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Introduction

My PhD thesis is funded by the School of English’s John Barnard Scholarship and is entitled ‘James Joyce and Photography’. My research builds on recent work by Justin Carville and Kevin and Emer Rockett on Irish photographic history and provides an in-depth, cross-disciplinary approach to Joycean study. Alongside my PhD I run ‘Writing Back’, a volunteer letter-writing project matching School of English undergraduate students as pen pals with older Yorkshire residents. The project was inspired by my love of writing letters and by my work as a volunteer ‘befriender’ at a local care home. Participants exchange letters with one another approximately once every two weeks. The objectives of the project are twofold: to target social isolation and to preserve local and personal histories via the medium of the letter. Between year one and year two of the project I have increased numbers from 28 to 98 participants. The older letter writers are recruited from various local organisations, such as Moor Allerton Elderly Care and Otley Elderly Action. Students receive full training on working with vulnerable adults and are matched up with their pen pals based on common interests and hobbies.

Whilst public engagement typically involves using research to engage with the wider community, I feel that there are several other strands that are key. The most successful public engagement projects are often the ones in which participants may have been unaware of having a need for the project before this was introduced. Public engagement can bring subtle and small changes to the lives of participants.

By the end of this year I intend to have developed a series of workshops on using letter writing as a means of combatting loneliness. In delivering these workshops at various public-facing events, I hope to promote and grow ‘Writing Back’ into a national initiative.

Mid term report

On 20 and 27 April I held the two events where students and older pen pals were able to meet up with one another over lunch. The events involved far more work than anticipated but both went extremely well. Each participant was presented with a booklet of all the letters that they had sent and received as part of the project, with surnames and addresses having been removed from these documents. With 112 participants taking part altogether this took considerably longer to complete than anticipated but attendees were particularly pleased to have a copy of these letters. Along with the booklets, I made place markers for each
participant and provided them with a copy of a form to be signed giving permission for photographs and letters to be used for publicity and research. Participants were also provided with numbered questionnaires to return to the University, measuring the impact of letter-writing on wellbeing, loneliness and their perception of the University or older people.

At the first event I had a detailed table plan but older participants started arriving from 12pm rather than the 1pm start time. Though I had anticipated them being slightly early this meant that the table plan was quickly ruled out and a degree of flexibility was instead required. At this event 21 students and 22 older participants were able to attend. Along with a colleague from the Volunteering Services and two employees from the West Yorkshire Joint Archive Service this brought the total number of attendees to 47. One older participant did not attend, with no reason for this being given. The West Yorkshire Joint Archive Service employees are going to look into this further, as he was referred to the project by their organisation. The second event was held off-campus at the New Headingley Club. I need to double-check numbers, but there were approximately 50 participants in attendance. Those participants commented on how much they had enjoyed the day and had welcomed seeing their pen pal in person. There was a great atmosphere at both events. They were a real celebration of students and older local residents having come together in the scheme.

Participants have been advised that they can now exchange addresses with one another and write to each other outside of the scheme, should they wish to do so. They are also aware that my time in Leeds will be somewhat limited during the next few months and that their student pen pals may soon be home for the holidays. Participants who attended the events advised that they would like to exchange their address with their pen pal so that they can write to one another over the holiday period. Participants can then re-join the scheme in September 2016. Whilst I would very much like to devote time to analysing the letters and questionnaires received at this stage, my priority now needs to be completing my thesis so that I can submit this by my deadline of 31 August 2016. A cursory glance at the current questionnaires received does receive some interesting data. Despite looking rather simplistic at first, it is somewhat revealing that participants largely do not rank themselves as “often lonely”. This exposes to me that the older participants who do join the scheme are largely those who would engage in community activities and be able to physically attend meet-up events. Though I haven’t yet surveyed participants who weren’t able to attend the event, notably those with physical mobility issues, it will be interesting to see how the results change (if at all) after this additional data is collected.

Going forward, my department has agreed to put forward an application on my behalf to The Footsteps Fund to fund me running the letter-writing project on a salaried, part-time basis. Having provided HR with a Job Description, I am currently waiting for confirmation with regards to the pay grade of the role. If successful in my application I would be able to combine this role with working as a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant at the School of English, having submitted my PhD thesis in August 2016. This is an ideal role for me, as along with expanding the scope of the project to include 100-150 students and 100-150 older participants, I’ve also included a research element in the Job Description that would allow me to respond to the findings from this year’s data. In having three days to officially devote to the project I could do far more with regards to collaborating with third-sector and archive organisations and offering additional Public Engagement events as part of the project.
Writing Back

Mental wellbeing

Chart demonstrating ratio of students who strongly agree that writing to their pen pal has a positive effect on their mental being (white), versus those who agree with the statement (blue).

Mental wellbeing

Chart demonstrating ratio of older participants who strongly agree that writing to their pen pal has a positive effect on their mental being (white), versus those who agree with the statement (blue).

Loneliness

Loneliness of participants ranked from left to right:

"I often feel lonely" [3-4 times a week]
"I sometimes feel lonely" [1-2 times a week]
"I never feel lonely" [never]
Writing Back has grown considerably during the course of the Engagement Excellence Fellowship. Prior to being appointed as a Fellow for the 2015-16 academic year, my objectives for the project were to measure the impact of loneliness and to make students aware of archival material existing in Yorkshire beyond Special Collections at the Brotherton Library. These aims were successfully achieved with the significant assistance of the Engagement Excellence team. In applying for the scheme I sought to learn from experienced practitioners in Public Engagement work. Whilst I set up the project in 2014 with support from the School of English, the Faculty of Arts and the Volunteering Hub, I had had no mentorship prior to the Fellowship. In developing my role as a Public Engagement champion I was able to apply for funding from The Footsteps Fund: Making a World of Difference Campaign. As 1 August 2016, I am now working as the Project Officer of Writing Back on a paid, part-time basis. The additional funding that the project has received will enable 150 students to write to 150 older Yorkshire residents across the course of the 2016-2017 academic year.

