



# CUPP conference report

April 2006 Brighton

 University of Brighton



BRIGHTON & SUSSEX  
**COMMUNITY  
KNOWLEDGE  
EXCHANGE**

[www.cupp.org.uk](http://www.cupp.org.uk)



**Dave Wolff**  
Director of Cupp

*The University has a responsibility and a desire to support its local communities. For the community organisations, each Cupp project aims to help them tackle disadvantage in the local area. For the University, each project contributes either to research or to student learning. We hope that the mutual benefits derived from these collaborations will encourage the partners to continue to work together for years to come.*

*This conference brought together community practitioners, academics, university managers, students, service users and community members in a shared endeavour – to explore community-university partnerships for community-university benefits.*

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### Additional resources from the conference

In this report we aim to provide a summary of the primary activities, issues and next steps from the Cupp conference held on 6th and 7th April 2006. Additional information and resources, including workshop outlines, presentations and handouts, as well as a summary of the feedback that we received from participants is available at [www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm).

The website also includes a list of useful jargon and acronyms, so if there are any terms used in this report that you do not know then please visit [www.cupp.org.uk/resources/jargon.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/resources/jargon.htm).

above **Dave Wolff**/ opposite **Dan Shelley**/ front cover **Julie and Hollie**  
- Access to Art project/

# 1 OVERVIEW

## Dan Shelley

Brighton & Hove Learning Partnership Manager, Cupp steering group member

*Universities often have a reputation for being out of touch from local communities - conducting 'blue sky' research, whilst students are not always welcome in neighbourhoods - with complaints of noise, disorder, and rubbish.*

*Brighton's Community University Partnership Programme (Cupp) addresses some of these issues by placing an emphasis on staff and students decamping from the 'ivory tower' that universities are stereotypically associated with, to work with local residents and the diverse communities surrounding them in Brighton, Hove and East and West Sussex.*

*Cupp builds upon the University's emphasis on applied courses and local partnerships to address these stereotypes. It draws together expertise from the University, in terms of research techniques and student/staff placements, and matches it with community based experts, with their localised knowledge around specific issues faced by these diverse communities. By working together local solutions can be suggested that can impact on both the local area and University participants, by increasing that actual, real life experience for students and staff alike.*

*The first Cupp conference held in April 06 outlined the impact that the programme is already having and showcased good examples of community and university engagement projects worldwide. Nearly 200 international, national and local contributors and participants from higher education, the voluntary and public sector, practitioners and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) attended the conference.*

*The two-day conference included workshops, discussions, a photographic exhibition, a film screening and networking opportunities. These initiatives provided information, ideas and examples of how universities are collaborating with community and public sectors in research, student learning and knowledge exchange. The response from those who attended the conference has been very positive.*

*Cupp incorporates the Brighton & Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange, (BSCKE), funded by the Higher Education Funding Council, to explore ways of exchanging knowledge and expertise between universities and their local communities.*



*I wasn't really sure what to expect and was pleased to find it so interesting and accessible*

Participant feedback

## 2 SETTING THE SCENE

Introductions to the conference were provided by **Julian Crampton** (Vice Chancellor – University of Brighton) and **Stuart Laing** (Pro Vice Chancellor – Academic Affairs, University of Brighton)

**Why is there such a level of interest in community-university engagement at this time?** Professor Julian Crampton, Vice Chancellor – University of Brighton

*This area of work is a priority for the University of Brighton for the following reasons:*

- *The conference reflects a vital part of the mission of the University of Brighton to work with and alongside its local communities and to make itself more permeable*
- *We believe fundamentally that this is part of our civic responsibility as a modern university and an intrinsic part of what we do to continually enrich our teaching and research*
- *Brighton has a long history of working with community connections, from our antecedents in local trade schools, and more recently as an institution oriented distinctively to professional formation in which teaching, learning and research require an intricate connection between the concerns of the profession and those it serves and the concerns of the academy*
- *Cupp is therefore an immensely exciting development for the University, building on that history and on that professional focus*
- *Whilst Cupp builds on a strong base here, it has enabled us to do different things and to do things differently - to start to redefine the relationship between a university and its external communities; to think afresh about the opportunities and obligations of partnership; to work out what knowledge exchange (rather than knowledge transfer) really means; to explore the scope of mutual benefit between people who work as academics and people who work in the community; to engage meaningfully and to mutual benefit*
- *Local commitment is also congruent with current policy trends, including those within Higher Education. Questions here include what is the role for this work in the context of increased marketisation; what are the conditions for successful partnerships; what is the potential and pre conditions for new forms of knowledge production and innovation; how can we ensure that community-facing work is endorsed in policy and funding; how do we ensure we continue to give our students knowledge and skills that work?*

