold house,</p> <p>Get in touch:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>Front</p>	 <p>Reflections on the walk: write/draw</p> <p>Back</p>
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## Test 2: adaptability and purpose of the tool

The Harvest Festival, hosted by Newbold Trust, gave us another magnificent opportunity to test the second iteration of the tool. The festival is actually one of the most important organic food events in Moray area and brings together a large number of providers such as Sky Delights (Nairn), Roots, Fruits and Leaves (Across Moray), Manna Juice (Elgin) Roseisle Gardens (College of Roseisle) and The Bread Kiln (Garmouth). The Newbold community cooked with products from their garden organic meals for the visitors, which this year reached just over 200 people. It is also the biggest community engagement event Newbold organises and includes sharing activities which Newbold are involved in and also an exchange with other communities.

At first, we thought it would be better to try the long version of the tool, developed during the last co-design workshop – with the four different postcards – and, observe how the walkers interact with it. We had planned to use it during the walking tours around the garden scheduled in the festival programme. However, when we arrived at Newbold House, we soon discovered that there were different activities happening at the same time, so the volunteers and staff members were really busy. Before the walk, we spoke to the Newbold member in charge of the facilitation of the walks and we agreed to cut the tool and just use the first two postcards. This decision was made for two reasons. The first one was that the facilitator felt more comfortable and confident using the tool in the short version because he had already used it. The second reason was that the short version, for him, seemed more appropriate to the nature of the walk, which lasted half hour and focused on their organic production over their garden.

At the beginning, he introduced and distributed the tool to the visitors that joined us for the walk. In total we were twelve. He also introduced the Leapfrog team and the tools for renewal project, so that the visitors could form an idea of our prototype. He guided us through the walk with four stops in different spaces of the garden. At each stop, he provided specific information such as the history of the house, the permaculture and how this influences the community life. This sparked informal discussions between the visitors who shared their interests. At the end, he invited them to envision the future of Newbold and write or draw their impressions about in their tools. The participants took the first postcard as a memory and left the second one at the gate with their reflections. After the event, we reflected on the experience and we concluded that the two versions were in fact one tool: a flexible and adaptable tool according to the needs and purposes of the walk, as well as the nature of the community engagement.



# Tool delivery event: feedback on the process and the tool

At the end of the following week, we came together for our last workshop. This final event was held in the Creative Campus, at the Glasgow School of Art in Forres.

The workshop began with a collective and reflective session. To guide the reflections, the Leapfrog team prepared a presentation with pictures depicting all the activities and workshops conducted up to that point. The pictures aimed to recap the participants' experiences and trigger them to share their impressions around each activity. Here we noticed the relevance of changing the physical environment as a way to animate innovation and creative thinking. As one of the participants said:

***'When you go out from the house (Newbold House) and you have conversations like these with the same people but out of your usual environment, you understand maybe better or from a different way. This becomes a tool for us; a tool to know each other better or in a different way.'***

Indeed, the rotation of the physical locations of the workshops and tool tests has been an advantage in this project due to its link with the physicality of the Newbold aim for renewal. Participants have told us that being removed from their workspace – by bringing them into a creative space – has strengthened their creativity and capacity for reflection. Conversely, using the work environment has energised the co-designing process creating the momentum to crystallise ideas based on real needs. For instance, the rapid brainstorming session was held in the dining room of Newbold House bringing together two needs; on the one hand, to close the circle of engagement initiated by the walking and on the other, to engage with an imminent Erasmus group of students.