The Engagement Excellence Fellowship provided me with a valuable opportunity to learn about data handling, sampling and best presenting research. Having attended the Campaign to End Loneliness Learning Network in Cardiff, I was able to practice using loneliness measurement tools and later implemented these strategies within my own project. I also made contact with Time to Shine, a lottery-funded project tackling loneliness in the older generation, and shared research data and strategies with their members. Following a celebratory lunch event for our pen pals I distributed optional questionnaires to participants. The results of the questionnaires indicate that the project is having a significant impact on the emotional wellbeing of the students and older pen pals. However, more could be done to target older members of the community who are most at risk of social isolation.

Having additional time to dedicate to the project this year will allow me to make contact with colleagues who are engaged in PPI across our department. With the number of participants significantly increasing next year, our School of English students will be offered the opportunity to write to an older Yorkshire resident from the very moment that they start their degree. Whilst I had some understanding of Public Engagement prior to this Fellowship, I had little knowledge of Public/Patient Involvement. The scheme introduced me to the intricacies of Applied Health research, with this being an area that I hope to explore further in the future. Attending the Theatre of Debate event was a particular highlight, given its focus on interdisciplinary and cross-departmental research. The objective of Writing Back is to continue this interdisciplinary conversation across the course of the University during the 2016-2017 academic year and beyond.
Appendix

- Breakdown of financial spend: The initial intention was to hold two separate events, other than the letter writing lunches. However, rather than the anticipated 28 participants I instead ended up having 112 letter writers in total, after deciding that facilitating more letter writing friendships would be the most beneficial action.
- The Faculty of Arts generously funded the cost of posting the students’ letters each week, as well as covering the catering costs of one of the letter writing events.

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<td>Stamps for participants</td>
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<td>£265.05</td>
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<td>Ambassador caterers (x1) – 1 lunch paid for by Faculty of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surplus</td>
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How many staff have you engaged with your project?
- Whilst this is an individually-run project I have been supported by my Head of School and departmental Finance Manager as well as two members of staff at the Volunteering Hub and Tess Hornsby-Smith at the Faculty of Arts.

Have you developed a case study/article? Include details, please.
- Please see page 5 of this document: article produced for the Love Letters, Inter-disciplinary.net conference.

How many events/activities have you done (during the scheme)?
- Two training events with 56 students in total.
- 112 participants regularly exchanging letters with one another.
- Two letter writing events (detailed below).

20 April 2016 Event (41 attendees)
- 18 students and 17 older participants at 20 April 2016 event.
- 2 additional older guests.
- 1 additional student guest.
- 2 members of third-sector organisations.
- 1 member of the Volunteering Hub.

27 April 2016 event (74 attendees)
• 33 students and 33 older participants.
• 6 additional older guests.
• 1 additional student guest.
• 1 member of third-sector organisation.

How many people have completing surveys/interviews/interacted on social media?
• 17 students and 22 older participants completed the post-event questionnaires.
• A recent Tweet regarding the project gained 797 impressions which included 33 total engagements with the Tweet.
Dr David Lewis, School of Biomedical Sciences

Introduction

I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Neuroscience and Scientific Ethics within the School of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Biological Sciences. I did my first degree in Pharmacology at Leeds before undertaking PhD and postdoctoral studies in Birmingham investigating the physiology and pharmacology of the brain’s pathways controlling the cardio-respiratory and gastrointestinal systems. I returned to a lectureship at Leeds in 1999.

What are you doing in your current role?

My current focus is student education, developing and delivering innovative research-based education not normally found in the curriculum, yet addresses a clear demand from employers including bioethics and non-traditional Final Year research projects. I lead national and international projects which provide education and training in the use of animals in scientific and medical research.

I’m passionate about engaging the public with science and its ethical implications. I create and lead major public engagement projects including “Engaging with Dementia” and “Pop-up Science”

What is your planned project about? Include objectives.

My project aims to link people with cerebral palsy with researchers and clinicians interested in the disorder, for them to work collaboratively together to identify research questions to be addressed, to shape and focus research into the disorder and potential therapies as it progresses, and to use social media tools to engage the CP community and the wider public with the outcomes of this research.

What is your understanding of public engagement?

Public engagement is the sharing of research or other activities with the public. It is a two way, interactive process which involves conversing, listening and learning from each other.

What is the step change for you with this project?

This will be the first time I have engaged with user communities to direct biomedical research or used social media tools to engage the public with the outcomes of research.
Dr Louise Walker, School of Civil Engineering

Introduction

I have a first degree in Applied Biology from Liverpool John Moores University and a PhD in Environmental Science from the University of Bradford. My career has a strong environmental focus. I worked for over ten years in urban water management research, supporting more sustainable management of surface water in cities.

I am now Programme Co-ordination Officer for the NERC/ESRC/Defra funded programme: Resource Recovery from Waste. This comprises projects at six universities, all looking at different aspects of resource recovery, but with the common aim of transforming the way in which waste is viewed so that it becomes a resource within a circular economy.

I would like to develop a method for public engagement across the multi-centre Resource Recovery from Waste programme.