*So for the University of Brighton, the conference is:*

- *an opportunity to reflect on what works (and perhaps what doesn't) – what are the conditions for success, whether in terms of policy and funding or individual practice*

*Cupp's model of community-university partnership aims to translate ideas of 'working together' into real equality in action both in and with the community. With increasing pressure on higher education to be less remote and to foster in students a sense of citizenship as well as skills for real life, we will see more of the kind of social engagement and dialogue in which Cupp is leading the way.*

Julian Crampton  
Vice Chancellor

- an opportunity to learn from each other, including from other sectors and other countries
- a statement of the importance of this work: it matters and it can make a difference to institutions and to individuals
- a celebration of what has been achieved to date

*I hope as we go through the rest of the conference, you will each find something from the experience of personal and intellectual engagement that excites, stimulates and challenges you - as well as something tangible that will help your own work.*

### Why community-university engagement?

Summary of key points from a presentation by Professor Stuart Laing, Pro Vice Chancellor – University of Brighton. The full text of the paper delivered on this subject can be found on our website at [www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm)

- The University of Brighton, like many former polytechnics, has always responded to the needs of the immediate locale in terms of education provision, Cupp is a new way of delivering a historic commitment
- The current focus on engagement can be seen in the context of two current government initiatives and reflect similar priorities in the USA, South Africa and Australia as well as many other countries.
- These initiatives are addressing the need to widen access to Higher Education and to engage in a meaningful way with local businesses and communities.
- Research suggests that those benefiting from Higher Education not only earn more (the 'graduate premium') but also live healthier and more fulfilled lives. To enable broadest possible access to these latter positive effects we need radically to extend our ideas about how 'participation' in Higher Education can happen.
- Engaging with business organisations in 'third stream' activity is part of Brighton's core business, enabling us to make a contribution to organisational success and wealth creation in the local and national economy.
- Extending this mode of engagement to community organisations and to the totality of the social process is also 'wealth' creating, taking the proper meaning of 'wealth' to be the welfare and well-being of the whole society. The traditional English concept of 'commonwealth' then links business and community engagement in a single purpose.
- Our experience of community engagement has caused us to rethink our concept of an academic community and consider knowledge exchange in addition to knowledge transfer.
- Community partners have helped us to rethink our processes and redefine our role in the preservation, discovery, development, transmission and application of knowledge.



*I was expecting it to be a lot more pompous, but everyone tried hard to avoid jargon and really communicate. It's very exciting to see our local university really trying to engage people like me. I might even sign up for a master's course now.*

Participant feedback

above **Stuart Laing**/opposite **Julian Crampton**/

### 3 CONFERENCE VALUES AND STRUCTURE

*Programme well thought out and good mixture of talks, panel debates and group work.*

*The panels worked really well and provided a necessary opportunity for wider thinking.*

Participant feedback

*below Art in the Woods Women from the Hillview Family Centre in Moulsecomb working with students from the Faculty of Art and Architecture/ opposite Sue Balloch/*

The primary aims of the conference were to enhance understanding of how to make mutually beneficial links between Higher Education and local communities and to further an understanding of the impact of Cupp and add to its prospects of sustaining itself.

Throughout the design and planning of the conference we had in mind the following core values, which we consider reflect the values and practices of Cupp:

- That the event should be as accessible as possible to all target groups
- Primarily activity/discussion rather than long periods of being ‘talked at’
- Thematic and small group sessions to be led jointly by academic and community partners

These values were reflected in the conference programme, which included 25 different workshops, facilitated group discussions, panel debates, networking opportunities, project displays, a film screening, a photographic exhibition and social event.



## 4 WORKSHOPS

The parallel sessions during the conference were categorised into 25 workshops and three separate strands:

- 1 Making a difference in the community** – Short presentations from community university partnership projects about a theme (e.g. ‘addressing disadvantage’) leading to small group discussion, finishing off with 3 lessons learnt on how to make community university partnerships effective in this area
- 2 Making a difference in the university** – Presentation on either a policy topic or a particular approach to engagement with communities taken by a university and its local communities, followed by discussion
- 3 Practical workshops** – Demonstrations of projects or practical descriptions of how things can be done

### Feedback from Day 1 and from the conference workshops

Professor Sue Balloch, Director of Health and Social Policy Research Centre  
– University of Brighton, Academic Co-Director of Cupp

*...Yesterday was distinguished by a wonderful mix of community and university people, not just from the South East, but also from across the UK, the USA and Australia. This generated an amazing, friendly warmth, which permeated discussions from start to finish. The day began with a plenary session, was followed by parallel sessions on ‘Making a Difference in the Community’ and ‘Making a Difference in the University’, practical workshops and finally a panel debate with questions from the audience, which brought many of the issues raised during the day together.*