Another important reflection was that the process became a platform for participants to learn throughout the process. For example, the first deliberative walk we did in the first workshop, helped them to see the property as a whole, and as a sequence of spaces that may have different identities and uses but are connected to each other. They learnt how to see their physical resources from different perspectives by listening to each other. They also learnt how to collectively prioritise future interventions using a thread. In fact, they mentioned that they would

use the analytical thread in their meetings in order to develop further their strategic future plans. Furthermore, they shared the insight that this project helped them to know better each other and hence start working as a team. One of them commented:

***'We were designing all the time, designing something that you have in your mind. You are getting a series of skills or ways of thinking and then you apply them all the time. It does not matter if you are in a coffee shop; you are in the kitchen or in the dining room.'***

After that, we moved to the kitchen and we sit around the table with coffee and biscuits. On the table, there were the different components of tool printed out in A4 and distributed in blocks. In one block there were the three postcards. The first one, called the purpose card, was designed as a memory of the walk to give away to the walkers where we included the logo with the principles of Newbold Trust. The second one, called reflective postcard, was designed to capture the walkers' reflections during the walk. The third one, called send-us-a-postcard, was designed to give to the walkers and capture their reflections once they went back home, so they would write their reflections on the walk and would send them back to Newbold Trust. In another block, there was the envelope, which was designed to hold the postcards and give it to the walkers as an invitation to participate in the walk. Finally, in the third block, there were the stickers where we included the Newbold Trust logo, which were designed to close the envelope. There were also scissors, post-its and pens for them to alter the tool and provide feedback.

They started the session by interacting with the tool. First they looked at the components and how all of the components would work together. Then, they cut the components and collectively began to talk about in what ways they could use the tool. This hands-on activity led to very interesting conversations around what information should be included in the tool in order to make clear the purpose of the walk and why would it be valuable to people to come and walk with them. At this point, we started to underpin ways in which the tool could be used to invite people to walk. Here, we discovered that the envelope had such a function, so we began to think further about the type of information that should be

provided on it to the people invited in order to make explicit the value of participating in the walk. We concluded that the tool was flexible enough, at that stage, to be tailored according to the needs, purpose and duration of the walk. It was agreed that the tool was able to help the facilitator to perform the walk by giving structure. Simultaneously, the tool was able to formalise the process of capturing the walkers' insights. However, the overall feedback was that the tool should have more blank spaces so they could tailor it depending on different needs and purposes. Another relevant comment on this was that the three postcards should be slightly different from each other so that each of them would be easily identified and thus, intuitively understood to have its own use. In other words, we needed to refine it further in order to make it possible for them and for another communities to use it in wider contexts. At the end, all participants had built their own tool for renewal, which they took with them. Finally, the leapfrog team thanked the participants, especially to the Newbold community, for all their hard work and for their strong commitment upon co-developing this project. This would not be possible without all of their hospitality, kindness and open-minded approach to exploring in what ways walking and a tool could become the vehicles for them to conduct community engagement.

Following this session the Leapfrog team set about making some final changes to the tools before publication.







# Final Design: the Seeing Differently tool

The project drew to an end and the Leapfrog team made some finishing touches to the tool during the last month. We also spent some time assembling its guidelines in collaboration with Newbold Trust. Here we reshaped the format of the postcards in order to allow it to be printed on A4 paper, which is the most common and affordable printer size. Each postcard was developed in a different Power Point slide to enable more versatility and to allow different communities to use the tool in surprising ways. The invitation postcard took the shape of an envelope. In the guidelines we described three ways of using the tool and inviting people to walk based on the conversations from our last workshop: 1) send the tool by post; 2) handle them on the street; or 3) using social media (see guidelines of Seeing Differently), to spark people's imagination. Each component was refined to make its use more intuitive. Both the postcards and the envelope have been designed to provide a framework to support a wide range of communities willing to use it for a walk. The walk can be around the design of public/private spaces, the renewal project of physical resources and/or for way finding experiences. The limits are our imagination.