Six Universities are involved in the programme and I would like to develop a co-ordinated approach to eliciting the views of the public on the recovery and use of resources from different types of waste. In order to engage people with the programme I would like to ask them to help us develop infographics to explain the aims and objectives of the programme that we can then use in our communication activities. Aim: to engage the public with the Resource Recovery from Waste Programme and raise awareness of issues surrounding the circular economy. Objectives are to:

- gauge public opinion on issues surrounding resource recovery from waste including concerns about re-use of resources and loss of non-renewables
- co-develop infographics that communicate the aims and objectives of the Resource Recovery from Waste project
- develop a method of communicating activities of the consortium that is quickly and easily understandable
- demonstrate impact of the programme by incorporating the views of members of the public in policy reports

It is important to the programme that the six projects work together toward coherent messages to inform policy. It has been recognised at this early stage of the programme that a greater focus is required on social aspects of resource recovery from waste. A public engagement activity will assist in the understanding and inclusion of social aspects to programme outcomes.

What is your understanding of public engagement?

I understand public engagement to be the involvement of lay persons in research in ways that are mutually beneficial to both parties.

What is the step change for you with this project?
Designing and implementing a new means of public engagement and to work with members of the public as well as professional stakeholders.

Louise left the University in February 2016.
Dr Kathleen E. Wright, School of Biomedical Sciences

Introduction
I am a mid-career Life Sciences researcher with an interest in developing effective treatments for common human diseases such as cancers and neuromuscular and skeletal damage. I enjoy learning new things and taking part in local and international voluntary activities.

My background?
My background is in Medical Biochemistry (University of Leicester), and Photodynamic therapy and Tissue Engineering/Regenerative Medicine (The Open University, Milton Keynes). I have research experience in cutting edge research for developing novel diagnostic tools, therapeutic drugs and cell-based implantable repair devices both nationally and internationally.

What I am doing now?
I am a Senior Scientific Officer in Cardiovascular Sciences in the Faculty of Biological Sciences at the University of Leeds and an honorary NHS staff. I provide laboratory management and scientific research support for senior academics, research staff and students.

What is my planned project about?
My public engagement project for the Engagement Excellence Scheme Fellowship is a healthy diet for a healthy heart workshop, as part of the Leeds Chapeltown Arts Festival in July 2016. The aim is to including all sectors of the local community and the University of Leeds and NHS Cardiovascular Sciences researchers. I will engage with the public as a scientist and a cake maker. Examples of maintaining a healthy diet for a healthier heart, and similarities between scientific research and cake making methods will be presented. Attendees will take part in healthy cake making and food science sessions while utilizing scientific tools. Seeds will be sown for future researchers and engagement projects.

My understanding of public engagement
Public engagement to me is the mutual seeking, meeting, interacting and exchanging of information, views and ideas between lay-people and specialists, while finding ways of continuing interactions between these two.

What the step change is for me?
The step change to me would be to be placed in a project leadership, management and facilitator role in a public setting.

Mid-Term Report
Project Title: Healthy Diet for a Healthy Heart
Workshop Aim: To Engage with the Chapeltown and surrounding community (Leeds, UK) as a University of Leeds cardiovascular researcher and a cake maker
Workshop Advertisement:
This workshop is planned for the 4th July (2pm -5pm) and the 8th July (11 am-2pm) 2016 at Jamaica House, 277 Chapeltown Road (as part of the week long annual Chapeltown Arts Festival). This workshop will be the first event of the week and is presently being advertised through the distribution of a workshop specific double sided A5 flier, and as part of the main fliers for the Arts Festival. These fliers are being distributed through the heart of the Chapeltown community (Chapeltown Road), in local businesses (i.e. libraries, dentists, cook food shops, barbers/hairdressers, launderettes, churches, schools, etc.). Fliers have also been distributed in the neighbouring Boumontofts and Harehills Lane communities, and in the Leeds City centre. 500 invitation fliers (£78) were designed and printed. These are being distributed with literature from the British Heart foundation (i.e. Reducing your blood cholesterol and Artie goes to the Carnival -5 portions of fruits/vegetables per day). This workshop is also been advertised electronically as Facebook events, on Eventbrite and on Twitter. There is presently no indications of the potential attendance rate to date. The impact of this advertisement activity to date includes a number of older people, professional fitness and fitness food producers being keen on attending this event with their students. I have also to date had one direct enquire about this workshop due to the distribution of these fliers. This was from a support worker and her older client. Bookings for this workshop are being managed by the Chapeltown Arts Festival organisers. A possible 500 more fliers may be required to be printed and distributed near the time, this is dependent on the registration numbers in the following 2 weeks.

**Venue:**
The Jamaica House venue has now been booked for 2 days and fully paid for (i.e. £100 for 2 rooms and the use of the kitchen, grounds, tables and kitchen equipment and appliances present). A workshop advertisement banner will be designed and printer to mimic the design of the invitation flier. This will be hung on the Jamaica House Building venue on Chapeltown Road.

**Display Room Activities:**
One laypersons cardiovascular research poster has been submitter to date with potentially 3 others on the way from postdoctoral/student researchers. Problems have been met in the acquisition of digital display equipment for displaying animated posters rather than still posters. This part of the project is ongoing with a backup of still posters for displaying to the attendees.

The video production to be stream in this display room has had drawbacks in terms of participants’ availabilities (i.e. senior academic researchers). An alternative has since been proposed to make the recording process possible in the researchers own time. Short 2 min voice recordings of previously proposed questions have been requested. A handheld voice recording device has been supplied for their use. These recordings will be used in the form of voice overs and subtitle in the short video. These interviewees where initially chosen to give research groups in FBS Cardiovascular Sciences the opportunity to take part in this public engagement activity. However, in this instance I will have to resort to groups that are already contribution to other aspects of the workshop.

One offer has been make so far to display a professionally home make cake in this display room. 2 other invitations to local cake makers have been issued and I am awaiting their response.
The use of the human body model and cardiovascular related equipment will be booked for this display room. Bits and pieces of research and cake making equipment will also feature in this display room.