*Both the Vice Chancellor and Stuart Laing affirmed Brighton University’s commitment to community/university engagement. Universities like Brighton grew, in the first place, out of the needs of its communities. Two political agendas have affected how universities operate in this context: the first is the widening participation agenda which should be seen as encouraging all groups, not just 18-25s, to participate in Higher Education; the second is the ‘third stream’ agenda with universities increasingly engaging with business and industry to support economic growth. Both of these can contribute to our ‘common wealth’, a 14th century concept ahead of its time which can be used to support the belief in knowledge exchange.*

*From the parallel sessions on ‘Making a Difference in the Community’ emerged a number of important issues, which included:*

- The virtue of ‘flexibility’ – adapting to research in the ‘real world’, taking time, being creative in response to difficulties, not adhering to any rigid rule book, changing tack as necessary.*
- Respect for partners’ respective strengths and recognition that knowledge exchange is two way: valuing community expertise and seeing participants as active players not passive recipients; understanding the complexities of people’s*

*I was pleasantly surprised by how useful [the] workshop was. Really good format with three examples and time for discussion.*

Participant feedback



*Both formal and informal discussions were tremendously valuable and relevant to what my institution is doing and trying to do.*

Participant feedback

A summary of each of the workshops as well as workshop presentations and handouts are available via the Cupp website at:  
[www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm)

*I think we have a way to go when working together, listening to others' experiences tells me it's going to take time for some universities.*

Participant feedback

*Really liked the openness of the discussion and the frankness about both successes and difficulties – found it very affirming and also useful.*

Participant feedback

*I am committed to this but my ability to engage with the community depends on University strategy.*

Participant feedback

*lives through listening to their voices and enabling them to be heard. Respect also means challenging universities' academic methods and practices, language and bureaucracy that can separate them from the community.*

- *Resources: acknowledging the need for simple, practical support in, for example, preparing research proposals and business plans, offering research training etc but, at the same time, being realistic about what can be achieved.*
- *Time: seeing that it takes a long time to develop partnerships or 'communities of practice' in which trust is a central ingredient. Knowledge exchange is both a product of partnerships and something which strengthens them too.*
- *Location: importance of delivering projects within the community, not in the university.*
- *Leadership: there is a need for strong and enthusiastic leadership of initiatives backed up by committed researchers who want to see change.*
- *Access to the university: improve means of access, especially for people who don't have funding.*
- *Emphasise the virtue of valuing qualitative research as much as quantitative research.*
- *At the end of projects, managing the withdrawal process well so that the work/outputs/changes are sustainable.*

*Unsurprisingly, many of these issues were then raised again in the 'Making a Difference in the University' workshops, showing that making a difference in both university and community relies on similar thinking. These are therefore not repeated. However, further key issues that were raised in those workshops focused on 'Making a Difference in the University' included:*

- *The need for long-term, integrated programmes with a shared vision.*
- *Make the most of community/university combined resources; investing in, for example, the development of the faculty fellow scheme to drive community collaborative research.*
- *Make space in professional courses in particular for community/civic engagement and experiential learning in the community, beyond this encouraging all courses to include a student learning in the community element.*
- *Respond to the massive response from students for community resource opportunities; help develop a rounded student; retain students more effectively in the university because of their community links; support the students properly while on placement.*
- *Involve practitioners in projects – they should take the lead; ensure projects and knowledge exchange does contribute to changes in practice.*
- *The support of Government departments and policy makers who recognise the importance of community/university engagement and make proper funding available is crucial.*

*opposite from top* **Doug Brugge/  
Nick Cutforth/Bruce Muirhead/**

# 5 PANEL DEBATES

## What use can a university be to its communities?

Summaries from international speakers

**Doug Brugge** Associate Professor, Department of Public Health and Family Medicine – Tufts University, Boston, USA

*While it is unrealistic to expect all universities all the time to have no conflicts with their host communities, it should be the case that universities strive to be an ally of and advocate for their host communities rather than simply advancing their own self-interest. Universities can do this in any number of ways. They can provide direct services to community members, they can provide access to their research abilities and knowledge, they can solicit volunteers to work in the community, and they can use their connections to policy makers to help convey community interests. A good ally knows that they are not the community, that they do not speak for or represent the community, but that they will consult with and join forces with the community to advance interests as brought forward by the community. Perhaps most importantly, universities need to be honest and forthright about their own interests in the community and negotiate openly and fairly when the university wants something itself.*

**Nick Cutforth** Associate Professor – College of Education, University of Denver, USA

*An engaged university is dedicated to building partnerships with its surrounding schools and communities. It is through community engagement that the wisdom of community residents, teachers, and other practitioners combine with the technical knowledge of university staff and students to ensure a more balanced set of political, social, economic and cultural priorities, resulting in shared resources and shared power, thus leading to equity and social justice.*