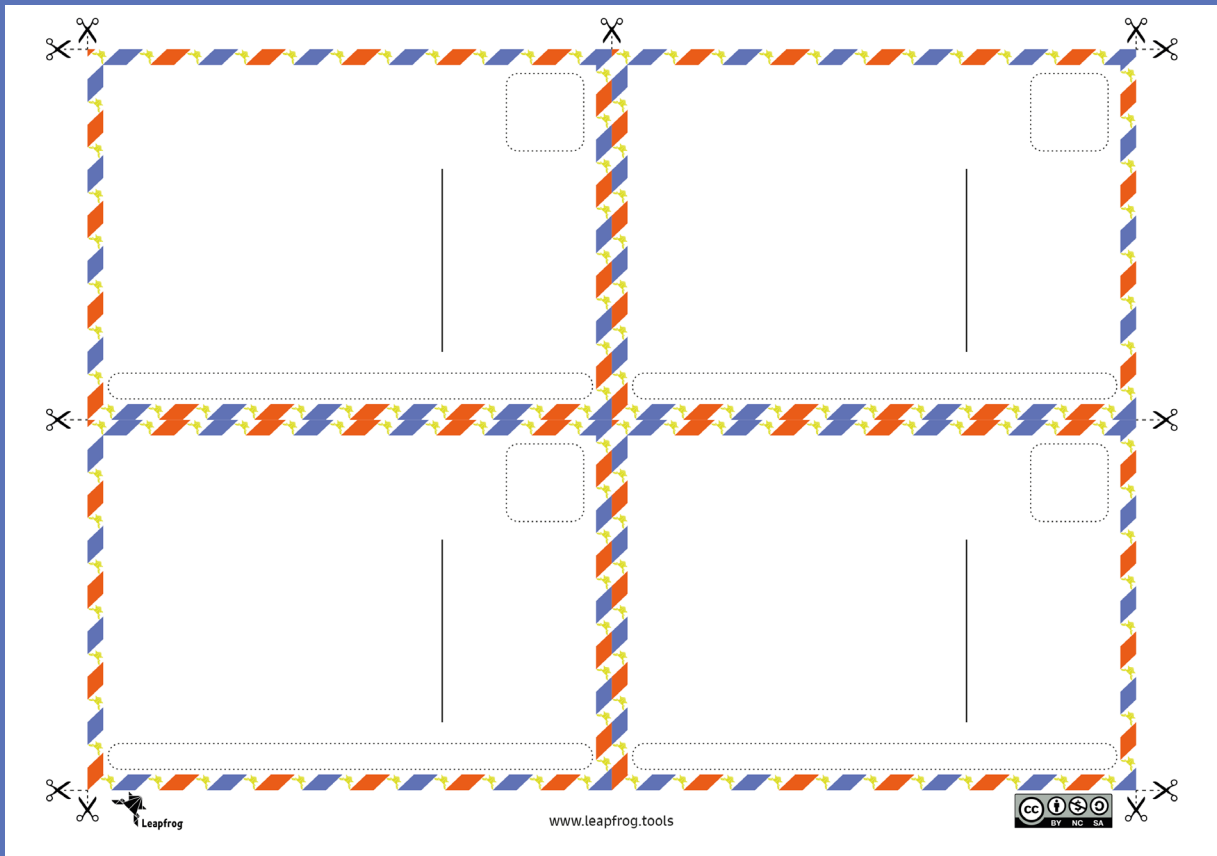
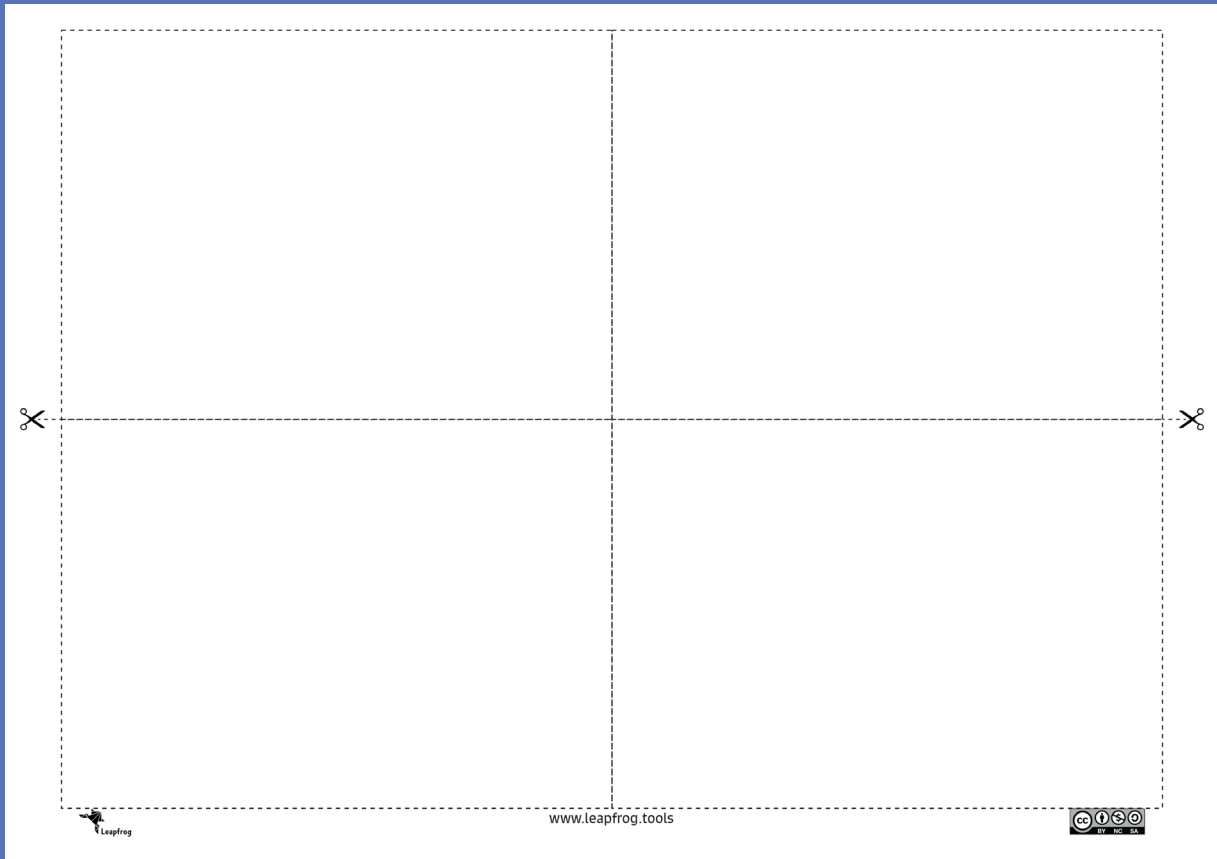
Finally, we asked Newbold community how they felt:

***“It was an exciting process to work alongside Leapfrog bringing together our team and members of the local community. The co-creative process provided a lot of inspiration and allowed us to work collaboratively and gain a new perspective. The tool has the potential to be a key part of our local connections”.***

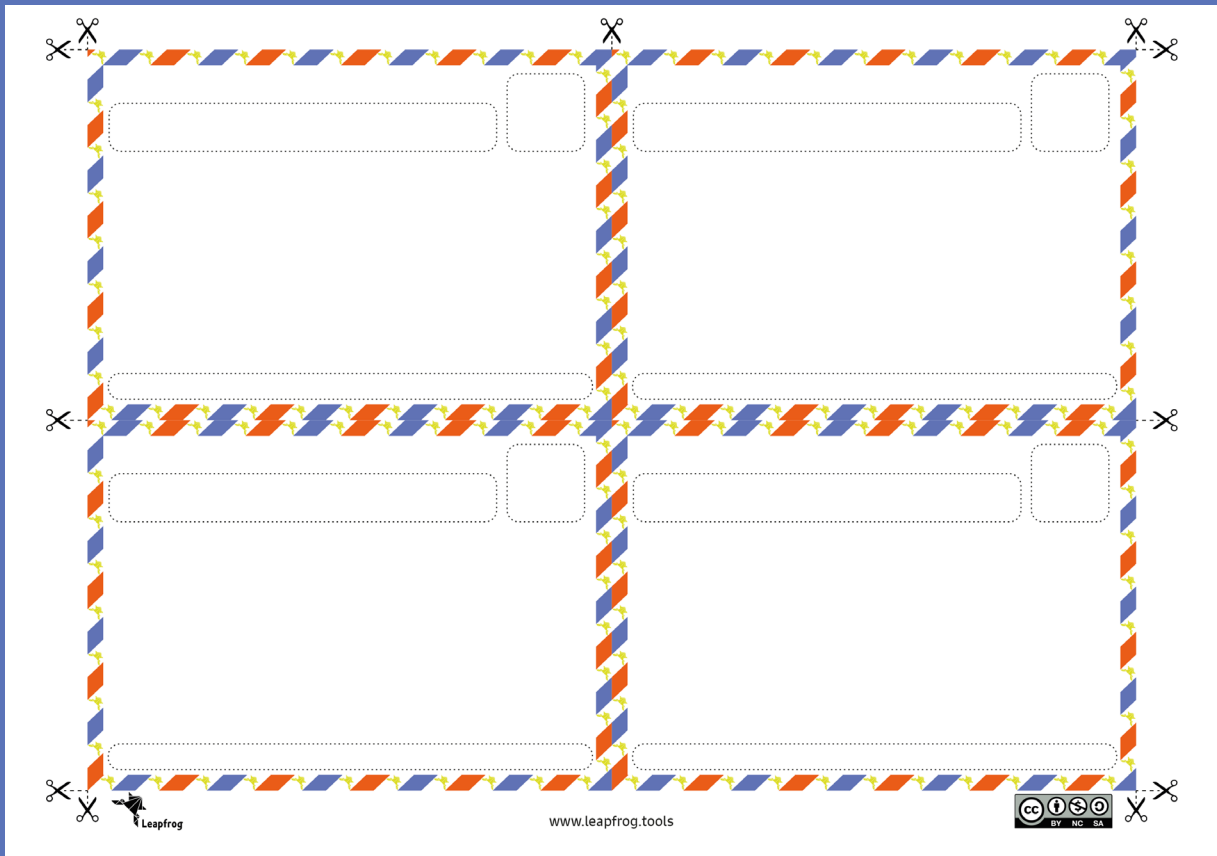
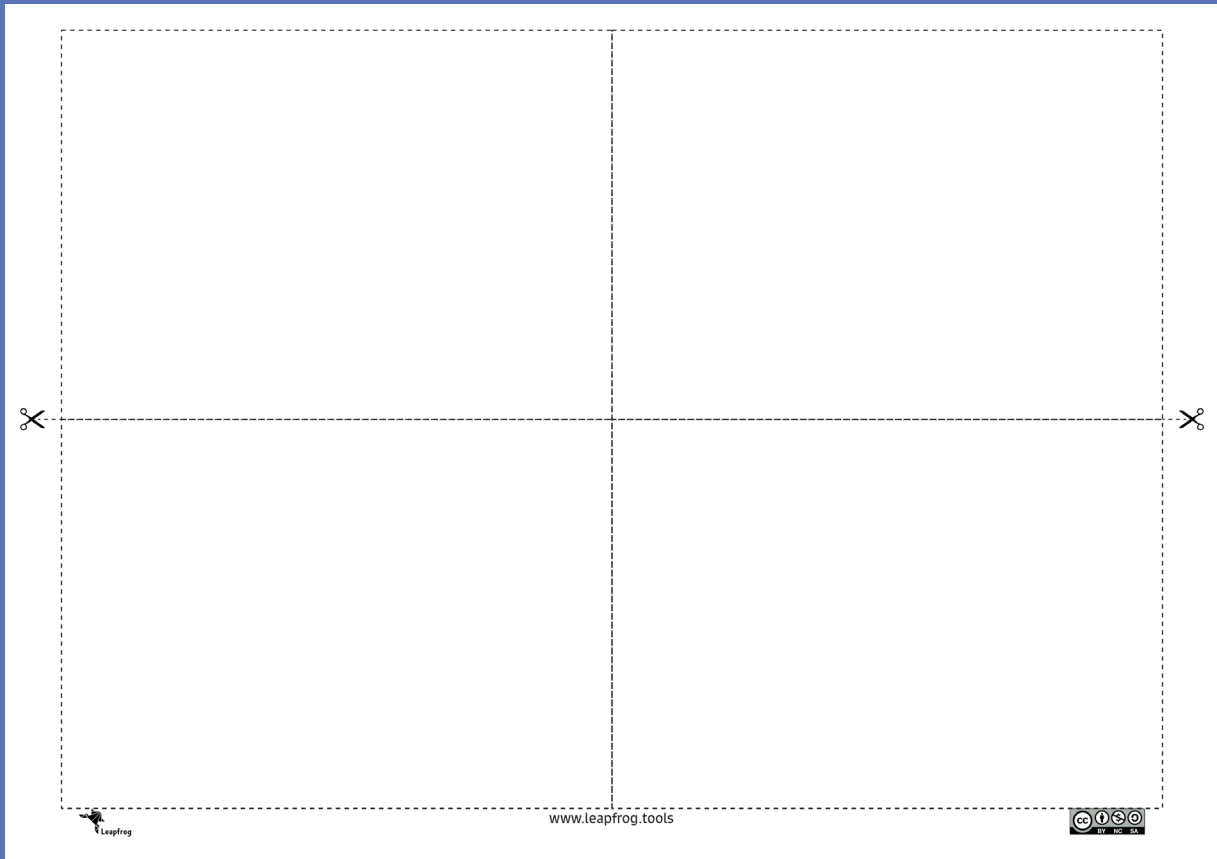
The tool from this project helped the people involved to understand their physical resources from different perspectives by making new connections with another people and understanding how they looked at the spaces. It also worked very well in unpacking personal hidden skills that people had but they were not aware of. This led to the community members to get to know each other better and to start recognising personal talents or visions and build trust.