A stall needs to be manned in this display area based on basic test of common food items for food groups (i.e. carbohydrates, fat and protein). The instructions for these mini tests need to be gathered.

**Practical Room Activities:**

An initial PowerPoint presentation will be used to start the workshop. This is presently 70% completed to date. This is based on introducing healthier food choices and portion sizes, information about heart disease and the latest news to link with food choices, and ingredient substitutes that may be used to personalise cakes to an individual’s own dietary needs.

Research supply catalogues have been searched for potential laboratory equipment which may be used during the practical caking sessions, to substitute traditional cake making equipment (e.g. Plastic beakers, weighing boats, pasture pipettes, spatulas, etc.). Due to the uncertainty of the number of attendees at this stage and the time it may take for these items to be delivered, the initial project estimated attendance levels of 14 persons per workshop will be used. These laboratory supplies will be ordered in the coming week. Also some more traditional baking items will be ordered for use in this workshop practical.

Healthier cake recipes have been sourced from various healthy eating websites, these will be formatted in layperson friendly manner for take home. These will be based on research into major supermarket cake baking kits (e.g. Morrisons). This format will also be adapted for use in the cake making workshop practical session.

Dry and fresh baking suppliers will be sourced and orders will be made nearer the workshop start date. Transportation and access to the venue for preparation purposes will be organised nearer the workshop start date for the day before.

**Staffing:**

So far I have 4 motivated staff/participants for this work shop. More specific and firmer commitments will be sought for respective dates in the coming weeks. Increase interaction with the venue staff will also be required nearer the date. Support will also be provided by the Arts Festival organisers. This may equate to 2 additional bodies.

**Data Collection Methods:**

A short questionnaire is still to be developed for these attendees to answer before and after the workshop for comparison. Literature has been collect for homework (e.g. walking plans and diet monitoring sheets from the British Heart Foundation). It is hoped that this information will be feedback to interested attendees after the workshop. This aspect of the workshop required more planning.

**Giveaway (prize draw):**

If funding permits, there will be potential giveaways of items from the British Heart Foundation (e.g. portion sizing plates)
What have you done in your project? Have you achieved your objectives?
In my project I developed and delivered Healthy Diet for a Healthy Heart - Healthy Cake Making Workshops. This was in aid of engaging with the local Leeds community of Chapeltown and surrounding areas. Some elements in the development and delivery of this workshop included: 1) **Collaboration** with the local Chapeltown Art’s Festival (as part of the festival planning committee), sharing ideas and progress with workshop development; 2) **Advertisement** via general festival & workshop specific flier development, and distribution of fliers with British Heart foundation material for adults & children (in libraries, dentist, barbershops, on the street, etc), development & use of venue hung banner and use of social media (EventBrite, Twitter, Facebook Events, festival email lists and via word-of-mouth); 3) **Content development** including cake recipe search, development & trials, utilization of colleagues & family members for pre-tasting experiments, internet searches for mini-presentation material a) healthy eating, b) causes of heart disease & c) baking methods, video production with heart researchers, body mass index & weight measuring activities, food testing activities, lay-persons scientific poster productions and a microscope display with various tissue sections; 4) **Budgeting/Purchasing** via selection of items for these cake making workshops using laboratory style tools & liaised with goods purchasing & delivery departments; 5) **Facilitation** running of these events, allocation of staff role & promoting participation, transportation of materials to venue & setting-up of acquired venue (Jamaica Society House, Leeds); and 6) **Evaluation of event** Collected photos during both sessions of these events, distributed and collected survey sheets, 7) **Follow-on** activities were provided of British Heart Foundation materials for monitoring cholesterol intake (Lowering Cholesterol-Your 10 min Challenge), increasing physical activity (Walking Training Plans for Beginners) and food cards of energy content of popular foods.
Yes, I have achieved most of my objectives. I initially planned for 14 persons in attendance per workshop session. The target attendees’ levels were met, I achieved ~13 and ~16 persons respectively (figures are of signed-in attendees). Attendees were diverse ranging
from 16-81 years old (figures are of attendees who filled in workshop questionnaire). The workshop was attended by members of the Chapeltown and surrounding communities, but also from members of communities as far afield as Roundhay, Moortown, Headingley, Armley, Adel, and even Bradford (information from questionnaire). From the questionnaire most attendees were retired/unemployed. Some objectives not fulfilled were: 1) Judging of attendance levels through sign-up sheets prior to event. This was managed by the festival organisers. This objective was no longer relevant as attendees learnt of the event through other means, 2) the involvement of identified local cake making experts. This objective was not met as the planned person was unable to attend by mid-year of planning, and subsequent substitutes did not deliver, and 3) only end of workshop questionnaire filling was developed & responses collected. So, no information about attendees before the workshop.

Your expectation of the scheme and how the scheme has helped you with your project.
My expectation of the scheme was that it would offer support and guidance for the development of my project idea to its realisation. This it has achieved. The scheme has helped me with my project by offering timely advice and expert directions for resources, further skills development and things to consider during the different stages of my project development with: 2nd & 3rd party presentations e.g. Infographics and examples of completed projects around the University of Leeds, as well as a few choice training sessions e.g. ‘Social Media’ awareness!). The scheme has also helped via providing an opportunity to learn from fellow scheme members’ experiences, throughout the year, from peer advice and from outcomes of their various project activities.

How likely is it that the research impact has been increased /will increase through your PE project?
The research impact for the Cardiovascular Research Group in the School of Biomedical Sciences would have increased to some degree in these local communities. This is through pre-workshop advertisement activities of conversing with lay-people on the street (while distributing workshop fliers & British Heart Foundation literature materials). Also, through discussions during these workshops themselves with attendees from different communities, work sectors and peer groups in Leeds. In addition, these workshops have gained notability by the ‘American Heart Association Meetings’ and the group ‘Cook and Eat Well in Coventry’ via Twitter, and by social group leads in the Chapeltown community (e.g. AgeUKLeeds, Jamaica Society, Northern School of Dance etc.)