*An engaged university is committed to helping to build more robust and healthier educational environments and communities. Its faculty and staff believe that success will depend upon the effort invested in bringing people together, building and nurturing long-term relationships and partnerships. Multiple benefits will be realized as new individuals and organizations are included and involved.*

*These partnerships will develop, identify, and implement projects and programs that use university scholarship and infrastructure to add value to community programs and contribute to community sustainability, while also adding value to university activity.*

**Bruce Muirhead** Director of Eidos – Queensland, Australia

*The role of universities is changing rapidly – and contested. The modern university is expected to be many contradictory things simultaneously: conservative and radical; critical and supportive; competitive and collegial; autonomous and accountable; private and public; excellent and equal; entrepreneurial and caring; certain and provisional; local and international. Democracies are sustained by citizen commitment to a democratic culture, without such a culture, democracy cannot survive. Universities distribute*



*How important it is to be working together to bring the community/ university together. I was really inspired by some of the discussions. I hope we can put into practice what we have gained from these two days.*

Participant feedback

*life-chances and public goods. A key strategy to building and sustaining democracy lies in the unique constellation of intellectual, social and financial capital embodied within the modern university. As key knowledge economy and society institutions, universities have to be responsive (short-term) and responsible (long-term). The key lies in the expertise embodied within the modern university, the socialisation role of mass higher education and the promotion of social cohesion in sustainable democratic societies. Universities and communities have the resources and capacity to co-produce and co-create powerful strategies for i) solving global problems manifested in the local community; and, ii) helping both to become national and global leaders, including defining their identity, building a foundation for teaching and research, delivering social and economic benefits; and, providing social, cultural and physical capital and infrastructure.*

*Our current challenges:*

- *The benefits of strong university-community partnerships are at risk because of the deepening Government focus on competitiveness, commercialisation and funding cutbacks in HE policy.*
- *There is an urgent need for the role of universities to include working with and for local, regional, national and international communities, informed by broader research.*
- *There is insufficient information reported to even superficially understand the level of community engagement being undertaken by a university. Real reporting of achievements against stated intention only takes place to a very limited extent.*

*The modern university is uniquely placed to responsively and responsibly play a central role in addressing these.*

**David Watson** Professor of Higher Education Management – Institute of Education, University of London, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Brighton

*In 2006 hardly any university, anywhere in the world, would dare not to have a civic engagement mission. The question is: how real, and how effective are these? The answer is: it varies.*

*All universities face a number of systemic problems: chief among which are funding and measurement (how will you be accountable for this?). These can be compounded by some internal problems: chief among which are perceived relevance and esteem (what does this do for me, my career and my department?).*

*What universities do publicly with their civic engagement strategies also varies. At one end of a spectrum you find “show and tell” or “parallel play.” “Look at this project.” This is the old linear model of knowledge exchange in operation. At the other you have genuine collaboration (between more than one institution, and more than one community partner) in fields which may be long-term, uncertain and genuinely risky.*

*That’s what universities can offer at their best: a safe and steady underwriting of exploration of difficult ideas and their implications, including in the “no man’s land” between the university and its communities. That’s what Cupp has begun to supply, and I applaud it.*

above **David Watson**/ opposite from top  
**Joann Weeks**/ **Angie Hart**/

**Joann Weeks** Associate Director, Center for Community Partnerships – University of Pennsylvania, USA

*Universities possess significant resources, particularly human resources, that can, if mobilized in new and integrated ways, help communities address critical issues such as literacy, health, economic development, and the development of democratic citizens. In the U.S., universities, including liberal arts colleges and 2-year community colleges, are integrating the academic work - research, teaching and learning - of faculty and students in partnerships with local K-12 (final year before college) schools and community organizations to address these needs.*

*U.S. universities are also using community-based federal work-study funding that places students in the community as they earn money to support their education. The University of Pennsylvania's Center for Community Partnerships, for example, links over 60 Penn classes each year from diverse disciplines and more than 150 work-study students to help develop and sustain university-assisted community schools, which are the hubs of the neighborhood for education, health, recreation and cultural services.*

*Universities are also major employers and spend substantial millions of dollars on goods and services and construction. Policies can be developed so that these dollars are captured more intentionally to benefit the local economy. Universities can also help build capacity in the community - through research on community-identified problems, and training of staff in non-profit management by higher education staff with similar responsibilities. Through mutually beneficial and democratic partnerships, universities can be part of long-term, sustainable efforts that help revitalize local communities as well as the university.*

### Questions to the Panel from the Floor – Day 1

The conference provided two opportunities for participants to submit questions to a panel of speakers made up of university and community representatives. Questions could be either written down in advance and submitted for consideration, or raised from the floor during panel discussions.