The tool has been published to the website and is available for download at: [leapfrog.tools](http://leapfrog.tools).

# Purpose Postcards



# Reflective Postcards

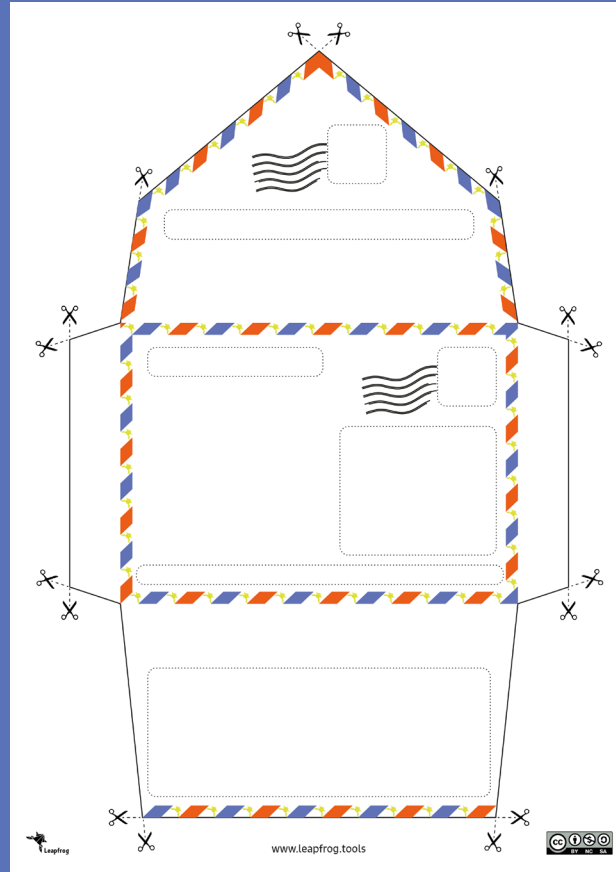


# Send-us-a-Postcard

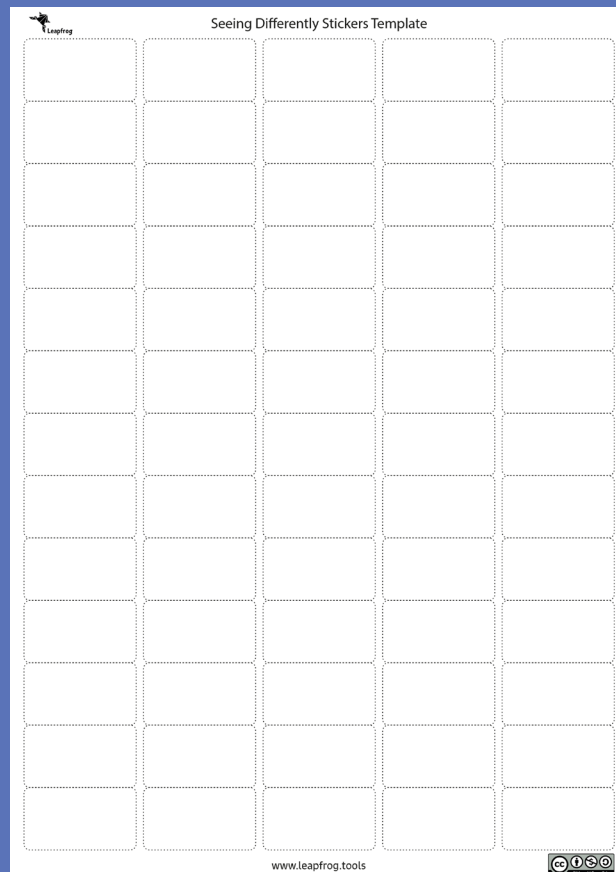
A simple postcard template with a dashed border. It is divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal dashed line. Each quadrant contains a horizontal rectangular box for writing. Scissors icons are placed at the midpoints of the four outer edges. The Leapfrog logo is in the bottom-left corner, the website [www.leapfrog.tools](http://www.leapfrog.tools) is at the bottom center, and a Creative Commons license icon (CC BY-NC-SA) is in the bottom-right corner.

A decorative postcard template with a colorful border of red, blue, and yellow diagonal stripes. It is divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal dashed line. Each quadrant contains a horizontal rectangular box for writing, a small square box with a scalloped edge for a stamp, and a vertical column of five horizontal dashed lines for an address. Scissors icons are placed at the corners and midpoints of the four outer edges. The Leapfrog logo is in the bottom-left corner, the website [www.leapfrog.tools](http://www.leapfrog.tools) is at the bottom center, and a Creative Commons license icon (CC BY-NC-SA) is in the bottom-right corner.

# Seeing Differently Envelope



# Seeing Differently Stickers



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to contribute their time to this project and making it such a success. Everyone we met made such valuable contributions, gave great insights and contributed really good ideas. Including Newbold Trust and everyone else who took part from Forres and Moray area.

We would also like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding the research.

Leapfrog – transforming public sector consultation by design is a £1.2 million 3 year Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects: ancient history, modern dance, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, English literature, design, the creative and performing arts, and much more. This financial year the AHRC will spend approximately £98m to fund research and postgraduate training in collaboration with a number of partners. The quality and range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides social and cultural benefits but also contributes to the economic success of the UK. For further information on the AHRC, please go to: [www.ahrc.ac.uk](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk)

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