How has the PE further diffused in your School/Institute? What is different now with respect to PE?
Public engagement has further diffused in my research school and groups. The outcomes of these workshops have been presented to the Cardiovascular Sciences research department in the School of Biomedical Sciences and was well received. The lay-persons scientific posters generated from these workshops have been hanged around the department for general viewing. I have been encouraging some of the poster makers to try and take their posters to an additional external event. The produced video was well received and it is in the process of being further upgraded for potential use on the departmental webpage and for School Open Days.
Public Engagement is now recognised as being an important element of our groups’ research activities. Senior researchers are now on the lookout for other potential activities e.g. Dr Sarah Calaghan has recently suggested the engagement/outreach activities of The Physiological Society as a potential additional follow on direction to this workshop. This is in addition to a request from the Jamaica Society-Leeds for a re-run of this workshop for their society members in October of this year.

Has your understanding of public engagement changed during the scheme?
My understanding of public engagement was initially highlighted as “I understand public engagement to be a mutual exchange of information, practice and learning between the research community and ‘J-public’.” I also now understand public engagement to mean being aware of the diverse background of the public in attendance. E.g. some attendees to these workshops were retired nurses and people with heart diseases themselves; to people who have never considered heart disease. Also, regular cake makers to people who have always wanted to learn how to make a cake. I have learnt from this scheme to plan way ahead and to be prepared to be flexible.

Have you achieved the step change you aspired to? What do you plan to do in the future regarding PE?
Initially my step change was highlighted as, “The step change to me would be to be placed in a more project leadership and lead facilitator role in a public setting.” This I have achieved. After some discussion with a colleague my step change was also from a Chapeltown Arts Festival cake seller last year to a Chapeltown Arts Festival workshop organiser this year. In the future, I hope to run similar ‘Healthy Diet for a Healthy Heart’ workshops and/or healthy diet and scientific research activities with members of local communities.

Appendix:
- Breakdown of financial spend (a table is fine) Please attached appendix sheets
- How many staff have you engaged with with your project? ~15
- Have you developed a case study/article? Include details, please. In preparation
- How many events/activities have you done (during the scheme)? 2 x workshop sessions
- How many people have attended these/taken part in these? >29 (13 +16) attended these sessions
- How many people have completing surveys/interviews/interacted on social media. Surveys collected 16
Dr Anke Brüning-Richardson,
LICAP, School of Medicine

Introduction

My name is Dr Anke Brüning-Richardson, I am a senior research fellow at the Leeds Institute of Cancer and Pathology. My research is funded by a local brain tumour charity, the PPR Foundation, and focuses on the development of novel drugs to stop brain tumour dissemination in the brain. This work had been funded initially for three years with another three years of funding granted by the charity to continue the research recently. Prior to my employment in my recent post I held various positions in cancer research at Leeds University and through this I met the CRUK Leeds Center Public Engagement Officer, Andy Wilson. He introduced me to the concept of public engagement by asking me to become involved in various public engagement activities such as lab tours for fund raisers, cancer patients and interested members of the public. When I started this I realized how much I enjoy the interaction with people of various backgrounds and the opportunity to relay the research I do in layman’s terms.

I have developed a very close relationship with the PPR Foundation, the charity that is funding me now, and especially with its founder, Pamela Roberts. I feel inspired by her drive and dedication to push brain tumour research forward, and would like to support her in her quest by doing public engagement related activities to raise awareness about brain tumours, the work of the PPR Foundation and the research carried out at Leeds University.

I was appalled by the minimal exposure of brain tumours in the public especially in view of the fact that these cancers are the ones with the abysmal outcomes in terms of life lost due to the disease. In addition brain tumours constitute the cancers that especially affect the young, children and younger adults. With my project - to generate a short video about brain tumours - to be launched to coincide with Brain Tumour Awareness Day (March 2016) I am hoping to raise awareness of brain tumours in the general public and also raise the profile of the PPR Foundation and the ongoing research at Leeds University. Public engagement for me is an interaction/dialogue with a target audience; I hope to achieve this by the making of an informative video.

Mid term report

Background:
This project aimed to produce an awareness video about brain tumours to be released on “Wear a hat day” (23/03/2016), a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about brain tumours. Since my work at the University of Leeds concentrates on new treatments for brain tumours and I am currently funded by a local brain tumour charity, the PPR Foundation, I wanted to help the charity by releasing this video and to promote the research that is being carried out at the University of Leeds.

What has happened?
I had asked several clinicians as well as the chairlady of the PPR Foundation, Pamela Roberts, to be involved in this project. I also got invaluable help from the director Steve McCarthy-Wright to create a script. I used the services of a local video company, as I had worked with them before and they had also waived some of the fees for charity. I organised dates for the clinicians (a brain surgeon, paediatric oncologist and pathologist) to be filmed in the beginning of March as well as dates for Pamela Roberts, Sophie Taylor (a PhD student funded by the PPR Foundation) as well as myself to be filmed on site. After completing of filming the video was then produced. I received a rough version and after some changes we had the final product. The video was released on “Wear a hat day” at lunchtime on YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. The news about the video was also circulated within the Wellcome Trust Brenner Building and by the local CRUK managers Andy Wilson and Paul Affleck.

What went well?
The video was well received, with positive feedback and shares on Facebook, over 250 views on YouTube and promising statistics on Tweetreach. In addition, the charity raised £2,000 on the day.