The panel for the first day consisted of **Kim Aumann** (Director – Amaze<sup>1</sup>), **Sue Balloch** (Director – Health and Social Policy Research Centre and Academic Co-Director of Cupp), **Nick Cutforth** (Associate Professor – University of Denver), **Bruce Muirhead** (Director – Eidos<sup>2</sup>) and **David Watson** (Professor of HE Management – Institute of Education). It was chaired by **Angie Hart** (Principal Lecturer – Institute of Nursing and Midwifery, Academic Co-Director of Cupp, community practitioner). Questions and responses are summarised below.

#### *What use can a university be to its community?*

Kim Aumann spoke from the perspective of a community partner and said that the University had helped in her organisation with training in research skills and access to university resources. They had provided a validation of project initiatives particularly in the eyes of some participants who saw university involvement as a mark of serious intent, and an opportunity to scrutinise funding bids.

Sue Balloch as a member of the senior researcher's team agreed that the University could boost research awareness, increase research capacity and increase a community's understanding of and commitment to rigorous research procedures.



**1 Amaze** supports and provides information to parents of children and young people with special needs, mainly in the areas of education, health, benefits and social services, and leisure – email [info@amazebrighton.org.uk](mailto:info@amazebrighton.org.uk) for more information

**2 Eidos** is a consortium of universities, government and non-government agencies committed to improving education and social research, policy and practice in Queensland and Australia – see [www.eidos.org.au](http://www.eidos.org.au)

*The panels worked really well and provided a necessary opportunity for wider thinking.*

Participant feedback

*The panel debate on day one especially was very interesting – probably because it was so brilliantly chaired, usually I find those things boring – and it even got a bit exciting at one point.*

Participant feedback

**1 Sussex Learning Network** is one of the first examples of a new HEFCE funded national initiative. The SLN will work in major disciplinary and employment sectors to transform the nature of access to and participation in Higher Education in Sussex, working with employers, schools and colleges, Higher Education Institutions and guidance agencies.

opposite **Falmer High School Arts Project**

*What is the first step to creating a university-community partnership?*

Answers included - listen to a community's needs and to the history of previous projects and partnerships in that area. Don't promise what you can't deliver. Identify good leadership to take new initiatives forward. Find someone you think you can work with.

*Could Cupp be more pro-active?*

Answers included the possibility of more involvement with education in the voluntary sector, (this is since being taken forward by Cupp in the form of involvement in a community practice curriculum strand with the Sussex Learning Network<sup>1</sup>) and informing community organisations of the value of research. However respondents stressed the need for a period of reflection before moving forward and the importance of an initial dialogue to explore with potential partners what is likely to succeed and to understand the constraints.

*How can a university differentiate itself from other education sectors?*

Responses included:

- A university provides added value, but should aim to be building the capacity of a community to solve its own problems rather than being seen as a source of expertise;
- A university provides research and opens doors to both partners by identifying what is already known about a particular problem;
- Universities need to be knowledge generating institutions, and as such can provide an opening up of complex thinking about difficult problems;
- Universities can offer a critical edge, they are seen as independent and can make public what might not otherwise be known;
- They provide opportunities for young people to join the community as part of its volunteer workforce, and to bring with them energy, optimism and new knowledge;
- At the same time community organisations can challenge the university to ensure that their research is related to knowledge that can be used to make a difference.

Some criticisms were raised from the floor. One participant described a continuum of voluntary to radical activist work and objected to people who do research for their own career development, learning on the back of the community what they don't already know for themselves. They stressed the need for university staff to understand the perception of the community, of communities who feel over researched or who feel that their time is taken up for the university's rather than for their own benefit.

Panel responses stressed the importance of strategic involvement and sustained relationships that were mindful of where energies were used. The university offers a particular set of relationships, but these need to be continually reviewed, and can invariably be conducted differently. There was an emphasis on the equal value of community work that provided a different but an equally valid form of knowledge to academic work, and the gains that could be had from bringing the two perspectives together.

## Questions to the Panel from the Floor – Day 2

On the second day of the conference the panel consisted of **Derek Blincow** (Director Children and Families – South Downs NHS Health Trust), **Charlie Jordan** (Programme Director – ALTogether), **Bruce Muirhead** (Director – Eidos), **James Powell** (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Enterprise – University of Salford), **Joann Weeks** (Associate Director Center for Community Partnerships – University of Pennsylvania) and **Simon**

**Whittemore** (Deputy Head Business and Community Policy – HEFCE). The panel was chaired by **Elizabeth Maddison** (Head of Strategic Planning Unit – University of Brighton). Questions and responses are summarised below.