What could have been better?
Organising all participants was okay, however, I did not appreciate all the other actions to have to take place when to do filming on site (i.e. liaise with the local health and safety manager, clearing the video with the section head, SCIF business lead, also making sure the lab looks neat and tidy!) Also, the video was finally done on the same day of release and I realised that I could not download it from the filmmaker’s website due to a technical problem. It was finally released at lunchtime after a stressful morning!!

End of scheme report

What have you done in your project? Have you achieved your objectives?
This project was aimed to raise awareness about brain tumours and the research I carry out in my role as senior research fellow at Leeds University, which is funded by a local brain tumour charity, the PPR Foundation. I aimed to produce a short video highlighting the difficulties to be overcome by the patients, their relatives and the scientists when dealing with this still deadly disease. The video was aimed to be released to coincide with Brain Tumor Day (Wear a Hat Day in March 2016).

Your expectation of the scheme and how the scheme has helped you with your project.
I didn’t really know what to expect, however, I found some of the associated workshops/meetings very helpful in terms of thinking about the structure of the video, how to present it and how to assess the impact of the video.

**How likely is it that the research impact has been increased /will increase through your PE project?**

I have had positive feedback in that on the day of the release of the video, nearly £1,200 was raised on the day, and there were spikes of visits to the PPR Foundation and my own Twitter Account. The video has been watched 276 times and there were many ‘Likes’ and ‘Shares’ on Facebook. The charity has put the video permanently on their website. I also established links with local artists through the video who spontaneously donated work to be raffled off on the day of the video release if people donated money.

**How has the PE further diffused in your School/Institute? What is different now with respect to PE?**

I think that for my own development, my colleagues are now much more aware of the PE work I do and also that we have an active PE team at the university. Especially with regards to Leeds University having signed up to the manifesto of public engagement my colleagues have now a local contact (myself) to talk to about PE activities and my work has inspired especially the PhD students in the department to think about PE-related projects.

**Has your understanding of public engagement changed during the scheme?**

I think my understanding of public engagement hasn’t changed as such, however, the scheme gave me the opportunity to develop personally and acquire new skills (for example how to write a script and make a video!) and inspired me and strengthened my desire to continue with PE work.

**Have you achieved the step change you aspired to? What do you plan to do in the future regarding PE?**

I believe that I have found out more about myself in this process. I have learnt that I can do activities outside research/science and am, I think, quite good at it. I thoroughly enjoy the interaction with the public and to be able to tell people about what I do in an understandable way. This interaction is reciprocal, in that I hear from the public (patients, relatives, school children etc.) what their views and priorities are. This will feed back into my research. I have applied to two national PE award schemes. I am also liaising with Kathy Oliver of the International Brain Tumour Alliance to produce an article about the PE work I do and have already an activity in mind which will also be mentioned in this article for further participation of the public with my PE activities.

**Appendix:**

*Breakdown of costs:*

**TOTAL:** £400 – Film production including filming and editing/post production

**Staff:**

1. Script writing – 1 film director
2. Video – 1 paediatric oncologist, 1 neurosurgeon, 1 brain pathologist, the charity chair lady, my PhD student, myself, 1 film maker

[engagement excellence]
3. Raffle event – 2 local artists, 1 international artist

How many events:
1 – the video, but still ongoing as available on YouTube and the charity website; also advertised through University websites and social media such as Twitter and Facebook

How many people have taken part:
As under ‘Staff’.

Social media interactions:
YouTube: 276 views.
Donations on the day of video release: £1,200
Facebook: Shares/Likes
Twitter: see print out of Twitter activity
TWEETREACH SNAPSHOT FOR pprfoundation

ESTIMATED REACH

80,174 ACCOUNTS REACHED

EXPOSURE

181,098 IMPRESSIONS

ACTIVITY

74 TWEETS
26 CONTRIBUTORS
10 DAYS

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

80.1k IMPRESSIONS
@StrayFM

24 RETWEETS
@StrayFM

68 MENTIONS
pprfoundation

MOST RETweeted TWEETS

11
Stay FM @StrayFM
NEWS: Fashionable fundraisers turn heads in #Harrogate for pprfoundation #StrayNews
strayfm.com/news/local-news... https://t.co/4XxYuKgSE

6
Stay FM @StrayFM
NEWS: Fashionable fundraisers turn heads in #Harrogate for pprfoundation #StrayNews
strayfm.com/news/local-news... https://t.co/DMyY2GULel

4
The Wild Plum @thewildplum122
Meet our team for today Kim, Cassie, Sue, Bethany, Julie & Carol #TheWildPlum #Harrogate #food
pprfoundation https://t.co/xT5A44hKc
TWEETREACH SNAPSHOT FOR ankeBgyar

ESTIMATED REACH

2,937

ACCOUNTS REACHED

EXPOSURE

5,986

IMPRESSIONS

ACTIVITY

28

TWEETS

6

CONTRIBUTORS

10

DAYS

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

3k

IMPRESSIONS

JustinLeeming

4

RETWEETS

AnkeBgyar

12

MENTIONS

apprfoundation

MOST RETWEETED TWEETS

3

Anke Richardson @AnkeBgyar

Please watch youtube.be/new2NIlYeYo

DerekCStewart @JustinLeeming @Boy

@JamesDaniel @CRUKYorkshires STRIdressYorks

#WearAHat4Day

2

The PPR Foundation @pprfoundation

To enter our Wear a Hat Day artwork draw just follow and message us your email address. Amazing art to be

wonderful.com/AnkeBgyar/tool...}

1

Stray FM @StrayFM

NEWS: Fashionable fundraisers turn heads in

#angrytuna for @pprfoundation @StrayFMNews

strayfm.com/news/local-even...https://t.co/4N6xUKsE
**Dr Clare Gee, School of Geography**

**Introduction**

I am an earth and environmental scientist, working in the School of Geography. I am returning to research after a long career break from science and retraining in peatland science on a Daphne Jackson Fellowship for 2 years at Leeds and I am 6 months in. In my other roles as mother, High school governor, mindfulness teacher and wellness coach, amateur artist, dog owner and outdoor enthusiast, I interface with many different local community groups that I hope I can make use of in this public engagement project.