#### *Community-university partnerships - where next?*

Responses highlighted the broader government agenda of third stream engagement, the connection between partnerships, teaching and research and the importance of broader national and international links to build on the understanding we have of the potential for this. They highlighted the importance of integrating a community strategy into the overall strategy for Higher Education Institutions, of supporting links between business and the community and helping to educate the private sector in the potential for cross sectoral work. The universities are in a position to drive changes in this direction, and the public sector is open to broader community involvement.

Other respondents talked of the need to make engagement integral to research, to encourage faculty members to relate research questions to 'real world problems' and to understand and mainstream partnerships of all kinds. The third stream has become a main stream and the university has a responsibility to provide leadership in this area equal to that provided in the other two. This may mean more reflection, more collaboration and a continual reworking of ways in which this might happen.

#### *How can communities enrich universities?*

Community involvement was seen as the first real way for students to test theory against reality, to look at how change can be engineered and how change happens. They help to continue conversations started by Jonathan Sacs on the 'Dignity of Difference' – it is through engagement with different communities of interest that students learn about and gain respect for people who are different from themselves. If a university is not connected with real external issues how can it justify the funding it receives? Universities provide communities with a different way of trying to find solutions and as such the two groups can work together to generate an understanding of the situations they are facing. Ways need to be found to capture and record a community's learning, as this is often lost or unaccounted for.

#### *How can a university support all staff to engage with the community?*

The first response to this question acknowledged how many staff are already engaged in community activity as part of their non university lives, and recognised the dangers inherent in requiring all staff to take on additional involvement. There was a discussion of possibilities for staff volunteering programmes and mechanisms for capturing the other activities that staff undertook in their own time.

Other respondents raised the importance of articulating the benefits of community involvement to people in order to get their voluntary 'buy in' to different activities, and stressed that rewards and incentives to do this need to be looked at carefully before trying to build it into contracts.

#### *Is there value in a cross university network? Is today the beginning of that?*

The existence of John Arnett's network at the University of Birkbeck was acknowledged, as well as the service learning network in Ireland, established networks in the United States and South Africa, and a Science Shop network that operates within Europe. Many of their member institutions share similar concerns played out in different contexts and networks offer some useful lessons for practice. Partnerships strike to the 'heart of what we are' and reflective networks help to evolve a 'pedagogy of critical engagement' – problematising as well as solving the issues involved, they provide generic ways of doing things and provide important learning opportunities.



## 6 CLOSING REMARKS

Final session Friday 7th April 06

**Elizabeth Maddison** Head of Strategic Planning Unit – University of Brighton

*It's my task to sum up the conference and offer some thoughts on next steps. I'm going to try to do that using some of the words, phrases and themes that I think have resonated during the conference. I got up early this morning to work on this task but was waylaid by my four year old who thought it would be more productive if we played 'hide and seek buses'. When I eventually persuaded him that I really did need to go to work because I had to come to this conference and needed to write down some things to say, he offered me his bus to bring to work. Now, I had been worrying about how to keep up with the standard set by other presenters – I knew I had no hats and no sweets, so perhaps a bus would be a useful prop. So I mused quickly on the bus as metaphor to see whether such a prop would indeed help me in my task, perhaps along the following lines:*

- *journey*
- *people get on and off at different points but share some of the journey together*
- *sometimes, in Brighton at least, people who don't know each other sit down and make conversation*
- *it's a very cost effective use of resources*
- *you get a good view that you don't get from other forms of transport*
- *in the UK at least we sometimes struggle with how to finance public transport*
- *and so on and so on*

*But just as I was in danger of flogging this metaphor too far, my son said 'perhaps it would be better if the bus stayed at home today'. And I said to myself – 'aha, the danger of over-promising'. So, to reflect seriously on the conference:*

- *perhaps extraordinarily, but certainly thanks to the organisers, the speakers and not least to all the participants, we have I think avoided over-promising*
- *indeed, I think for many of us the conference has exceeded our expectations*

*Just as, in many ways, Cupp itself has done:*

- *when we started, we had a rather dull business plan and a promise of funding from The Atlantic Philanthropies – they said, very nicely, 'would you like some money?' and we said to them, equally politely, 'thank you very much' and then to ourselves 'whatever do we do now?'*
- *we knew more about what we didn't want than what we did*
- *we did not intend to be simply a grant-making entity, bestowing largesse, with a queue of people outside the office door whose expectations we had raised but would now disappoint*
- *we did not intend to imply that we had all the answers inside the University and that all the questions lay outside the University*
- *we knew we were trying to do something rather different, and we used some fine words like 'mutuality' and 'exchange' to try to describe that to ourselves and our partners*

*An excellent and highly engaging conference which managed to provide a space for wide range of perspectives, facilitate some valuable exchange and generated a sense of shared purpose.*

Participant feedback

above Elizabeth Maddison/  
opposite from top Art in the Woods/  
Football4Unity/ Access to Art  
Hastings/

- *we would, we said in the original business plan, ‘identify a joint programme of work that meets mutual needs and draws on mutual experience and expertise’*
- *and, both reassured and challenged by Stuart Laing, we did indeed set about ‘defining it in the doing’*

*This conference has been very much part of that process:*

- *not only a celebration, though importantly it has been celebratory*
- *not only analytic, though it has been that too*
- *not only rich in describing and sharing individual experiences, though it has done that as well*
- *but importantly, powerful in placing those facets in institutional, organisational, strategic and political contexts*

*We started yesterday with a challenge from Stuart to place this work in the broader context of what are universities for and how should they operate, the nature of knowledge, what counts as knowledge and how it is developed, who has access to university resources and who has access to community resources.*

*And we’ve talked a lot about resources:*

- *in Bruce Muirhead’s words from yesterday, different forms of capital – social, economic, symbolic and intellectual. And we’ve been challenged - also by Bruce - to think about working with what we’ve got*
- *we’ve been challenged by colleagues from HEFCE to help them work out where this stuff fits into public funding; how to get right some of the top-down bottom up bits of lobbying that might be needed to secure public policy interest and public funding streams across government; what kind of metrics there might be, how to demonstrate impact and added value.*

*And we were challenged right at the outset by Angie Hart and Dan Shelley to think carefully about aspects of working together, the multiple hats we each wear, the different language we use, and how power works in our relationships:*

- *David Watson reminded us yesterday that the essence of Cupp in some ways is about ‘resourcing the conversation’, finding a space and a mechanism by which partnerships can get established and can develop and flourish*
- *throughout the workshops, we’ve been testing the notion of mutuality and exchange, inter-penetration and boundary-spanning, and we’ve been challenged by Bruce again to think about co-production and co-creation.*

*Equally throughout the event, we’ve been challenged by some of the workshops and our international colleagues to really think hard about sustainability:*

- *as David Watson said, to move beyond the ‘show and tell’*
- *we have seen sustainability in the way individual projects have spawned other work, in the ways an initial contact to the Cupp research helpdesk evolves over time into a structural relationship between colleagues across disciplinary and professional boundaries that changes what they both do and how they do it*
- *as Bruce Muirhead said, we need to work on how to aggregate our resources and to be more strategic*
- *as we’ve noted in a number of the workshops, the importance of building long-term relationships*



*And many times in the last two days we have seen the evidence for the truism that leadership matters; that senior commitment can make the difference; that this work can enthuse and inspire individuals in the community and the University; that you need to find a point of entry into the dialogue; that you need to engage in engagement.*

*Looking ahead, then, what might be the next steps:*

- *well, last night we had the film, next we will have the book – there will be a Cupp book as another contribution to ‘defining it in the doing’, to lobbying up and down, to describe what works for us and to be analytical and self-critical about the story so far*
- *there will actually be two books, because David Watson is working on a book that places this work in an international, theoretical and political context*
- *I’m optimistic that together these volumes will articulate, test and share – and contribute to further developments*
- *there will be more international activity*
- *we are already in Brighton moving from a project focus to a strategic focus. We have more to do about that including work to do to support HEFCE’s thinking, to try, if we can, to inform and influence public policy, and to work on our own model for sustainable development that works for Brighton, and how far this might be generalisable*
- *we need to make sure we have ways in which we continue to challenge each other and to learn from other ways of working – one of the messages from this event is that there is a lot going on nationally and internationally, but it is still somewhat fragmented: we need to continue to work together to help ourselves develop a sustainable model and to retain some necessary self-criticism – to keep on defining and defining in the doing, in the writing, in the filming and in the talking and listening*
- *we do as a sector need to find ways of building this work systematically and systemically into the mainstream for universities; ways in which it can be fully recognised in public policy; and, to go full circle back to where we started with Stuart Laing yesterday morning, ways in which we can together enhance the ‘common wealth’*

*below Football4Unity/*



## 7 NEXT STEPS

Following on from the feedback that we received from the workshops (page 7 and 8) and from the feedback forms completed by participants, we have identified the following areas of work and suggestions to take forward from the conference:

### Resources

*Presentations, handouts and resources used in the workshops available online*

Visit [www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm) to download the available presentations, handouts and additional resources that have been provided by the conference contributors.