**What are you doing in your current role?**

I am researching the role of peatland pools and how they process carbon for release into the atmosphere. I live in the beautiful Calder Valley, surrounded by peat moorland – so peat is much more than a job!

**What is your planned project about? Include objectives.**

I want to engage the community in Todmorden in giving thought and voice to what the moors surrounding the town mean to them. The aim is exchanging knowledge and creating a dialogue about the global importance of peat moorlands on our doorstep and beyond, through highlighting the research work at Leeds.

At present I have several possible objective ideas:

- A photo voice event around the May bank holiday Todmorden Boundary Walk organised with the agreement of the local Rotary Club
- Local paper write up and a Facebook page to collect photo entries and comments
- Inviting the large community of local artists to create a piece summing up what the moors mean to them and/or in response to hearing about what the moors mean to me, as a scientist.
- Displaying the body of work in an exhibition to coincide with the Boundary Walk event.

**What is your understanding of public engagement?**

Public engagement to me is finding new and imaginative ways to catch the interest of non-scientists/different groups in the wider public in the scientific research work we are doing. When people are engaged they are not passive, so by that definition engagement involves some form of participation, for example asking questions, taking part in an activity and/or being stimulated enough to think or behave differently, even if only in a small way, as a result of the participation. Engagement is a two way process with a researcher actively working to understand the current view of the other in order to share information and knowledge. The scientist/researcher therefore gains new insights, especially around effective communication, during the engagement exercise.
What is the step change for you with this project?
To speak up in public about my research and test out my communication skills with a wide variety of people. This is a large leap for me as I am relatively new to this subject area but feel this is an advantage when finding plain English ways to communicate it.
To formally approach local groups like the Rotary Club and Moors for the Future to ask for their help with the project. Engaging in dialogue with the local paper and social media to reach as many people as possible in the community.

Mid term report

The date of my main public engagement event is fast approaching – the Todmorden Boundary Walk is on Sunday 1st May. I will be handing out leaflets at the start and then manning an information stall at the half way refreshment point, with staff from a moorland restoration group that I invited to attend.
My overall aim is to raise locals awareness of the international importance of the landscape on their doorstep, especially the peat that is at its heart and to weave in the relevance to everyone of the research work we do in explaining how and why moorlands affect all our lives.
My objectives have been to design an engagement exercise that is a two way exchange with locals. I have designed and widely distributed an information leaflet with research generated facts about peatlands and an invitation to send to me a photo and comment about what the moors mean to you. Later in the year I will create a display of the collaged photos/comments, with peatland information in the town Tourist Information Centre. I hope that participants in the Boundary Walk will be keener to ask questions at the stall after reading the leaflet before their day on the moors.

Actions so far:
Design and print the leaflet and set up the university email address for the photo entries. After my initial presentation to the Todmorden Rotary club, which generated many questions and much interest with members, I have liaised with them closely over the event organisation and they have sent out over 100 event leaflets for me with walk registration forms.
Staff from Moors for the Future, who carry out large peatland restoration projects and act as research partners with the School of Geography, have agreed to come on 1st May.
I contacted the local paper and they ran a short article (with a very uninspiring title!)
A local primary sent 150 leaflets home in all the juniors book bags
I have spent the past few weeks distributing leaflets in Todmorden and neighbouring Hebden Bridge and speaking to as many people personally as possible to publicise the event. I have contacted many local groups: Calderdale Ramblers and 3 other walking groups, Treesresponsibility, Mountain Rescue, Todmorden Moor campaign group, Treesponsibility, local council, Quaker group, S, Pennine nature partnership, local artists network and put leaflets in local cafes, the Post Office, Hebden Town hall, the tourist information centres in both towns and posted links on my own Facebook page and the Todmorden Harriers FB and the Todmorden community online forum.
Lessons Learned:
Publicising an event is a never ending task – like posting into a black hole! Nothing comes back! However photos have begun to trickle in, so the message is out there. Don’t give up hope.
Get a personal contact for the local paper and write the article for them if possible, with your own photo, don’t use the general email address.
Print more leaflets than you ever think you will need – the return rate is poor
Get friends to help out with posting to Facebook and sharing posts. Think about what time of day you post and repeat after a few days/before the event. I don’t use twitter but if you have a local following it would be useful.

Next Steps:
Designing a short questionnaire to measure impact at the stall – suggestions from the group welcome!

End of scheme report

What Do the Moors Mean to You?
My research in the School of Geography concerns blanket peat bogs in the North of England and understanding the processes by which they contribute to the global carbon cycle. I have come into this field recently, after returning to academia from a family career break. Part of my interest in this field was from living in a South Pennine town for the past decade, surrounded by blanket peat bog moors on which I love to walk. The moors influence every aspect of life in Todmorden; from where houses can be built, to transport, the sense of community and the flood-prone nature of the town. Many incomers have been drawn there because of the surrounding hills, while born-and-bred residents often have a very deep seated sense of home and heritage in the valley. However over the first year of my research, through conversations about what I do with friends and neighbours, I began to realise how little was generally known about the international importance of our surrounding moors to climate change, and our national water supplies or the damage that has been done to them through past pollution and drainage. No-one I spoke to knew that over £5 million of EU money had been spent on a moorland restoration project near to the town. It was through these conversations that the idea of the “What do the Moors Mean to You?” project was born.