*More information on community-university partnerships*

Cupp is currently producing a book provisionally titled 'Mutual benefit: Making university-community partnerships work'. The book will illustrate how building systemically community-university partnerships can positively impact on improving the lives of the most disadvantaged sectors of our society. It will also show how such work can add value to the university by contributing to its research outputs and by improving the quality of student learning.

In keeping with the values and practices of Cupp, the book is being co-written by staff at the University of Brighton and community partners from a variety of organisations that have been involved in Cupp projects.

We are currently securing a publisher and expect the book to be available in Autumn/Winter 2006. For more details email [cupp@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:cupp@brighton.ac.uk)

For a list of online resources on community-university partnerships visit [www.cupp.org.uk/resources/link\\_home.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/resources/link_home.htm)

*Dissemination of key findings to contributors and participants, but also more widely to local authorities and primary care trusts*

This conference report is to be disseminated widely. Copies are being sent to key contacts in the Higher Education sector, public sector, and the community and voluntary sector. It is also available online at [www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm](http://www.cupp.org.uk/conference.htm) so if you feel that your contacts may be interested then please do forward it on.

*Contact details for those who attended*

It is not possible for us to make contact information for contributors and delegates publicly available. However, if you would like to get in touch with another contributor or participant, then please do get in touch with us (email to [cupp@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:cupp@brighton.ac.uk)) and we will contact them on your behalf.

### Further events

*Another conference on an annual/regular basis, Regional conferences*

Cupp is planning to host a second conference on community-university partnerships in 2008. The findings from this conference and developments in this area of work over the next year will inform the priorities and themes to be explored.

*Some ideas can be followed up fairly quickly, others will need to 'sit' and develop.*

Participant feedback

*The cross-pollination was great. A few more names to add to my list of people that 'do' not just talk!*

Participant feedback

*Whilst we are a very different university, I did feel reassured about our approach – especially as I often feel I'm working 'alone' on this agenda!*

Participant feedback

If you are planning a conference or event that you feel may be of interest to others working in similar areas, please let us know (email details to [cupp@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:cupp@brighton.ac.uk)) and we will disseminate information via the Cupp email list (visit [www.cupp.org.uk](http://www.cupp.org.uk) to sign up).

### **A network of community-university partnerships**

*A network (which, where possible, consolidates with existing networks) linked via email, Establish a UK wide network to follow this up nationally*

Further work needs to be done to establish the best format and remit for a UK and/or international network of community-university partnerships. This is something that Cupp is keen to contribute to and we will be building and strengthening relationships with other partnerships around the country and internationally as our own programme develops. The networks and initiatives below may be of interest:

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **HEFCE good practice programme**

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has established six expert working groups to identify and distil good practice models in knowledge transfer and exchange.

Dave Wolff, Director of Cupp, is chairing a sub-group that is looking into social and community engagement.

For more information see [www.hefce.ac.uk/reachout](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/reachout) and click on *good practices*.

### **Higher Education Community Partnership (HECP)**

HECP is a new association which promotes all aspects of partnership working between Higher Education Institutions and their local and regional communities in the UK. Their conference in July 06 considers the role of UK Higher Education in promoting civic engagement through university and community partnerships, volunteering, community based learning and community based research, knowledge transfer and exchange and through lifelong learning in the community. For further information contact: [hecp@fce.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:hecp@fce.bbk.ac.uk). Cupp will be exploring links with this new association.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **The Talloires Declaration**

The University of Brighton is a signatory of the Talloires Declaration. Composed in 1990 at an international conference in Talloires, France, this is the first official statement made by university administrators of a commitment to environmental sustainability in Higher Education. The Talloires Declaration is a ten-point action plan for incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations and outreach at colleges and universities. It has been signed by over 300 university presidents and chancellors in over 40 countries.

For more information see [www.ulsf.org/programs\\_talloires.html](http://www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html)

*opposite Access to Art Hastings/  
rear cover Art in the Woods/  
Football4Unity/ Access to Art  
Hastings/ Falmer High School Arts  
Project/*

### **Global University Network for Innovation**

Cupp is a member of the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI). GUNI is composed of UNESCO Chairs in Higher Education, research centres, universities, networks and other institutions highly committed to innovation in higher education. Over 100 institutions from around the world are GUNI members.

GUNI was set up by UNESCO, the United Nations University (UNU) and the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC) in 1999 with the aim of following up the decisions taken at the World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) held in Paris in 1998. The goal of GUNI is to contribute to the reinforcement of higher education by the application of the decisions of the World Conference on Higher Education.

More information is available at [www.guni-rmies.net](http://www.guni-rmies.net)





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*Cupp and the University of Brighton would like to thank: Our academic and community partners, all the contributors to the conference, the University of Sussex and The Atlantic Philanthropies and HEFCE. Photography by Andrew Kingham, Alice Fox, and Bob Seago.*