My aim was fairly broad and simple – to stimulate greater awareness of the moors and their importance to many aspects of our lives, in more of the community of this Pennine town. I hoped to stimulate discussion about the importance of this landscape to people’s lives and the relevance of the peatland research we do here at Leeds. On a personal level I aimed to deepen my knowledge of public engagement, what works and doesn’t work, through hands-on learning.
To achieve my objectives I took the starting point of the annual Todmorden Rotary Boundary Walk, a 21 mile walk around the moorland skyline of the town, following the old parish boundary. The event attracts around 300 participants each year, both residents and visitors. It takes place on the first bank holiday weekend in May.

I designed the project in the hope of stimulating a two-way exchange with participants. I asked people taking part in the walk (and a wider audience of moorland users in general/residents) to think about the question “what do the moors mean to you” and to send me a photo and a short explanatory comment which captured their thoughts. I would then compile these into a photo collage display to create a “photo voice” of the event. In addition I provided an information stall where questions could be answered, at the mid-way rest point of the boundary walk, with physical displays to explain moorland processes and posters explaining our research work. I also arranged for staff from the moorland restoration partnership Moors for the Future to be present and explain more about their work in the local area.

Before the event I widely distributed an information leaflet with details of the project on one side and 10 research-generated facts about the impact of peat moors on our lives, on the reverse. The leaflet was sent home with 250 local primary children, displayed on the Rotary Boundary Walk website, stocked in the Post Office, libraries and Tourist Information offices of Todmorden and neighbouring Hebden Bridge. Copies were also displayed in many shops and cafes. The local paper wrote a short article on the project and leaflets were emailed to all the local ramblers groups and moorland activist groups, as well as posting on the Fell Runners forum and local community forum.

In January 2016, I gave a talk to the local Rotary club and gained their interest and support for the event. They arranged to send copies of the project leaflet to all boundary walk participants. In all, more than 700 leaflets were distributed. It was difficult to know how much of an impact the leaflets had. Indications that people were interested were that the leaflets in the Post Office and Tourist Information were all taken and had to be replenished. Also word of mouth conversations with people who saw me round town indicated that some people had read them.

The unpredictability of the British weather meant that the Boundary Walk event did not go as hoped. Walkers came into the rest-point wet and tired and most just wanted to grab a cup of tea and a sandwich and were not in a receptive frame of mind for information about the moors. Unfortunately the weather also meant it was not a good day for taking photos. The brief questionnaire I had designed to gauge the impact of the information was not useful. Over the next month 12 people responded with photos and comments. While this was much less than anticipated, several of the participants sent a good variety of images and a range of different comments. This means that the second event in the project – the photo collage, will still reflect a variety of view-points and provide another talking opportunity about the moors/research/conservation in the town. The collage is due to be displayed throughout October 2016 in the Todmorden Tourist Information Centre, along-side information about the global importance of the peatland landscape, reflecting the research we do here in the School of Geography.
It is difficult to accurately gauge the impact of the display and the level of discussion it generates. To maximise potential impact, I will inform the local paper of the exhibition and invite participants to bring friends and neighbours to view it, as well as advertising on the local community forum.

Being part of the University Engagement Excellence Scheme this year has been a great experience. Having peer support, structured meetings and useful information about different approaches to science communication and public engagement was a major motivator throughout the project. I found the sessions on infographics, assessing impact and communication through performance to be particularly stimulating. I enjoyed hearing about the progress of the other EES member’s projects and the scope of the different approaches being used. I found their journeys to be inspiring. I would have liked a final session where we gave visual presentations to each other about the journey each of us have been on. This would have brought us full circle from the first session’s presentations, when we all shared our aspirations for our projects, and been another valuable peer learning experience.

I have learned so much from this project – as much from what has not gone to plan as from the parts that worked well. Particular learning points that come to mind are: talk to everyone you can think of – people want to be helpful if you have an exciting project; events that are spread over time make impact hard to gauge; people have to be in the right frame of mind to be engaged and some people just don’t want any more information even if it’s about a place they care about; don’t despair! – even a less-than-expected participation result can produce a beautiful end product, that can continue to generate impact.

In addition I have learned how much I enjoy talking to non-scientific audiences and creatively communicating complex environmental science in accessible ways. It has really stretched and challenged me to do this, which has been both enjoyable and stressful at times. In future, working on this kind of project as part of a small team would be (for me) more rewarding than doing it alone. Although I notified my research colleagues and all members of the School of Geography through the departmental newsletter, email and the water@leeds twitter feed, the project does not seem to have changed attitudes to public engagement in the School - sporadic projects are happening on an individual basis as before, with little communication to colleagues. I think it would take the creation of a Faculty Public Engagement with Research post, with a remit to raise the profile of public engagement and coordinate projects, to make a real, lasting step-change. However, as NERCs research impact agenda grows, the desire to create projects is likely to change.

I have certainly achieved the personal step-change I aspired to in applying for the Engagement Excellence Scheme. It has inspired me to take my interest further by doing a part-time PGCert in science communication this academic year at UWE in Bristol. I am not yet sure where this will take me – whether I will use these skills from within academia or full-time in a science communication role, but the possibilities of either direction are exciting. This is reflected in the cover photo for this report – it has felt like a long, strenuous run across the moors on which I have jumped in with both feet and got well and truly muddy (with the ‘mud’ of experience) – and the path ahead, (to more science communication projects) looks very inviting!
The Project team

Sue Pavitt
Professor in Applied Health & Translational Research, School of Dentistry

Elaine McNichol
Academic Lead in Service User and Carer Involvement, School of Healthcare

Alexa Ruppertsberg
Team Lead for Public Engagement with Research Communications